



March 9, 2016
Acts 15:30-41
Acts 16:1-40
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Exegetical Study

1. **Acts 15:30-41** – *“The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers. After spending some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord. Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.’ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”*
 - a. The Journey and the Ministry
 - i. **Acts 15:36** marks the beginning of Paul’s second missionary journey, about 50-53 A.D.
 - ii. Barnabas and his close relative, John Mark, left Antioch of Syria and made their way to Cyprus.
 - iii. Paul and Silas left Antioch of Syria and made their way to the province of Cilicia.
 1. A province was similar to a county, e.g. Loudoun County.
 - iv. Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark
 1. John Mark traveled with Paul and Barnabas on part of their first

missionary journey.

2. When they got to the region of Pamphylia, John Mark left and returned home.
 3. Paul refused to allow John Mark to go with them because *“he had **deserted** them in Pamphylia.”* (Emphasis added)
 4. Barnabas stood up for John Mark and wanted to give him a second chance.
 5. Pastor Gary said, “There’s not necessarily a right and wrong here. Now, I won’t go so far as to say, [as some people say,] ‘Look at how God used a disagreement to double the impact on the kingdom.’ No, I don’t buy that. I think that God took a bad situation and made something good out of it. I don’t think that he [allowed Paul and Barnabas] to get into a conflict just so he could split them up and then multiply the effect across the kingdom. ... I think these are two guys who are just disagreeing with each other. One thing that’s important for us to recognize is that sometimes good, godly people disagree, and it’s okay. It doesn’t mean that one person is right, and one person is wrong. ... It means they just have a different perspective of things... So, we have to respect Paul’s position. ... In Lystra he was [stoned] and left for dead! He [was saying], ‘I can’t take somebody with me who isn’t strong because this [may] be a life [or] death situation. Paul is not wrong, and Barnabas is not wrong. ... [It’s like Barnabas was saying,] ‘I know he bailed out on us once, but everybody deserves a second chance.’ ”
 6. The dispute between Paul and Barnabas was not a life-long issue because Paul later asked Timothy to get John Mark.
 - a. **2 Timothy 4:11** – *“Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.”*
2. **Acts 16:1-5** – *“He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.”*
- a. The Journey and the Ministry
 - i. Paul and Silas traveled from Derbe to Lystra, where they met Timothy.
 - ii. Timothy
 1. Many Bible scholars believe Timothy was about fifteen years old

when he met Paul and Silas.

2. Timothy's mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, were believers, but his Gentile father was not.
3. Timothy was Jewish because heritage was traced through the mother.
4. Timothy was circumcised so he would not be an offense to the Jews to whom they were trying to minister.

3. **Acts 16:6-10** - *"Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, 'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them."*

a. The Journey and the Ministry

i. Luke wrote the book of Acts, and up until this point, he had not been personally involved in ministry with Paul.

1. **Acts 16:10** - *"After Paul had seen the vision, **we** got ready at once to leave for Macedonia..."* (Emphasis added)

ii. Paul's vision

1. Pastor Gary said, "This is very challenging, and I'm going to do the best I can to present this as balanced as I can. ... [Paul reminded the church in Galatia that it was illness that afforded him the opportunity for him to preach the gospel.] ... What does it mean that the Holy Spirit redirected them? Did they hear an audible voice? Did they see the Lord, who blocked their path? Please note, sometimes the Lord will direct us supernaturally and sometimes the Lord will direct us naturally. ... I'm not dismissing [the fact that the Lord can speak to us supernaturally]. I think sometimes we forget the natural ways he uses to speak to us. ... God used a very natural thing, like an illness, to keep [Paul] from moving north to Bithynia, [so Paul] would stay right where he was in the region of Galatia. ... I can hear the objections [about what that statement means]. Does that mean that God made him sick to keep him in Galatia so that they could hear the gospel? I'm not going to go so far as to say that God is going to make somebody sick. I will clearly say, however, I believe that God will use natural things like a physical illness to sideline us at a place where he wants us to remain for a period of time. Sometimes when things happen in our lives [and], at first it might seem [to be] a set-back, or it might seem that [it's not a good situation],

don't dismiss [what's going on]. ... God can use supernatural things and natural things to accomplish his purposes and his plans for the sake of the kingdom. ... Be faithful to bloom where you are planted, and you trust God for the timing on [other matters] because what looks like [being] sidelined... is God's way of putting on the brakes because he wants us right where we are for his sake."

a. **Galatians 4:13** - *"As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you."*

4. **Acts 16:11-40** - *"From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. 'If you consider me a believer in the Lord, she said, 'come and stay at my house.' And she persuaded us. Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.' She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned around and said to the spirit, 'In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!' At that moment the spirit left her. When the owners of the slave girl realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. They brought them before the magistrates and said, 'These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.' The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, 'Don't harm yourself! We are all here!' The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell*

trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God – he and his whole family. When it was daylight, the magistrates sent their officers to the jailer with the order: 'Release those men.' The jailer told Paul, 'The magistrates have ordered that you and Silas be released. Now you can leave. Go in peace.' But Paul said to the officers: 'They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.' The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed. They came to appease them and escorted them from the prison, requesting them to leave the city. After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left."

a. The Journey and the Ministry

- i. Philippi was a leading city of that day, as prestigious as Rome itself.
 1. The city was founded by Philip, king of Macedon.
 - a. Philip reigned from 359 B.C. to 336 B.C., when he was assassinated.
 - b. Philip was the father of Alexander the Great.
 - ii. Like other towns and cities where Paul had been, Philippi did not have a synagogue because there weren't ten Jewish men living there.
 - iii. The demon-possessed slave girl
 1. Paul rebuked the evil spirit, and the girl was wonderfully delivered!
 2. Her deliverance from demon possession killed the goose that laid the golden eggs, so to speak, and her owners were less than pleased, so they seized Paul and Silas.
 - iv. The selfless examples of Paul and Silas
 1. Paul and Silas were not only humiliated, they were stripped, beaten, and severely flogged, and yet they continued to pray and sing to the Lord!
 2. When their chains fell off and the prison doors opened, instead of running for their lives, Paul and Silas witnessed to the prisoners and the jailer!
 3. Paul and Silas encouraged others, when in fact, they were the ones who needed encouragement.
 - v. The Philippian jailer
 1. When the jailer saw the evidence of God's supernatural

intervention, he asked Paul and Silas what he needed to do to be saved.

- a. **Acts 16:31** - "... *'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household.'*"
2. The jailer and each member of his household believed and placed their trust in Jesus Christ, and they were baptized.
- vi. Pastor Gary said of Paul and Silas, "These [men are] shining examples of what it means to be a whole-hearted, devoted follower of Jesus Christ."

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the 1984 New International Version (NIV)