

Ministry in Macedonia

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Acts / Philippians; Arrest; Persecution; Witness Text; Demon Possession; Exorcism; Guidance / Acts 16:35–40

Paul had plans to go one way in his missionwork but God had other plans. He blocked Paul's plans and opened another door. God had a special work in Macedonia. Furthermore, there were specific people who God was working to save in that area.

A bishop of a century ago pronounced from his pulpit and in the periodical he edited that heavier-than-air flight was both impossible and contrary to the will of God. Oh, the irony that Bishop Wright had two sons, Orville and Wilbur! Wright was wrong. Sure of himself, but wrong.

- I've met some
 - who are convinced
 - God's will
 - but isn't.
- Paul was corrected
 - on this topic.

God's Will

[Acts 16:6–10](#) (ESV)

And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

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So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

- When God closes a door
 - He opens another.

- I have become so
 - accustomed to this.
 - I know pray:

- “I want this Lord...”
 - But if you don’t
 - please show me by

- closing the door.

Buying Practice

- A closed door
 - Very clear answer!
- Open door
 - not a clear answer...

Toxic Relationship From God...?

“God gave me peace”

in sin!

- How can we know?
 - the will of God?
- God rarely reveals
 - everything at once.

Asking for Directions

- › Advance a little
 - › in the direction that
 - › is clearly God's plan
 - › at this time.
 - › Then, inquire again!

Hiking and More Hiking

- Continue Story

Acts 16:11-12 ESV

So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.

- Traveled by land
 - visited all cities

- established churches

Sabbath in Nature

Acts 16:13 ESV

And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

- Normally go to synagogue
 - no option here.
- Where do people worship?
 - by the river
- Looked for people praying.
 - began to teach.

Riverside Conversions

[Acts 16:14-15](#) (ESV)

One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. And

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after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

- Wealthy woman
 - learns, accepts, invites
 - get baptized.
- They start church
 - in her house.

Satan Evangelizing?

Acts 16:16–17 ESV

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.”

- Back to “church”

- river prayer spot

- Satan create distraction

- › Satan can speak truth
 - › Some truth =/

 - › all truth!

There was a fellow who was about to jump from a bridge. An alert police officer slowly and methodically moved toward him, talking with him all the time. When the officer got within inches of the man he said, “Surely nothing could be bad enough for you to take your life. Tell me about it. Talk to me.” The would-be jumper told how his wife had left him, how his business had gone bankrupt, and how his friends had deserted him. Everything in life had lost meaning. For thirty minutes he told the sad story—then they both jumped.

Acts 16:18 ESV

And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

- Satan wanted
 - judgment by association

- Ohhhh...
 - you are with the
 - Crazy and Unhealthy people
- Paul make clear
 - disassociation with demons

Acts 16:19–20 ESV

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city.

- More false accusation
 - more persecution
 - more unfair trials

The Mob

Acts 16:21–22 ESV

They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.

- More mobs
 - more riots
 - more public beatings...

- › Have you wondered
 - › Why does he keep
 - › going back to mission field?
 - › So hard!!!

Child Rearing

Tired

Bored

Unfair

Constant desire for

entertainment

artificial happiness

preparation for service

Public Beating

Acts 16:23–24 ESV

And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

- More arrests
 - more prison time
 - more pain

- Dungeon
 - Feet in stocks

- How would you feel?

- › God abandoned me

- › Angry at God

- › Unfair

- › Making Bargains

- Most believe,

- happiness is natural result
 - things going good
 - in your life
 - But not true!

Where Is Joy Found?

Not in unbelief, Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type. He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in pleasure, Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure if anyone did. He wrote: "The worm, the canker, and grief are mine alone."

Not in money, Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

Not in position and fame, Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake; manhood a struggle; old age a regret."

Joy and Money

"Researchers have found almost no correlation between income levels and happiness. Between 1957 and 1990 income levels in the U.S. doubled. Yet at the same period, people's levels of happiness did not increase. In fact, reports of depression actually increased tenfold. Incidence of divorce, suicide, alcoholism and drug abuse also rose dramatically."

Joy In The Lord

Acts 16:25 ESV

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,

- Everyone is confused.
 - lots of sounds
 - in the jail
 - Yelling
 - Crying
 - Moaning - in pain
 - Fighting
- Unfamiliar Sound
 - Singing
 - Prayer
 - Joyful Praise.

- Everyone is listening
 - prisoners
 - jailor

Massena, one of Napoleon's generals, suddenly appeared with eighteen thousand men before an Austrian town which had no means of defense. The town council had nearly decided to surrender when the old dean of the church reminded them that it was Easter and begged them to hold services as usual and to leave the trouble in God's hands. This they did; and the French hearing the church bells ringing joyfully concluded that an Austrian army had come to relieve the place and quickly broke camp. Before the bells ceased ringing, all the Frenchmen had vanished.

God Finally Speaks

Acts 16:26 *ESV*

and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.

- Angels wanted
 - to be there
 - moment of praise.

- Their praise,
 - opens the prison!

- Notice
 - God did not intervene sooner!!!
 - God allowed
 - Angry Mob
 - Arrest
 - Public Beating
 - Incarceration
 - Painful stocks

- Silence From God!!!

- Paul and Silas??
 - Loud for Lord!
 - Singing
 - Praising

- They are thankful
 - they get to
 - Suffer for God.
- Finally God
 - can no longer
 - keep silent
 - the earthquake
 - › Vindicates Disciples
 - › Vindicates God's Name

Acts 16:27 ESV

When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

- Jailer had been warned
 - keep them!
- In those days
 - if prisoner escaped

- Your life for Theirs!
- Believing everyone God
 - Suicide
 - instead of public shame
 - public execution.

We Are Here

Acts 16:28 ESV

But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.”

- Greatest Miracle
 - Singing and Praying
 - Earthquake
 - Doors Open
- **Prisoners Don't Run!!!**

- Love of God
 - constrained them!
- God was
 - trying to save them
 - and the jailor

Acts 16:29–30 *ESV*

And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

- Jailer knew
 - miracle of God
- Heard them sing and pray
 - knew it was their God.
- **“I want what you have!”**

- I want to be saved!

- › Greatest witness

- › not a sermon

- › example of life

Lieghton Ford was speaking at an open-air crusade in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Billy Graham was to speak the next night and had arrived a day early. He came incognito and sat on the grass at the rear of the crowd. Because he was wearing a hat and dark glasses, no one recognized him.

Directly in front of him sat an elderly gentleman who seemed to be listening intently to my presentation. When Pastor Ford invited people to come forward as an open sign of commitment, Billy decided to do a little personal evangelism. He tapped the man on the shoulder and asked, "Would you like to accept Christ? I'll be glad to walk down with you if you want to." The old man looked him up and down, thought it over for a moment, and then said, "Naw, I think I'll just wait till the big gun comes tomorrow night."

In the minds of many people, evangelism is the task of the "Big Guns," not the "little shots."

- › Best sermon

- › Your Life

- › Second Best Sermon

- › Your Word love/warning

› after they saw you life.

- Jailers Plea
 - “How can I be saved today?”
- Paul makes it simple
 - man knows nothing

Acts 16:31 ESV

And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

- Most basic gospel message
 - Believe!

› Definition of Faith

› James on Faith

Two washings

Acts 16:33–34 ESV

And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he

was baptized at once, he and all his family. Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

- Jailer washes wounds
 - physically
- Paul washes sins
 - spiritual washing

› STOP HERE?

- They serve one another.

Secret Release

[Acts 16:35-37](#) (ESV)

But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.” And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and

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go in peace.” But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”

- Roman citizens
 - no fair trial
 - public beating
 - Could be in trouble

[Acts 16:38–40](#) (ESV)

The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. So they came and

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apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

- Fulfilled Paul’s desire
 - public cleansing
- Encouragement

- left town

Summary

- Paul Learned
 - God's Will Is Always Best
 - Satan Can Speak Truth
 - Joy and Contentment

John Wesley was about 21 years of age when he went to Oxford University. He came from a Christian home, and he was gifted with a keen mind and good looks. Yet, in those days he was a bit snobbish and sarcastic. One night, however, something happened that set in motion a change in Wesley's heart. While speaking with a porter, he discovered that the poor fellow had only one coat and lived in such impoverished conditions that he didn't even have a bed. Yet, he was an unusually happy person, filled with gratitude to God. Wesley, being immature, thoughtlessly joked about the man's misfortunes. "And what else do you thank God for?" he said with a touch of sarcasm. The porter smiled, and in the spirit of meekness replied with joy, "I thank Him that He has given me a life and being, a heart to love Him, and above all a constant desire to serve Him!" Deeply moved, Wesley recognized that this man knew the meaning of true thankfulness.

Appeal

- Joy is a Choice
 - Choose It Today