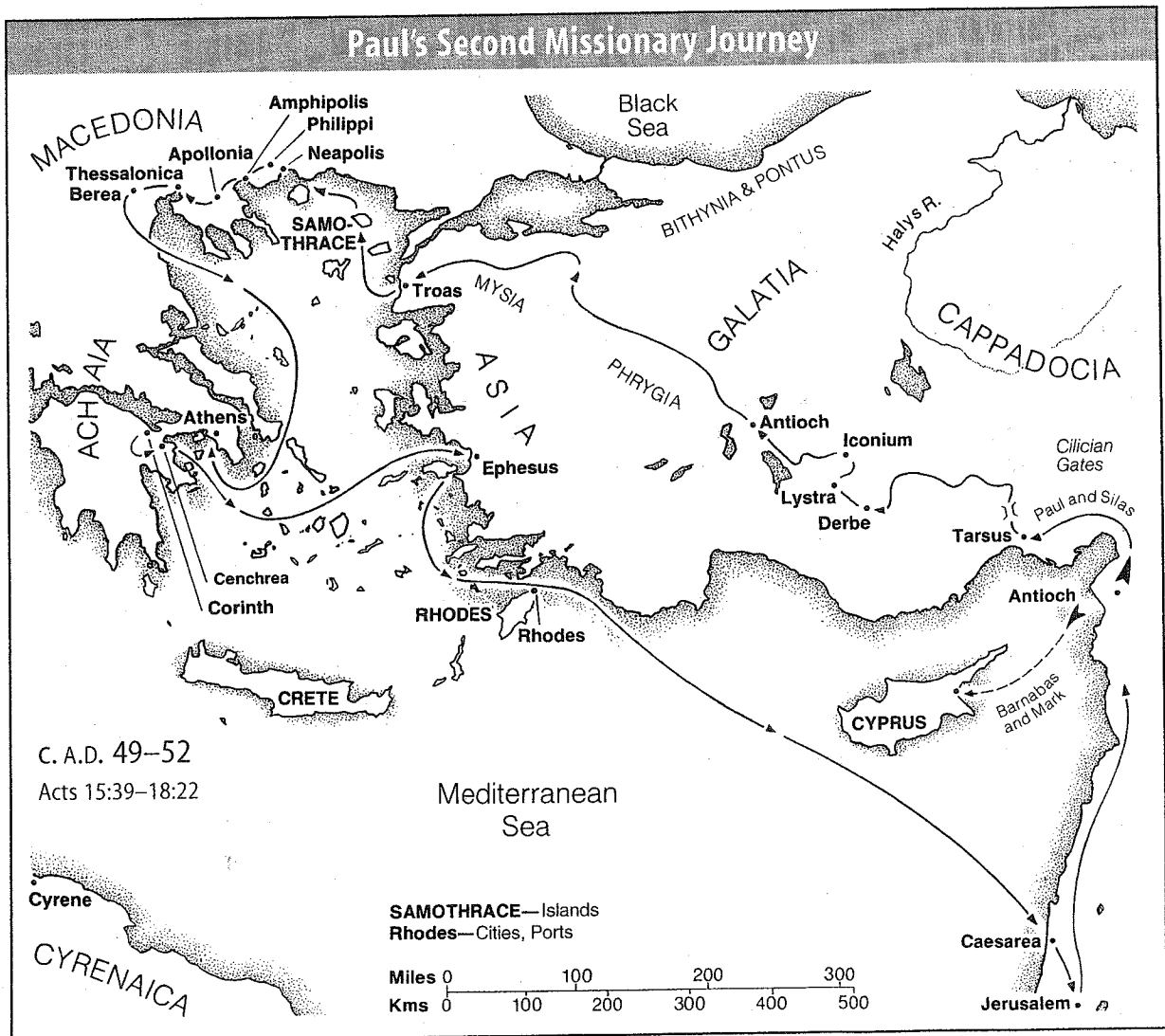


CHAPTER 9

The Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15-18)

The Apostle Paul wrote many of the New Testament books including Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Ephesians. These letters were written to churches that were located in these four cities: Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus. There was once a time when each of these cities had no church at all. How did these churches begin? How did the people living in these cities first hear the good news of salvation? As we follow Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22), we learn that God used Paul in a wonderful way in starting churches in these important cities.

The following map shows most of the important places that Paul went on this second missionary journey:



The above map is taken from the Zondervant KJV Study Bible, page 2259 (see under Acts 16).

In this chapter we will not take time to study everything that happened to Paul on this missionary journey. You can read about these things for yourself in Acts chapters 15-18. Instead we will look closely at two things: 1) Paul's refusal to take John Mark with him on this journey; 2) Paul's adventures in the city of Philippi.

The Beginning of a New Missionary Team

Suppose you were to go into a town to do some shopping and the people of the town grab you, spit on you, punch you in the face, throw you in the river and tell you that they never want to see you again. Would you be very eager to visit this town again?

Paul once visited a city where he was not treated very well at all. On Paul's first missionary journey (see Chapter 8 of these notes), Paul was persecuted, driven out of town, and stoned to the point where his enemies thought he was dead! Did Paul want to return and visit the cities that had done all these things to him (Acts 15:36)? _____ What courage this man had!

Paul wanted to take Barnabas with him (Acts 15:36), but who did Barnabas want to take (Acts 15:37)? _____ Did Paul think this was a good idea (Acts 15:38)? _____ John Mark had come along as a helper on the first missionary trip, but as it turned out, he was not much of a help. John Mark turned back and did not go with Paul and Barnabas (see Acts 13:13; 15:38).

Barnabas and Paul disagreed strongly about whether John Mark should go. Finally Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed to the island of Cyprus (Acts 15:39). Who became Paul's new missionary partner (Acts 15:40)? _____ This new team went forth to some of the areas that Paul had visited on his first missionary journey.

Why Him and Not Me?

John Mark might have said, "Why didn't Paul want to take me? Silas got to go with Paul and I didn't. What's wrong with me?"

Do you ever wonder why sometimes others get to do things and go places and you do not? Perhaps your parents do something special with your brother or sister, and not with you. Perhaps your school gym class is choosing sides for a game of softball, and your friend is always picked first and you always seem to be picked last. You might think, "Why him and not me?"

Perhaps the teacher in school asks other students to do special things, but hardly ever seems to ask you. Sometimes it seems that the other person always gets the better deal. Why is this so? Sometimes we feel like crying out, "Why not me? What's wrong with me?"

Here are some things to keep in mind:

1) It may not be the right time.

John Mark was not profitable to Paul on his first missionary journey and Paul refused to take him along on the second missionary journey. But look at 2 Timothy 4:11 and see what Paul said about Mark years later (just before Paul was going to die). Was Mark profitable to Paul at this time? _____ Mark was now older, he had learned many lessons over the years, and he was a

much stronger person. In fact, God even used Mark to write the Gospel of Mark, the second book in our New Testament!

Sometimes we need to wait until we are older (wiser or stronger) before we can do certain things or go certain places.

2) God may want to teach you patience.

Sometimes we have the selfish attitude, "I can't wait; I must do it now!" But God must teach us that there are many things in life that we have to wait for. Sixth graders can do certain things that fifth graders cannot do and fifth graders can do certain things that fourth graders cannot do. You must wait until you are in the fifth grade to have fifth grade privileges, and you must wait until you are in the sixth grade to do the things that sixth graders do!

3) You may not be ready.

A seven year old may love cars and may really want to drive a car, but if he were allowed to drive at that age, it would be a disaster! John Mark was not ready to go with Paul on a dangerous missionary journey. It would be unwise to put a soldier in the middle of the battle if the soldier has never learned to shoot a gun!

4) There are some things you must learn to accept.

There are some things in life we need to cheerfully accept even though we might wish things could be different. For example, in Genesis chapter 37 Jacob showed that he loved Joseph more than his other sons by making him a very special coat. Did Joseph's brothers learn to accept this cheerfully? If their attitude had been right, they could have said something like this: "Even though we would love to have our father make special coats for us, we are thankful that Joseph is treated so well. Even though our father loves Joseph very much, we know that he loves us too and we need to try to be the best sons we can be to him. We also want to be the best brothers we can be to Joseph." Did they say something like this (see Genesis 37:4)? _____

Suppose you always seem to be the last one chosen when sides are picked for a ballgame. Is this something you can learn to accept? After all, God has not gifted everyone to be a great athlete. There are probably other things that you can do better than those who are good in sports. Can you be thankful that you can try to play your best and that you are not crippled and unable to play at all?

5) Be thankful for what you can do!

When Jesus went up to the mount of transfiguration, He only took three of His disciples with him (see Matthew 17:1). Was Philip one of the ones that He took? _____ What should Philip's attitude have been?

a. "Why them and not me? Why did Jesus take those three and leave me behind with these other nine disciples?"

b. "I would have loved to go with the Lord up that mountain, but He did not ask me to come, and He knows what is best. I'm thankful that Christ chose me to be one of the twelve disciples. I have the wonderful privilege of learning from the Lord day after day!"

The next time someone else gets to do something instead of you, remember to have a good and thankful attitude instead of being mad and jealous!

6) Prove that you are faithful!

If John Mark had been a faithful helper on the first missionary trip and had not turned back and "quit," do you think Paul would have taken him on the second missionary trip? _____ Paul felt that John Mark's failure on the first trip disqualified him from going on the second trip.

Suppose your parents let you go for a picnic in the woods with some friends. Instead of returning home on time, you arrive two hours late. Then, to make things worse, the park ranger calls your parents and tells them that you left litter and garbage all over the picnic area and that you had started a fire in the wrong place. Would your parents be likely to let you go on a picnic in the woods one week later? If you want a person to trust you, then you must prove yourself faithful!

Paul was not sure he could trust Mark for this important missionary work and did not want to take him along. Later Mark did show himself to be faithful (2 Timothy 4:11).

1. WHY HIM/HER AND NOT ME?
2. WHY ME AND NOT HIM/HER?

These two questions can cause us much trouble if we do not learn to THINK rightly and THANK God.

How does thinking rightly and thanking God change me? God is the LORD that I need. God is the LIFE that I need. God has a plan and purpose and place for me TODAY. I will find God's plan, place and purpose in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Directed by the Spirit

Look again at the map in the beginning of this chapter. Did the Holy Spirit want them to preach the Word of God in Asia (Acts 16:6)? _____ This does not mean that God did not care about people living in Asia, but this was not God's time for Asia. Later they would go to Asia and preach the gospel there. In fact, even on this second missionary journey, the team went to Ephesus which was the capital city of Asia (Acts 18:19). As God's witnesses, we need to be in the **right place, at the right time, speaking the right message to the right people!**

The missionary team also tried to go into Bithynia. Did the Spirit allow them to go there (Acts 16:7)? _____ Where did the Spirit of God want them to go (Acts 16:9)?

_____ God was in charge of this team--directing them and sending them to the right places at the right times. This work of preaching the gospel and planting (starting) churches was not Paul's work. Whose work was it (compare Acts 13:2)?

Macedonia (today known as Greece) is considered part of Europe. This was the first time the missionary team went into Europe. The first important city they arrived at was Philippi.

Philippi

There was no synagogue in the city of Philippi, so the missionaries went down to the river to a place where people often gathered to pray. Here Paul spoke God's Word to a group of women. Whose heart did the Lord open (Acts 16:14)? _____ Was she baptized in water (Acts 16:15)? _____ Did she show kindness to the missionaries (Acts 16:15)? _____

One day Paul met a demon possessed girl who was a soothsayer (or a fortune-teller, one who could tell what would happen in the future)--see Acts 16:16. Because she was a fortune-teller, she was able to earn much money for her masters (Acts 16:16). What did Paul finally do to the demon that was in this girl (Acts 16:18)? _____

Without the demon in her, do you think that this girl would continue to be a fortune-teller? _____ Would she continue to earn money for her masters (Acts 16:19)? _____ Were her masters happy and thankful for what Paul had done (Acts 16:19-20)? _____

Notice how Paul and Silas were treated by the rulers of Philippi (Acts 16:22-24). Their clothes were torn off. They were beaten with many stripes. They were thrown into an inner prison. Their feet were fastened in the stocks.

If this miserable experience had happened to us, we probably would have cried, complained, grumbled or worried. What did Paul and Silas do (Acts 16:25)? _____

They had a wonderful prayer meeting and song service! They were praising God! The other prisoners must have really wondered what was going on! They knew that something was different about these two men! These men belonged to the living God.

At a later time Paul wrote to the Philippians. Read what he wrote in Philippians 4:4. Did Paul practice what he preached? _____

Many times, when believers start praising, God starts working! God did a great miracle (Acts 16:26). The jailor woke up in a hurry and after seeing the amazing thing God had done, he fell down before Paul and Silas and said, "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?" He asked the right question and Paul and Silas were ready to give the right answer.

What must a person do to be saved? What answer did Paul and Silas give (Acts 16:30-31)?

- a. **Try to live a good life.**
- b. **Keep the Ten Commandments.**
- c. **Love your neighbor and do good unto others.**
- d. **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- e. **Love God with all your heart and all your soul.**

When people ask us questions about salvation, we need to be ready with the right answers!

Paul also told the jailor, "Your house will be saved!" (Acts 16:31). His "house" (household) probably included his wife, children and household servants. What did Paul mean when he said, "You will be saved and **your house**"?

Does this mean that if the jailor believed on Christ then all of the people in his house would

automatically become saved too? If a father believes on Christ today, does this mean that everyone in his family will automatically become a Christian too? This is *not* what Paul was saying. In Acts 16:31, Paul was really saying this:

"If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved, and if those in your house believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, then they will be saved too."

Did Paul preach the gospel to all those who belonged to the jailor's house (Acts 16:32)?
_____ Did all of his house believe in God (Acts 16:31)? _____ Were they all saved (Acts 16:31)? _____ Were they all baptized (Acts 16:33)? _____ YOUR PARENTS cannot believe for you. This is something you must do yourself. If *you* believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, *you* WILL BE SAVED!

In the next chapter we will take a look at some of the things that happened on Paul's third missionary journey!

