

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

Text: Acts 16:1-5

Introduction:

Following the sharp contention, which separated Paul and Barnabas, Silas and Paul, have been sent out into the mission field together. While Barnabas and Mark traveled to Cyprus, Paul and Silas, began seeking to strengthen the churches, up in Syria and Cilicia. This morning, we will find them moving further west, into Derbe and then Lystra, where they will meet Paul's future protege, Timothy. [Note: They are traveling in the reverse direction, from Paul's first missionary journey]

"Then [Paul] came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek" (vs. 1).

Question #1: What do we know about Timothy's Christian background? In what way, did he come to know about Christ? What encouragement and exhortation ought this to provide for Christian parents, even when only one parent is saved? [See 2 Timothy 1:3-7]

Question #2: What can we note about the grace of God, when considering Timothy's parents, and God's calling of Timothy?

"He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium" (vs. 2).

Question #3: What does verse 2 teach us about Timothy's character? How might the people at Iconium have come to witness this?

"Paul wanted to have him go on with him" (vs. 3a).

Question #4: Considering Paul's refusal to take Mark with him on this second missionary journey, what might Paul have seen in Timothy, which would compel him to take the young man, along with him, from here? Was "age" a factor at all? Are there other texts, where Paul

addresses the issue of "youth/age?" [see 1 Tim. 4:12; Consider the responsibilities given Timothy, by Paul]

"And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek" (vs. 3b).

Question #5: Why does Paul circumcise Timothy? Does this not contradict all that Paul had just done at Antioch, to alleviate the Gentiles of this burden? [Timothy was half Jewish; Timothy was a leader in the church; Timothy's effectiveness as a minister of the Gospel, would be greatly hindered, if he failed to do this...etc]. Are there certain liberties, which Pastor's and/or Deacons, or even others in positions of authority, might have to give up, which the average layperson could continue practicing, for the sake of their office/responsibility?

"And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem" (vs. 4).

Question #6: Here, we find Paul and company, carrying the Jerusalem decree beyond Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. Why would they have done this? What might be implied by this? How would Timothy, having been circumcised, possibly help or hinder this effort?

"So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily" (vs. 5).

Question #7: How were these churches strengthened in the faith? How does hearing and embracing correct doctrine increase our faith? Any thoughts about the fact that they "increased in number daily?" What method of ministry, was continually used by God, to bring about this increase, in Acts? [Unity, prayer, correct doctrine...etc Vs. modern day church growth movements]