

How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Introduction

Paul's burden to let others throughout the world know about the good news of Jesus Christ would not be subdued. He had to get back on the mission field. The decree from the Apostles and elders in Jerusalem needed to go out to the churches and that was just the excuse Paul needed to gather his team and get back to work.

Acts 15:36-41 – The Separation of Paul and Barnabas

What was to be the purpose of this second missionary journey?

What caused the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas?

Why didn't Paul want John Mark to go on the journey? See also Acts 13:13.

Why do you think Barnabas wanted to give John Mark a second chance? See also Col. 4:10

Do you think they reached the right decision by parting ways? Who do you think was right?

What do we learn from this passage that may help us in making decisions about leaders?

Acts 16:1-10 – The Addition of Timothy & The Macedonian Call

Why did Paul want Timothy to be circumcised?

What was part of Paul's purpose in revisiting the churches established in his first journey?

In verses 6-9, we see that Paul desired to preach in Asia and Bithynia but the Spirit of God did not allow them to go there. What could this mean?

What answer did Paul receive in his vision?

How does Paul's vision help us to better understand what is meant by the Holy Spirit not allowing him to preach in Asia and Bithynia?

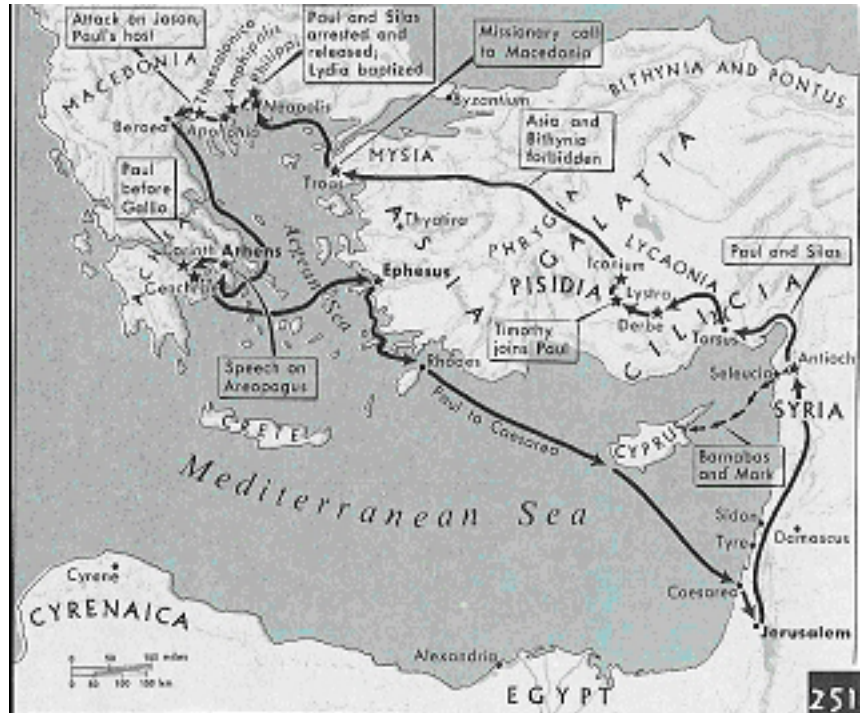
How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul’s Second Missionary Journey

Acts 16:11-15 – *Paul in Macedonia*

As Paul crosses over from Troas to Neapolis, he begins his ministry in Europe. His first destination was the city of Philippi, in modern day Greece. Philippi was named after Philip of Macedon, Alexander the Great’s father and was a Roman Colony. It was at the end of the great Roman Highway, the Egnatian Way. The map below details their journey.¹

The first thing we notice that is different about Paul’s ministry in Macedonia is that he didn’t run to the synagogue. Why didn’t he go and find one? The answer is probably that there was not a synagogue to attend. According to Jewish custom, a synagogue could not be formed unless there were 10 Jewish men who were heads of households. Based on what we learn of Lydia, it appears that she was a semi-Jewish proselyte and that the people Paul gathered with on the banks of the river were those who followed the Jewish religion and met together collectively each week to pray and worship. He would have been viewed as a visiting rabbi, a rarity for them, and would have been given the opportunity to teach, just the opportunity he needed.



What do we learn about Lydia in verses 14 and 15?

What does Lydia’s conversion teach us about those who seek God but don’t yet have the truth?

What do the details of Lydia’s conversion teach us about God’s role in salvation? (John 6:44-45 and Romans 9:16)

¹ Map taken from the Macmillan Bible Atlas, Macmillan 1993, p. 184

How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Acts 16:16-24 – Trouble in Macedonia

What was the slave-girl's occupation and what is its equivalent in modern times?

How did Paul view her ability? Was it a gift or was it something else?

Discuss God's teaching concerning mediums and fortune tellers. (See Deut. 18:9-12, Isaiah 8:19)

Why did the spirit lift up Paul and Silas as servants of God that proclaimed the gospel? There are at least a couple of possible answers that offer some explanation.

What was the reaction of demons to Christ and what might this have to do with their response to Paul? (See Mark 1:23-28, 34; Matthew 8:28-34; James 2:19)

What is one of Satan's most popular methods of attack and how might this apply to the situation in Phillippi? (See 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelations 2:18-22)

Why did the slave-girl's masters become upset with Paul and Silas and what was their accusation to the authorities? (See 1 Timothy 6:10)

Acts 16:25-40 – Conversion of the Philippian Jailer

Describe Paul and Silas' physical condition in prison?

What was their spiritual and emotional condition? Why the big difference? (See 2 Cor. 4:18)

Why would the jailer kill himself? Why did he become so immediately grateful to Paul and Silas and attentive to their message? (See Acts 12:18-19)

Why did Paul appeal to his Roman citizenship? What good did that do him?

How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul’s Second Missionary Journey

Acts 17:1-9 – The Gospel preached in Thessalonica

Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia with an estimated population of 200,000. It was a major port with an important commercial center. It is known today as Thessaloniki and is still a significant city in Greece.

What was the main thrust of Paul’s message in the synagogue and why was it important?

What type of people got saved there in Thessalonica?

What type of people did the Jews get to cause in insurrection against the Christians?

What was the charge brought against Jason and why would it cause problems?

Acts 17:10-15 – The Gospel preached in Berea

Berea was a much smaller town than Thessalonica. The Roman writer Cicero described it as being, “off the beaten track”.

The Bereans were said to be “more noble” than the Thessalonians. Why? What does this imply about the basis for the Thessalonian’s beliefs? What can we take away from this?

Acts 17:16-21 – Paul in Athens

Prior to the rise of Rome, Athens was the greatest city in the world. Such prolific philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and Zeno (founder of Stoicism) had taught there. Although Rome was now the chief city, Athens was still prominent as a religious center. The pagan writer Petronius remarked that it was easier to find a god in Athens than a man. There were idols and buildings dedicated to hundreds of gods all throughout the city.

What was Paul’s reaction to what he saw in Athens?

How did Paul put his emotion into positive action? What door did God open for Paul?

How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Acts 17:22-34 – Paul's sermon on Mars Hill

This sermon is one of the few recorded sermons of Paul in Scripture. We see that on this occasion it was very short and to the point. He didn't get to go very far, but was able to make some powerful points during those few moments. Let's break this sermon down into 3 sections:

Verses 22-23: Paul Bridges the Gap between their Culture and Scriptures

How does Paul connect them to the gospel message?

How does this differ from his method with the Jews and what does this teach us about evangelism? (See 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Verses 24-29: The True God is Greater than Idols

What was confused or turned around in the Athenian's thinking?

If God doesn't dwell in a temple, why did the Jews construct a temple for Him?

Verses 30-31: God's Call to Repent

What is the extent of God's call for salvation?

What does Paul consider to be proof of God's existence and call to judgment?

Acts 18:1-11 – The Gospel preached in Corinth

Corinth had replaced Athens as the most important city in Greece. It was a large city and strategically located between the Northern and Southern portions of Greece so that anyone who traveled from North to South had to go through Corinth. It was also a major seaport, gathering visitors from all over the Roman Empire. In addition, Corinth was the home of the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love. The temple of Aphrodite was located on the Acropolis, about 1,500 above Corinth. Each evening, the temple's one thousand priestesses, who were ritual prostitutes, would come down into the city to seduce the men and work all sorts of evil. Corinth was well acquainted with sin and was in great need of the gospel.

What compelled Paul to join up with Priscilla and Aquilla?

How to Read the Bible for All its Worth

Lesson 6g: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 – Paul's Second Missionary Journey

How was Paul able to devote himself to the ministry after Silas and Timothy arrived? (See 2 Corinthians 11:9 and Philippians 4:15)

What do we learn from Paul's response to the Jew's continual rejection of the gospel (vs 6)?

Did Paul's response to the Jews help or hinder his ministry in Corinth? What about the Jews?

Acts 18:12-17 – Trouble in Corinth

What was the accusation made against Paul by the Jews? Why was it a big deal?

What was the response of Gallio to the Jewish accusations?

Who was Sosthenes and why was he beaten before the judgment seat? (See 1 Corinthians 1:1)

Was God faithful to his promise to Paul (see verses 9-10)

Acts 18:18-22 – Paul completes his second journey

Why did Paul shave his head? (See Numbers 6:1-8, 13-21) What was his motivation for this?

Why would Paul practice a Jewish ritual as a Christian?

Why did Paul leave Ephesus after having some initial success and an invitation to stay?

Assignment:

Read Acts 18:23 – 21:17 in preparation for the next lesson