

- A Study in Acts -

Chapter Sixteen – Second Journey of Paul

ACTS 16:1-6:

It was in the previous lesson, at the conclusion, that we actually began this journey.

The journey will begin from the same point that the first journey began, **Antioch of Syria**. Paul and Silas will be commended by the brethren to this work (**15:40**); and from Antioch they will go through **Syria** and **Cilicia** strengthening the brethren in these locations (**15:41**).



Text #1:

Acts 16:1-3 “Then he 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.² He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and

Iconium. ³ Paul wanted to have him go on with him. 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.”

Derbe and Lystra: Paul and Silas would come from the opposite direction to this region of **Lycaonia** (**Acts 14:6**), and stop at these two cities which are about thirty miles apart. We know that Paul cannot stay in two places at once; Luke is telling us that whichever city Paul actually stayed in, the work he is doing here is on behalf of both (such as delivering the decrees – **Vs.4**, and strengthening the brethren – **15:41**).

Timothy: It is here that we will be introduced for the first time to Timothy, who will be an intricate part of New Testament history from here on out.

Luke reveals first that he is “**The son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was a Greek**”.

Timothy’s grandmother (Lois) and his mother (Eunice) are God fearing woman and brought Timothy up with the Old Testament scriptures.

2 Timothy 1:5 “when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.”

2 Timothy 3:14-15 “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Since Timothy is recorded by Luke as already being a disciple; this indicates that he was converted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ from the preaching of Paul and Barnabas on the first journey. In addition, he has been a disciple long enough to be well spoken of by the brethren here (**Vs. 2**).

The Apostle Paul will enlighten us further concerning what this speaking well would entail when he would remind Timothy later in order to motivate him to fight the good fight of faith, note:

1 Timothy 1:18 “This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare”

1 Timothy 4:14 “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.”

Paul defines that the gift within Timothy was that he would wage the good warfare, thus the laying on of hands here is not the bestowal of a spiritual gift (which we know that only the Apostles can perform), but the demonstration of approval towards the spoken prophecy of Timothy accomplishing this purpose (which is emphasized in both contexts of Paul’s statements

– verses those who would abandon their calling, and so all could see his progress and dedication to the doctrine).

Lastly, Luke records that Paul is going to perform an act of expediency. Paul knows that he will engage many cities by entering the synagogues first, as he demonstrated time and again in the first journey and that Timothy would not be able to enter with him unless he were circumcised. So, in order for Timothy to go with Paul, as Paul desires, and be able to be a student of everything Paul does, Timothy needs to be able to go where Paul goes. Since in this region, and I am sure would go elsewhere as well, that his father was a Greek, Paul performed this expediency so that Timothy could go where Paul goes.

We know that Paul has already demonstrated that this is not necessary for service to God (**Galatians 2:3** – Titus), and that he is carrying with him the inspired letter from Jerusalem that demands that this is also not necessary. So, the only reason for this is so Timothy can accompany Paul as Paul wishes (an expedient act!).

Timothy is not only going to go with Paul on this journey and learn, but we will see that he becomes a very effective servant of Jesus Christ and a trusted fellow servant with the Apostle Paul. Paul's language concerning Timothy speaks volumes for the love that Paul will develop for this young man, note:

1 Timothy 1:2 “To Timothy, a true son in the faith:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.”

2 Timothy 1:2 “To Timothy, a beloved son:

Grace, mercy, *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Philippians 2:19-24 “But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. ²⁰ For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. ²¹ For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. ²² But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. ²³ Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. ²⁴ But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.”

Text #2:

Acts 16:4-5 “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. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.”

Paul and Silas deliver the decrees from the elders and Apostles as written by them, but sanctioned by the Holy Spirit of God (**Acts 15:28**), to these Gentile churches.

The results of this were very similar to that of **the Body of Christ** in Jerusalem when the consensus of doctrinal purity was established; a productive unity (**Vs. 5**).

Luke has only specified that Paul and Silas have come and engaged the cities of Lystra and Derbe. There is no reason to speculate about other locations, as Luke is an able body recorder. Thus, **verses 4-5** refer specifically to Lystra and Derbe (however, we would be very naïve, especially considering the work of the disciples in copying and sharing scripture, to think that the other congregations from the first journey would not have the decrees shared with them as well).

Text #3:

Acts 16:6 “**Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.**”

Phrygia: This is a large Roman province inland and a little south-central in Asia Minor (see map link). This will constitute Paul’s first visit to this region and not much is mentioned here or elsewhere about them.

Galatia: This is another large Roman province connected directly east and a little north of Phrygia. This is the area that Paul visited on the first journey, primarily Iconium, Antioch, and Derbe. The region of Galatia is a vast area; however, the geographical area is not what is mentioned by Luke (there are no cities in the vast areas north and east towards Cappadocia), it is the political area that supports the population that is being identified.

Luke records the travels through these two regions in a single verse, so it is difficult to sense the passage of time involved in this short verse; however, we know that Paul will share the decrees from Jerusalem. This in turn will support why Paul would state when he would write back to them from Corinth:

Galatians 1:6-7 “*I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.*”

Summary: We began this journey with Paul and Silas in Antioch of Syria; they then traveled through the rest of Syria and through the region of Cilicia strengthening **the Bodies of Christ** along the way. When they came to the area of the two cities of Lystra and Derbe, they picked up a young Timothy to travel with them. They delivered the decrees to these cities which strengthened them to a productive unity. From here they will travel to two new areas of Asia Minor: Phrygia and Galatia. Luke does not record anything about these visits and Paul will not return to these regions until **Chapter 19**.

Next: “The First European Converts!”