

ACTS CH 15:36- CH 16 – LYDIA & A JAILOR ARE CONVERTED

Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:40–18:22) - 49–51 CE

15:36-41 – There arose a sharp disagreement

How to navigate a disagreement with a brother or sister in Christ:

- There's a wrong way to be right. It's OK to agree to disagree without demonizing or belittling one another.
- Scripture never says either one was in the wrong. They simply went about the situation differently. Barnabas was willing to take a risk on someone (Mark) no one else was willing to do (which he did with Paul when he brought him to Jerusalem). Paul likely wanted someone who showed more commitment/willingness/focus – as he himself does.

16:1-5

- Paul circumcises Timothy for the sake of the church's mission, in order not to unnecessarily offend the Jews—Timothy would be entering into Jewish synagogues and homes. Paul makes him a full Jew for the sake of his witness to the Jewish community (this is a different situation addressed in Gal 2:3-4, where the issue is not witness but coercion).
- Paul is not advocating syncretism or compromise of the gospel message. Rather, he is promoting a considerate evangelistic approach—one that accounts for different social circumstances, ethnicities, and religious convictions. He adapts to his audience (but not by compromising the gospel or his message) to remove any obstacles to their acceptance of the gospel message. 1 Cor 9:19-23

16:6-10 - Forbidden by the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's plans

- You may have plans for your life that may even be very good, honorable, noble, and wise plans. But God may have other plans for you – to accomplish a purpose which you cannot foresee.
- "Spirit of Jesus" – Another name for the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9, Phil 1:19

16:22-25 - Jailed, singing hymns and praying

- They had no idea what was to follow, for all they knew they were being set up for a long prison sentence or even death.
- How do you respond in the face of adversity?
- Dr. Mitch Kim in his message PROCLAIM The Authority of God's Word says this, "Our authority is a received authority, it's not inherited authority. Authority is expressed through prayer filled dependence on Jesus. When the demon feels too big, and the burden is too much for you to bear, you do not need stronger shoulders you need weaker knees. Authority is expressed through faith filled dependence upon God and prayer."

16:35-40 - Using legal leverage

- It was illegal to punish a Roman citizen without a trial. The officials didn't know they were citizens, and for whatever reason Paul and Silas never mentioned it.
- Why are they being let go now? For such a miraculous event to have occurred after the exorcism of the slave girl, they probably are recognizing they Paul and Silas have some sort of divine favor. They are likely releasing them so as not to incite further punishment from their God.
- It's after this that Paul finally mentions that he is a Roman citizen, and that they have in fact broken the law – using his legal rights as leverage. The magistrates are now in danger of losing their power and authority, if Paul so chooses to make a fuss about it. By demanding a public apology, Paul aims at clearing not only their names, but the name of Christianity – this will show that their preaching and miraculous deeds are by no means illegal, giving them the freedom they need to carry on the work. Since the magistrates know they are in the wrong, they concede. They also continue to ask them to leave, probably wanting to get rid of the potential threat to themselves.