

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God's Mission Continues

Acts 15:30 - 16:10

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PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: This passage shows the preparation and beginnings of the second missionary journey of Paul. This time with a different set of companions but with the same goal in mind—to plant churches and strengthen those that exist. And in this passage we see the mission of God continue and the heart of a true pastor.

I. Introduction.

- A. Read 15:30 - 16:10.
- B. Within the church there are those who find themselves moved into what is often call the pastoral ministry.
 - 1. The office and role of pastor is really the office of elder.
 - 2. The word, pastor, is actually just the word for “shepherd.” And it speaks to the heartbeat of an elder.
 - 3. Invariably, many who are of this type find themselves also having opportunities to extend that service in missionary efforts both local and foreign. The apostle Paul was one of these sorts of men.
- C. In our passage today we see the heart of a pastor.
 - 1. We see a pastor in action.
 - 2. We see how he deals with conflict
- D. In the passage Paul both prepares and begins his second missionary journey.
 - 1. And with it we are reminded yet again that this is not an effort of human invention, but a work of God. But God uses inadequate people to accomplish His purposes.
 - 2. Paul prepares to go back out to help the churches and almost immediately faces problems of various types. And yet in and through all of these, God's purposes are accomplished.
- E. Today we will see six qualities of a faithful pastor. Six ways the apostle Paul, and others, show how to think and act as a pastor.

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II. The Mission of God Continues.

A. A pastoral heart. (32-36).

1. We see the heart of a pastor in several people here. And as a pastor and teacher I had to smile reading this section.
2. Silas and Judas, we find out, are also prophets. Remember that there is almost nothing of the New Testament written at this point. This is a key reason for the early prophets in the church.
3. Paul and Barnabas are also staying to teach. By now you should know that this is the core task of a pastor/elder. It must be in their heart (35).
4. All of these small vignettes are simply examples of a pastoral heart. So, the way to shepherd the people of God is found in two ways:
5. So, we see in vs 36 that Paul suggests to Barnabas that they return to the churches which they had established earlier and check up on them.

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6. And this burden to see how the churches are faring then leads us to the next quality of a faithful pastor.
- B. A pastoral disciple-maker. (15:37 - 16:3a).
 1. All of us will die and no pastor, teacher, preacher will last forever. And so it is incumbent to raise up new leaders who will faithfully carry on the task of shepherding Christ's Church. This is commonly called discipleship.
 2. The Apostle Paul made it his habit to bring with him younger men who would assist him and learn from him as he traveled, establishing new churches and building up ones that already existed.
 3. The first thing to note here is that just because a person is available for discipleship does not mean they are a good choice
4. So Paul looks for a new companion and disciple and lands on Silas.
- C. A pastoral concern (16:3b)
 1. One thing to note here is that if Paul had followed the path of the first journey then he would not have met up with Timothy.
 2. Note what Luke writes about him in vss 1-3.
 - a. His mother was Jewish and father a Gentile.
 - b. vs 3 shows that Paul has him circumcised because he would be considered to be a Jew. This fits back into the whole thing we have studied.

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- c. At the same time Titus, another disciple of Paul's was a Gentile and we find in Galatians 2:3 that Paul refused to have him circumcised. Why? Because he was fully Gentile and to demand him to be circumcised would contradict the truths of the gospel.
 - 3. This shows again how Paul would thread the needle with so many of these sort of challenges. He is always thinking about the gospel and the opportunity to proclaim it. The last thing he cared about was his own person rights.
 - 4. This is simply described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22, *"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some."*
 - 5. So now the team is complete. Silas has replaced Barnabas as a companion and Timothy is the young apprentice to Paul to help and to learn. And the rest is history.
- D. A pastoral commitment to truth (16:4-5).
- 1. Here we are reminded yet again to the need to teach in the Church.
 - 2. When you look at any church anywhere the first thing you should take notice of is the focus on biblical instruction and preaching.
 - 3. And at the core of that teaching is the gospel. Paul is giving the message from the Jerusalem council to every church he teaches at.
 - 4. And the result (5) is churches being strengthened. This can only happen where biblical doctrine is soundly and thoroughly taught.
- E. A pastoral sensitivity (16:6-10)
- 1. Here we have a very fascinating event that will leave you with questions.
 - 2. They apparently wanted to head deeper into Asia but somehow the Holy Spirit forbade it. How that worked we are not told, but Paul was an Apostle and things worked differently with them than us.

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3. Then they get to a place called Mysia and want again to try Asia by way of Bythnia (now part of Turkey) and again they are prevented.
4. So Paul gets the message the second time and they go to Troas, which is a port city and shows Paul had fully abandoned Asia Minor and set his eyes on Europe now.
5. A small detail to notice in vs 10. Note the “we” in this part. This is a change of perspective for the writer, Luke. He had written in the second person and now to the third person and the reason is that he has joined Paul at this point.

III. Conclusion.

- A. There we have it, a pastor’s heart, pastor as disciple-maker, pastoral concern, pastor commitment to truth, and a heart that is sensitive to God’s leading.
- B. As I said in the beginning, this is simply the mission of God continuing onward towards its fixed end.
 1. The book of Acts is a simple, straight-forward accounting of how God’s purposes will not fail.
 2. When we talk about the sovereignty of God it so often devolves into a simplistic, almost childlike discussion. Within a few moments people are making statements that are nothing less than fatalism while on the other side people are crying out that God doesn’t want us to be robots. But in this passage we see the subtleness of God’s sovereignty.
 - a. How Mark was removed from Paul’s team.
 - b. How the mission work was enlarged because Silas stayed. How Timothy just happened to be around and become part of Paul’s team.
 - c. How the Holy Spirit stops Paul from going any further into Asia Minor.
 - d. And finally, how Paul was given a vision that redirected his plan.
 3. All of this working toward the perfect purposes of God.
- C. We do not see the end beloved. And we really don’t know the beginning of things either. Both are hidden in the purposes and will of God.
 1. We can stop worrying about things that are not ours to be concerned over. And instead, we can become focused on what God has revealed for us to do.

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2. This is what Paul did. He took up a heart of a pastor. He looked out into the world and saw a great need for the gospel to go outward. He saw that God was moving all of this in accordance to His grand plan. And he got busy.
3. May you and I be the same.

Benediction

May the Lord answer you in your day of trouble. May the name of YHWH set you in a secure place on high. May He remember your faithfulness and prayers and may He grant you the true desires of your heart. Amen