

The Book of Acts - Chapter 16 & 17
GOING WHERE THE SPIRIT LEADS
Pastor Bob Carvalho—November 3, 2019

The Spirit of God was redirecting God's servants to get them to the place where He was going to use them for His glory.

- We can now see that God had ordained His own plan for bringing the Gospel to Europe. Little did Paul realize when he left Antioch, that he would be God's instrument in making that happen.
- We see in verse 14 that the Lord opened her heart. This must always be the case. Without in any way diminishing the importance of repentance and faith and of preaching the faith of Christ, there can be no life in Christ unless the gospel comes "not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit."

Eph. 1:18 *having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints.*

- **It is significant that the first people Paul preached to in Europe were women. He is often misrepresented as a male chauvinist by those who reject his teaching on the role of women. But he was not prejudiced, as his eagerness to speak with this group shows.**

Acts 16:25 *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

Not groans but songs came from their mouths. Instead of cursing men, they blessed God. How could the two missionaries praise God under such conditions? They understood what many Christians seem to forget—**praising God does not depend on circumstances.**

Acts 16:31,32 *And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.*

When the gospel is preached to hearts prepared by God, the results are inevitable. The jailer and each member of his household were saved. The whole household was not automatically saved. Each member had to hear the Gospel and believe.

■ **The only source for Paul’s teaching was the Scriptures. Christianity is a revelation. We can’t think our way into it and we cannot discover the Gospel by our own intuition. It must be revealed to us.**

In the first two chapters of 1 Thessalonians, Paul reflects on what happened in Thessalonica as the result of his preaching.

1. The preaching was blessed by God. Paul says that when he preached at Thessalonica the gospel came “with power,” that is, by the Holy Spirit **(1 Thess. 1:5)**.

2. The people received God’s Word eagerly. Paul says that when he preached the gospel the words he spoke were received by the Thessalonians “not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God” **(1 Thess. 2:13)**.

3. The believers tried to model their Christian lives after Paul. Paul wrote that those who received the gospel became “imitators” of Paul and his companions **(1 Thess. 1:6)**.

4. They became models themselves. Having imitated Paul, these new Christians then became models themselves, not only to one another but “to all the believers” in the area **(1 Thess. 1:7)**.

5. The church at Thessalonica became a missionary church. Finally, as a result of all those things, the church at Thessalonica became a center through which the gospel “rang out” everywhere **(1 Thess. 1:8)**.

Paul created enough of a stir that finally they took him and brought him to the Areopagus. The Areopagus was a court, so named for the hill on which it had once met. The theme of Paul’s message to the assembly was how to know the unknown God.

That involves three steps: ***recognizing that God is, recognizing who He is, and recognizing what He has said.***