

The Great Adventure - Acts 16:6-12 *How can I know What God's will is?*

Message to Conversation Guide

Key Verses

Acts 16:6-12

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been kept by the Holy Spirit** from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus **would not allow them to.** 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. 12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. NIV

Discussion Questions

1. R.C. Sproul once said "as a minister the most frequently asked question I have received as a minister is 'how can I know the will of God?'" Why do you suppose that people in churches are intensely interested in this subject?
2. Below are listed some areas that people seek God's will in. Can you think of other areas of concern where people want to know God's will?
 - *Should I change jobs?*
 - *Should I get married?*
 - *Should I marry the person that I am with now?*
 - *Should I move?*
 - *What college or school should I go to?*
 - *Should I have this surgery?*
 - *What type of school should I put my kids in?*
 - *Should I go back to school?*
 - *Should I change jobs?*
 - *Is it time for me retire?*
 - *Should I buy the house, or build this house with a particular builder?*

3. In the message it is discussed that although Paul was close to God and a deeply spiritual person he struggled with discerning God's will in **Acts 16:6-12**. Discuss how struggling to know God's will doesn't mean that one is not spiritual or close to God.
4. Even if we struggle to know the perfect will of God nevertheless if we desire passionately it is a true sign of our conversion. Read and discuss the verse below.

Ps 40:8

8 I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart." NIV

5. What are the adjectives in the verse below from Romans that describe God's will? How does this verse debunk the idea that doing God's word is burden? (see **Matt 10:39, 16:25, Mark 8:35, Luke 9:24** and **John 12:25**)

Rom 12:2

2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will. NIV

6. In the verses below Paul is kept, forbidden, to preach the gospel in certain places that had people that needed Jesus because God had a certain place for him to minister. Discuss the principle: **Good opportunities are not necessarily God's will for us.**

Acts 16:6-7

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. NIV

7. What situations and methods may God have used to shut doors for Paul in **Acts 16:6-7**?
8. How does this verse in the book of Ruth convey that sometimes God is leading us and directing us even when we don't realize it? Discuss the two kinds of guidance: conscious guidance and unconscious guidance.

Ruth 2:2-3

2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." 3 So she went out and began to glean in the fields

behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she found herself working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelech. NIV

Ruth 2:3 b “and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz,” ESV