

An Unlikely Servant

Today we are introduced to, who I believe, is one of the most remarkable men of the early church - Timothy. *Timotheos* (Τιμόθεος): one who honors God, one who is dear to God.

Timothy was a man who honored God - even from a young age, and it all began in the backroads town of Lystra in the region of Galatia.

GOD HAS A WAY OF CHOOSING UNLIKLEY PEOPLE TO BE HIS GREATEST SERVANTS.

I want to make 7 observations from Acts 16:1-5 regarding Timothy - a great man of God.

Observation #1 - Timothy was from an unimpressive place. **16:1a**

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy,

By what Luke says, we figure Timothy was from Lystra. Lystra was no capital city. It was a smaller

town. It seems there were so few Jews in Lystra that there wasn't even a synagogue there.

Observation #2 - Timothy was from a mixed home.
16:1b

the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.

Timothy, it would seem, was raised mainly by his mom and grandmother. Both were wonderful women in the eyes of God. We get that from *2nd Timothy 1:5 - I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.*

Meanwhile, his dad was not a Jew, nor was he a Christian.

Observation #3 - Timothy had a great reputation in 2 local churches. **16:2**

² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium.

He consistently showed up with a hunger to learn, a hunger to worship, a hunger to serve, and a hunger to fellowship. When the church was gathering. He was there. He was there at prayer meetings. He was there at Bible studies. He probably showed up early. He stayed late. If Mom couldn't make it, he was still there.

If you want God to use you someday, it starts right now in your local church.

Observation #4 - He was given a great opportunity.

16:3a

³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him

Jesus was the one who said in the parable of the Talents that it's the Master who says to the faithful servant. *You have been faithful over little. I will set you over much (Matthew 25:21).*

That saying of Jesus became true of Timothy that day. He was faithful in the little things, so the Master - Jesus - gave him more. God gave him the greatest of opportunities - full-time service for the Lord, alongside the most impactful Christian to ever live - The apostle Paul.

Observation #5 - Timothy had a great heart. **16:3b**

³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

He cared about people more than himself. He had a great heart for the lost. He did not want to stand in the way of anyone coming to faith in Jesus.

Dan Duncan worded it well: When the essence of the gospel was at stake, Paul would not bend for a minute - Salvation is through faith in Jesus, not works. But when the progress of the gospel was at stake, Paul was very flexible. (1 Cor. 9:19-23)

Observation #6 - Timothy had a great work to be part of. **16:4**

⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.

Their initial goal: Go from church to church telling all the believers that the decision was final: God's door of salvation is open and it's open wide to all who would believe in Jesus. You don't have to go through the lobby of Judaism to get to the door of salvation. To be right with God, you go directly through one and only door. **The door is Jesus Christ (John 10:9). You enter Him not by religious law keeping, but only by faith in Him.**

Observation #7 - Timothy got to see God do great things. **16:5**

⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.

I'm sure there were times where he thought to himself, "boy I wish every Christian on the planet would get to see what I'm seeing right now. I wish every Christian would know the feeling of being used by God to do the greatest work of all."

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