

HE LIFE OF PAUL – WEEK 14
Trusting God When His Plan Is Different From Ours
Acts 16:1–15 | October 4, 2026

1. PAUL RETURNS TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH : Paul begins his second missionary journey with a desire to revisit the churches he had previously planted. After Paul and Barnabas separated, Paul traveled with **Silas**. In Lystra, Paul meets **Timothy**, a young believer who was well respected by the believers. Paul invites Timothy to join him in ministry. The churches were strengthened in their faith and continued to grow.

Acts 16:5 – “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.”

2. CHRIST IS BIGGER THAN OUR PREFERENCES: Timothy was circumcised, **not because circumcision was necessary for salvation**, but because it could remove a barrier between Timothy and the Jewish people. Paul was willing to lay aside a personal freedom or preference so that the Gospel could move forward. Our preferences should never become more important than reaching people with the Gospel. We should ask: **Am I willing to set aside my preferences so Christ can remain the focus?**

Key Truth: Sometimes following Jesus means giving up something we are free to do so that someone else can hear and receive the Gospel.

3. GOD SOMETIMES CLOSES DOORS TO REDIRECT US: Paul and his companions wanted to preach in Asia, but the Holy Spirit prevented them from going there. They tried to go into Bithynia, but again God closed the door. Paul was doing something good, yet God still redirected his plans. A closed door is not always an attack from the enemy.

Sometimes God closes a door because He has another direction and purpose. God may use circumstances, obstacles, or unanswered plans to realign us with His will.

Acts 16:6–7 – “They were kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia... the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.”

4. TRUST GOD WHEN HE SAYS “NO”: Paul did not continue forcing his own plans when God closed the doors. His obedience to God’s “no” eventually led him to God’s greater “yes.” God gave Paul a vision of a man from Macedonia saying, **“Come over to Macedonia and help us.”** Paul understood that God was calling them to preach the Gospel there. Sometimes **God’s “no” today is preparing us for His “go” tomorrow.**

Isaiah 55:8–9 – “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD.

Proverbs 3:5–6 – “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

5. GOD’S PLAN CAN BE BIGGER THAN OUR PLAN: Paul traveled to Macedonia, arriving in Philippi. Instead of finding the person he may have expected, Paul found a group of women gathered by the river. One of them was **Lydia**, a wealthy and influential woman who worshiped God. Paul faithfully shared the message of Christ, and **God opened Lydia’s heart** to respond. Paul was faithful to share; **God was responsible for opening her heart and bringing salvation.**

Acts 16:14 – “The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message.”

John 6:44 – “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them.”

6. OUR FAITH SHOULD AFFECT THOSE AROUND US: Lydia responded to the Gospel and was baptized along with her household. Her faith immediately became visible through her actions. She opened her home and used what God had given her to bless others. Her faith did not stop with her—it impacted her family and became part of the beginning of the church at Philippi. **Our obedience can become a doorway through which God impacts other people.**

Takeaway:

Trust God when He closes a door. Follow Him when His direction is different from your plan. Be willing to lay aside preferences for the sake of the Gospel. Share Jesus faithfully and trust God to open hearts.

Reflection:

Is my faith affecting the people around me? Am I willing to trust God’s plan even when He closes a door I wanted open?

ALASKA MISSION TRIP

OCT 3- 10

PRAYER & PRAISE

OCT 26

"THE GATHERING"

OCT 31

MORE INFO TO COME!

**MEN'S COFFEE &
BIBLE STUDY**

**EVERY THURSDAY
AT 6:30AM IN THE
TERRACE**

#LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Toys for Tots



We are collecting new toys to
donate to our local TOYS FOR TOTS!

OCTOBER 4TH-NOVEMBER 1ST

**DROP OFF AT THE "GO TABLE"
IN THE TERRACE**

TEENS + YOUNG ADULTS

Special Needs

MINISTRY



BIBLE STUDY



GAMES



SNACKS



NEW FRIENDS

*We need a few extra volunteers!
Contact Missy*

**BRAND NEW SERVICE, EVERY SUNDAY
ONLY AT 11AM IN THE LITTLE ATTIC
Starting October 4th!**