

Acts 16 Faith in the Fire
Calvary Chapel Titusville 6/29/25
Pastor Paul Andris

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, [the] son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father [was] Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (Acts 16:1-2 NKJV)

Leadership in the body of Christ doesn't start with charisma; it starts with character.

A [good] name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 NKJV)

A strong testimony is formed long before someone ends up with a pulpit or title.

Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took [him] and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. (Acts 16:3 NKJV)

Now this marks an interesting turn of events. When it came to salvation, Paul said:

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love. (Galatians 5:6 NKJV)

So why does he circumcise Timothy? Because of the Jews.

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, that I might win those [who are] under the law; to those [who are] without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those [who are] without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all [men], that I might by all means save some. (1 Corinthians 9:20-22 NKJV)

This was not a compromise of the Gospel.

And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily. (Acts 16:4-5 NKJV)

This is the fruit of clear doctrine and solid discipleship.

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. (Acts 16:6 NKJV)

This is one of those mysteries of divine guidance.

"For My thoughts [are] not your thoughts, Nor [are] your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV)

Don't despise the closed doors of God. They are often His mercy.

After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. (Acts 16:7 NKJV)

This is costly obedience.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (Galatians 5:25 NKJV)

God is not obligated to explain Himself. Our job is to obey.

So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:8-9 NKJV)

Vision and clarity came after steps of obedience.

The steps of a [good] man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. (Psalm 37:23 NKJV)

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Faith doesn't wait for the whole blueprint. It obeys the last word and trusts God with the next.
Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. (Acts 16:10 NKJV)

When God speaks, He expects obedience.

Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next [day] came to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days. And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met [there]. (Acts 16:11-13 NKJV)

Never underestimate the power of small gatherings, especially ones centered on prayer.
Now a certain woman named Lydia heard [us]. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (Acts 16:14 NKJV)

'The Lord opened her heart.'

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. (John 6:44 NKJV)

Our role is faithfulness; the Spirit's role is fruitfulness.

And when she and her household were baptized, she begged [us], saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. (Acts 16:15 NKJV)

Lydia responded to the Gospel not just with belief, but obedience and hospitality.

Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. (Acts 16:16 NKJV)

Spiritual warfare is never far when the Gospel is going forward.

She was being exploited through pagan religion, darkness disguised as insight.

Satan doesn't just oppose through violence, but through counterfeit spirituality.
And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14 NKJV)

Not every spiritual thing is holy.

This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." (Acts 16:17 NKJV)

Let's be wise here: Affirmation from impure sources is still defilement.

And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. (Acts 16:18 NKJV)

Paul wasn't reacting in the flesh, he was identifying the root issue.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1 NKJV)

Paul took authority in the name of Jesus, the only authority that casts out darkness.

"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; (Mark 16:17 NKJV)

Jesus' name is not simply a formula, it's the authority.

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But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged [them] into the marketplace to the authorities. (Acts 16:19 NKJV)

Money, when elevated above all from love and justice, will always result in injustice.

For the love of money is a root of all [kinds of] evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Timothy 6:10 NKJV)

Expect opposition when the gospel disrupts the status quo.

And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; "and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." (Acts 16:20-21 NKJV)

Religious persecution often hides behind false political or social language.

Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded [them] to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw [them] into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. (Acts 16:22-24 NKJV)

Blessing in the kingdom doesn't always look like blessing in the world.

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. (Acts 16:25 NKJV)

Worship isn't circumstantial. It's spiritual. And it has power.

Your praise in the dark may be what brings light to someone else.

Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. (Acts 16:26 NKJV)

When you choose to worship in your darkest moments, God uses your faith.

And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. (Acts 16:27 NKJV)

This earthquake wasn't just for Paul and Silas. It was for the jailer too.

But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." (Acts 16:28 NKJV)

Sometimes what seems like the open door to our escape is actually the moment of assignment for our witness.

Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:29-30 NKJV)

This is the question every Gospel worker longs to hear. What must I do to be saved?

So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31 NKJV)

In a moment of crisis and urgency, Paul and Silas point to faith.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; [it is] the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV)

When one person opens their life to Jesus, others are often soon to follow.

Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed [their] stripes. And immediately he and all his [family] were baptized. (Acts 16:32-33 NKJV)

Things change quickly when the Spirit of God gets hold of a heart.

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Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household. (Acts 16:34 NKJV)

Now look at the full circle. Chaos to celebration.

Behold, God [is] my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the LORD, [is] my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.' " Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation. (Isaiah 12:2-3 NKJV)

Salvation brings joy.

And when it was day, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go." So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace." But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us openly, uncondemned Romans, [and] have thrown [us] into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out." (Acts 16:35-37 NKJV)

A good name is necessary for a young church, for the Gospel's integrity and witness.

And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans. Then they came and pleaded with them and brought [them] out, and asked [them] to depart from the city. (Acts 16:38-39 NKJV)

God brings justice in His time.

So they went out of the prison and entered [the house of] Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed. (Acts 16:40 NKJV)

Servant leaders aren't obsessed with what they suffered—they're focused on building up others.