

Make Changes for God's Mission!

Acts 16:1-5

“Your church will either change or die ... You don’t change the truths of God’s Word, but many of the methodologies and paradigms that describe the way we “do church” today will not be here tomorrow ... sacrifice and change [is] critical to the mission heart.”

--Rainer

Big Idea: God wants to save people that are different than us; so, we make changes to reach them with the gospel.

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. 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. 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. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily. (Act 16:1-5 ESV)

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Change for the Mission!

- 1. Sacrifice your comfort for the gospel (vv. 1-3).**
- 2. Never sacrifice the gospel (v. 4).**
- 3. Trust God to strengthen your faith (v. 5).**

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Importance of Circumcision

- i. Sign of the covenant for Abraham (Gen 17:10; Rom 4:11-12).
- ii. Refusing circumcision was tantamount to refusing participation in the covenant (Gen 17:14).
- iii. Real circumcision was a matter of the heart (Duet 10:16).
- iv. Circumcision is no longer the sign of our covenant with God (Acts 15) ... Baptism is.

Importance of Baptism

- i. Baptism symbolizes unification with Christ (Rom 6:3-5).**
- ii. Believers get baptized to confess our faith (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12; 9:18 ...).**
- iii. Only Believers experience baptism (1 Pt 3:21, Col 2:12).**

Question: If circumcision has *absolutely nothing to do with salvation*, then why do it?

Answer: “because ... they all knew his father was a Greek.” (v. 3, cf. Rom 10:14; 14).

Do whatever it takes to be heard.

- i. Meet them on their level.**
- ii. Make sacrifices (circumcision) to relate to them.**
- iii. Focus on Kingdom, not comfort.**

2. Never sacrifice the gospel (Acts 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 (v. 4; cf. Acts 15:7-10).

(Gal 2:3-5) – ³ But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. ⁴ Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery— ⁵ to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

Relate to people but maintain gospel purity.

- i. The church agreed circumcision was not required (v. 4; Acts 15).**
- ii. Timothy was still circumcised to relate to people (v. 3).**
- iii. Titus was not circumcised to preserve the gospel (Gal 2).**

Paul/Titus pushed against legalism.

Legalism:

- i. Enslaves us to rules.**
- ii. Promotes works-based salvation.**
- iii. Perverts the gospel.**

We must maintain gospel purity at all costs.

3.Trust God to strengthen your faith (v. 5).

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

3 ways God strengthens our faith:

- i. Bringing new people into the fellowship.**
- ii. Trusting God's Word more than our traditions.**
- iii. Sacrificing our freedoms to reach people.**

Today, are you willing to make changes to reach the world with the gospel?