

Living in God's Will.
Acts 15:36-16:10

Acts 15:36-41

Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are doing."

Acts 13-14. They had left the church in Syrian, Antioch.

Preached the Gospel *in the regions of*

Cyprus,

Pamphylia,

Pisidia

Lycaonia

In the cities of

Salamis

Paphos

Perga

Antioch in Pisidia

Iconium

Lystra

Derbe

37 Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. **38** But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. **39** Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; **40** but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. **41** And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Strengthening the churches

Acts 16:1-5

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. 2 He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 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. 4 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. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Picked up Timothy

Strengthening the churches

Acts 16:6-9

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. 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 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." 10 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.

Had Gone through

Phrygia and Galatia, but, Forbidden by the Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

[Map](#)

Went to

Mysia

Tried to go to

Bithynia

Ended up in

Troas

Finally given a vision

Macedonia

Wants to go right and up, then decides to try middle. Finally, God sends them left.
Can you imagine following this Guy?

Over the course of this particular Missionary excursion

Paul and Silas will meet

Timothy

Titus

Priscilla and Aquila

Luke

Churches will be planted in

Philippi

Thessalonica

Berea

Athens

Corinth

Ephesus

Colosse ?

Via Jerusalem Paul will eventually end up in Rome, where he will write to

Timothy and Titus before his execution in Ad 64.

And in his final letter to Timothy he will request the company of Mark “who has become useful to him in the ministry.” (2 Ti 4:11)

None of this was his plan in the outset.

He simply wanted to go with Barnabas to strengthen the churches they had established on their first journey. They parted ways over Mark’s involvement in their ministry though Paul and Barnabas seem to have reconciled at a later date (1Corinthians 9).

Living in God’s will? How do we know we are in God’s will?

3 things

1. Our Focus.
2. Our Attitude.
3. Our Method.

1. Our Focus: Doing the Lord's Work.

A. Strengthen the Church.

1. Encourage believers. (Every city they went to)

2. Persuade Unbelievers. (especially Acts 17,24)

B. Be a living testimony. of the existence, love and grace of God in word and deed.

Turn to: 1 Corinthians 9:9-15; 19.

Pain, imprisonment and physical distress are not necessarily signs of God's disfavor.

He encourages us to trust Him through these things.

Psalms 23, Life of Christ.

It is often the means by which God deepens our understanding of the infinite depth and nature of our love for us, by allowing us to share in his grief over all mankind through the ages.

and to grasp more fully His motivation in sending Jesus Christ to restore us to Himself. (Walk with me and share my heart.)

God talked with Moses as a friend.

The crowd said, "You go into God's presence, Moses. Just keep us safe, fed and satisfied."

2. Our Attitude: Trusting God (Wholeheartedly)

A. Humility. "We concluded". God is perfect, not us.

We can trust Him to redirect and redeem.

B. Don't burn your bridges.

At some point things probably got awkward.

Barnabas and Mark were restored to Paul

(1 Corinthians 9:6 and 2 Timothy 4:11)

And Mark wrote what most scholars believe to be the earliest authoritative Gospel.

C. Hold people, things and plans loosely.

a. Remember God is in control, not us.

b. A man makes his plans but God directs his steps. (Pr 16:9)

c. Honor His love for the people we meet and rejoice
in His love for us.

(Have some water.)

d. Remember we are pilgrims.

Paul stayed in some places only a few weeks and in other places
for years.

We draw our joy from the Lord, not our address or place of
employment.

3. Our Method: Love God. (Acts 2:42)

A. We Meditate upon His Word.

Hide his word in our hearts.

Devote ourselves to receiving and obeying instruction from His word.

Corporately and privately.

B. We Pray.

1. Expressing our hearts to God fearlessly. (trusting His loving grace)
Yet respectfully. (Remember He is our Eternal Creator, Father,
Lord, Judge and King.)

2. Accepting His answer.

Most often, "Trust me."

C. We commit to our local community of believers./ Fellowship.

1. Service. Sent out, Commended by a congregation they had served
for over 13 years, in submission to the elders.

2. Relationships.

Make time and invest energy. Breaking of bread.

Don't go it alone. "We...", "Paul and..."

"Mark has proven useful to me in the ministry"

Over time as we obey God in general and in the moment He will reveal
more specifics concerning His distinct will for us. And we don't need to fear
failure, because God redeems everything we entrust to Him.