

Acts of the Holy Spirit  
“*God of the Impossible*” – Series

NOTE TAKERS...

- I've titled today's message: **“Decisions”**
  - (Acts 16:1-15) NKJV.

**~ INTRO ~**

NOW...

- As we come to (Acts 16)...
  - We have a growing ministry team being chronicled...
    - On this 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey:
      - Paul
      - Silas
      - Timothy is added (v.3)
      - Luke is added (v.10)

AND... AT THIS POINT...

- **Five-years** has passed since the first trip.

SO... AS THEY RE-VISIT THE CHURCHES...

- They travel north out of Syria to Derbe & onto Lystra...
  - And all reports show the churches are doing good!

BUT INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH...

- At **Lystra**... where the crippled man was healed (Acts 14:8)...
  - Timothy was held in great esteem by the church there.
    - So Paul added him to the team.

HOWEVER...

- It was well known that Timothy's dad was a Gentile.
  - So Paul had Timothy circumcised because of the Jews.

AND IF YOU REMEMBER LAST WEEK (Acts 15)...

- All the issues about keeping the *law & circumcision*...
  - That swept across the region and hindered ministry.

**HERE'S A FEW THINGS TO LEARN:**

**IDEA #1 – FREEDOM** (vv.1-5)

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OK... WHY WOULD PAUL DO THIS...

- After spending half of the previous chapter...
  - Fighting for liberty from circumcision?

**FLIP TO** (1 Cor. 9:19-23) NLT

DURING THIS 2<sup>nd</sup> MISSION TRIP...

- They would be interacting with Jewish people.
  - So Paul avoided the unnecessary fight...
    - By doing something that didn't affect salvation.

PAUL KNEW...

- That circumcision was a matter of the heart (Rom 2:29) NLT

OK...

TAKE NOTE OF... A FEW PRACTICAL MATTERS:

- 1) Things that **promote** spiritual growth (Acts 2:42) NLT
  - Learning the bible
  - Sharing life
  - Communion
  - Prayer
- 2) Things that **hinder** spiritual growth (Eph. 4:28-30) NLT
  - Telling lies
  - Letting anger control you
  - Stealing
  - Foul language
- 3) The **results** of good growth (Eph 4:16) NLT
  - Healthy
  - Maturing
  - Full of love

Let me bring this home with a **Comparative Application**:

- Have you ever done something in your marriage to keep the peace?

THEN YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT PAUL DID!

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**IDEA #2 – FORBIDDEN** (vv.6-7)

NOW... IN THESE VERSES... THE HOLY SPIRIT...

- Was forbidding Paul and the team to preach the word (v.6).

I THINK THIS IS AN IMPORTANT TOPIC...

- To discuss with growing believers.
  - Because we need to recognize the value...
    - Of **open** & **closed** doors.

GOD WAS LEADING THIS TEAM...

- With ***closed doors*** – i.e. ministry delays.
  - “*forbidden by the Holy Spirit* (v.6).

Let’s consider some basic decisions helps:

- 1) Desire (Phil. 2:13) NLT
- 2) Peace (Phil 4:6-7) NLT
- 3) Open doors (Rev. 3:8) NLT

PAUL LATER WROTE... (Gal 5:16)

“*Let the Holy Spirit guide your lives...*”

HE GOES ON TO SAY...

- When the Holy Spirit is leading...
  - Here are the mental & moral qualities you can expect!
    - (Gal. 5:22-23) NLT

**PRACTICAL APPLICATION:**

- Think about your life AND discover where God is leading you.
  - Look around and see where God is forbidding you.

WHEN WE TRY TO PUSH THROUGH A CLOSED DOOR...

- It results in frustration, irritation, & unexplained problems.

JESUS TOLD PAUL ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD (Acts 9:5)

- “*It is hard for you to kick against the goads*”
  - [i.e. go against Gods will]

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NOW IF YOU'RE NEEDING CLARITY...

- Here's some simple questions you ask God:
  - God is there something You want me to know?
  - God is there something You want me to do differently?
  - God show me what I need to see to do Your will?

WHEN WE RESPOND WITH GODLY WISDOM...

- Here's what it looks like ([James 3:17](#)) NKJV

*Pure* = Certain

*Peaceable* = Brings peace

*Gentle* = Fair or mild (not stressed out)

*Willing to yield* = I'm being teachable & ready to obey

**IDEA #3 – FLEXIBILITY** (vv.8-15)

(v.9) Paul has a vision with a **MAN** begging him to come to Macedonia.

SO THE TEAM...

- Heads that way... BUT they find a **WOMAN** named Lydia ([v.14a](#)).
  - AND this is the one... who God opened her heart ([v.14b](#)).
- Lydia and her household get saved and baptized.

THE MINISTRY TEAM...

- Was staying flexible between the OPEN & CLOSED DOORS!
  - This is a great example of *directed service* here...
    - Where God was leading the way...
      - And showing them where to go & what to do!

JESUS TAUGHT PETER...

- The same lessons in ([Luke 5:4-11](#)) & ([John 21:5-7](#))
  - With where to cast his fishing net.

POINT BEING...

- Here's the results of a life lived by faith – ([Rom 15:13](#)) NLT.

**~ IN CLOSING ~**

- What are the open doors that God has placed in your life?

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- What are the closed doors you need to back away from?
- What impact is the Gospel having upon your household?