

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

NOTE TAKERS...

- I’ve titled today’s message: “***How Ministry Happens***”
 - (Acts 16:16-40)

OPEN WITH (vv.11-15)

~ INTRO ~

REMEMBER... (Acts) is a *snap-shot-narrative* of the works of the Holy Spirit...

- Spread over the course of about 30-years.

NOW...

- As we continue thru (Acts 16)...
 - The growth of Paul’s ministry team is being chronicled.
- On this 2nd Missionary Journey...
 - Paul adds a few new faces: Silas, Timothy (v.3), & Luke (v.10).

THIS TRIP HAPPENED...

- Somewhere between (49-51 AD)...
 - And covered about 2,800 miles of travel.

PAUL VENTURED INTO...

- Several notable locations & later wrote letters to churches there.
 - We call them ***Epistles*** (Christian living).
- He traveled northwest thru the region of **Galatia**

AT THE START OF (Acts 16)

- Paul went into Macedonia (**Philippi**, **Thessalonica**, & Berea).
- From there he moved south into Athens & **Corinth**...
 - Before circling back east to **Ephesus**...
 - And finally went south into Jerusalem.

NOW...

- Why does this journey matter to you as a Christian?

BECAUSE... IT’S A PICTURE...

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

- Of the *expansion of ministry*...
 - Which results in an *expansion of faith*.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS MOVING THRU MEN & WOMEN...

- As they stepped out in faith.
 - And the church needs to be reminded...
 - Of how God wants to use us today.

HERE’S A FEW THINGS WE CAN LEARN:

IDEA #1 – OBSTACLE OR OPPORTUNITY?

READ (vv.16-24)

PAUL & THE MINISTRY TEAM...

- Stayed with Lydia in Philippi (v.12)...
 - As they continued to seek God in prayer.
- They were looking for ways to minister...
 - When **an obstacle** (a demon possessed girl) (v.18)...
 - Got Paul & Silas beaten & throw in jail (v.23).

BUT...

- God turned it into **an open door** to save many.

TOO OFTEN CHRISTIANS...

- Stop taking steps of faith...
 - we stop growing...
 - We stop looking for ways to serve...
 - And the **“Expansion of Ministry”** stops.

THIS IS WHY DISCIPLESHIP IS SO IMPORTANT!

- The discipler helps the disciplee make sense of the walk of faith.
 - When hardships come perspective is given
 - When setbacks happen promises are recalled
 - When sickness & disease hits God’s faithfulness is pointed to

CAN I HELP YOU ALONG?

- Can I lift you up a little this morning?

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

OUR DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM...

- Is detailed... it's action oriented... AND... it's for every Christian!
 - But it requires YOU to take steps of faith.

IDEA #2 – GOD IS STILL WORKING MIRACLES

READ (vv.25-34)

- (v.29) a guy got saved from suicide & then commits his life to Jesus.
- (v.32) Paul shared the word with his family...
 - (v.33b) and they all got saved & baptized.

SOME PRATICAL WAYS...

- The Holy Spirit is working in believers today: ¹
 - I. Your **life** = Gods power working thru you (salt & light) (Matt 5:13-16).
 - II. Your **words** = Communicating the heart of God to others – comforting, giving hope, healing, love, peace, repentance (2 Cor 1:4-5).
 - III. Your **service** = What you do for the Lord is part of spreading the gospel and getting in the battle as a contributor & not watching on the sidelines as a consumer (James 3:13).
 - IV. Your **money** = Financially supporting the work of ministry to advance, expand, & strengthen the ministry of Jesus (2 Cor 8:11).
 - V. Your **prayers** = This is done in the spiritual realm and without them, physical effort makes no eternal difference (1 Tim 2:1).

IDEA #3 – HUMAN FAILURES IN MINISTRY

READ (vv.35-40)

¹ Smith, Chuck, The Book of Acts an in-depth Commentary (pp.23-24). The Word for Today, © 2013.

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*Expansion of Faith*” – Series

WE CAN DO THE RIGHT THING...

- With the wrong attitude!

AT THIS STAGE IN (Acts)...

- Paul was about 46-yrs old AND still had some fire in his bones.
 - God used this fire to advance the gospel...
 - But sometimes it came out in an un-spiritual way.

CONSIDER OTHER MEN OF GOD

- Nehemiah pulled out peoples beards in frustration (Neh. 13:25).
- David was ready to kill Nabal (1 Sam 25:22 & 31).
- Peter cut a guys ear off (John 18:10).

Here Paul gets verbally aggressive and causes a scene. – (Acts 16:37).

AND... I’m sure YOU too have said things wrong...

- AND done things wrong!

POINT BEING...

- On our best day may we recognize that we’re...
 - Still just sinners saved by grace.

(Rom 3:10) NKJV

“There is none righteous, no, not one...”

- AND... may this lead US to a more supportive heart...
 - To help our fellow Christian... (Gal. 6:1) NLT.
 - Instead of trying to highlight their flaws.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?

~ IN CLOSING ~

I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER THE GOSPEL...

- Is there anyone who would like the assure of faith...
 - And have your sins forgiven by Jesus thins morning?