**Lesson 17 Acts 15:36 - 16:40 Saints Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy**

In the last lesson we read about the Council of Jerusalem. It was decided at this meeting of Apostles and Presbyters, that Gentiles did not need to undergo circumcision nor follow *all* of the Mosaic Laws. Instead, they needed to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols, from blood, from meats of strangled animals, and from unlawful marriage.

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse or message in this week’s lesson from Acts 13 and 14 that you found inspiring?**
2. **Paul and Barnabas part ways. What were they arguing about? See Acts 15:36-41.**

**Acts 15:36-4136**After some time, Paul said to Barnabas, “Come, let us make a return visit to see how the brothers are getting on in all the cities where we proclaimed the word of the Lord.” **37**Barnabas wanted to take with them also John, who was called Mark, **38**but Paul insisted that they should not take with them someone who had deserted them at Pamphylia and who had not continued with them in their work. **39**So sharp was their disagreement that they separated. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. **40**But Paul chose Silas and departed after being commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. **41**He traveled through Syria and Cilicia bringing strength to the churches.

1. **Last week we read that it was no longer necessary for Christians to be circumcised. Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised? See the footnotes and text for Acts 16:1-5.**

**Acts 16:1-5 1**He reached [also] Derbe and Lystra where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. **2**The brothers in Lystra and Iconium spoke highly of him, **3**and Paul wanted him to come along with him. On account of the Jews of that region, Paul had him circumcised, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. **4**As they traveled from city to city, they handed on to the people for observance the decisions reached by the apostles and presbyters in Jerusalem. **5**Day after day the churches grew stronger in faith and increased in number.

1. **In verse 10 we see our first “we” passage. Check your footnotes for the reason that Luke uses the pronoun “we” here. See Acts 16:6-10.**

**Acts 16:6-10 6**They traveled through the Phrygian and Galatian territory because they had been prevented by the holy Spirit from preaching the message in the province of Asia. **7**When they came to Mysia, they tried to go on into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31811b)] did not allow them, **8**so they crossed through Mysia and came down to Troas. **9**During [the] night Paul had a vision. A Macedonian stood before him and implored him with these words, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” **10**When he had seen the vision, ***we sought passage to Macedonia at once***, concluding that ***God had called us*** to proclaim the good news to them.

1. **What do we know about Lydia? See Acts 16:11-15 and 40.**

**Acts 16:11-15** We set sail from Troas, making a straight run for Samothrace, and on the next day to Neapolis, **12**and from there to Philippi, a leading city in that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We spent some time in that city. **13**On the sabbath we went outside the city gate along the river where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat and spoke with the women who had gathered there. **14**One of them, a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, from the city of Thyatira, a worshiper of God,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31818e)] listened, and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what Paul was saying. **15**After she and her household had been baptized, she offered us an invitation, “If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my home,” and she prevailed on us.

**Acts 16:40 40**When they had come out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house where they saw and encouraged the brothers, and then they left.

1. **Check your footnotes for information on the type of demon or spirit that is involved in verses 16-24.**

**Acts 16:16-24 16**As we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl with an oracular spirit,[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31820f)] who used to bring a large profit to her owners through her fortune-telling. **17**She began to follow Paul and us, shouting, “These people are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.” **18**She did this for many days. Paul became annoyed, turned, and ***said to the spirit***, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” Then it came out at that moment. **19**When her owners saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the public square before the local authorities. **20**They brought them before the magistrates[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31824g)] and said, “These people are Jews and are disturbing our city **21**and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us Romans to adopt or practice.” **22**The crowd joined in the attack on them, and the magistrates had them stripped and ordered them to be beaten with rods. **23**After inflicting many blows on them, they threw them into prison and instructed the jailer to guard them securely. **24**When he received these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and secured their feet to a stake.

1. **Why were Paul and Silas put in prison? See verses 16-24 above.**
2. **Why did Paul and Silas not flee from prison after the earthquake broke their shackles? See Acts 16:25-34 and Acts 12:18-19.**

**Acts 12:18-19 18**At daybreak there was no small commotion among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. **19**Herod, after instituting a search but not finding him, ordered the guards tried and executed.

**Acts 16:25-29 25**About midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God as the prisoners listened, **26**there was suddenly such a severe earthquake that the foundations of the jail shook; all the doors flew open, and the chains of all were pulled loose. **27**When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew [his] sword and was about to kill himself, thinking that the prisoners had escaped. **28**But Paul shouted out in a loud voice, “Do no harm to yourself; we are all here.” **29**He asked for a light and rushed in and, trembling with fear, he fell down before Paul and Silas.

1. **How did the jailer respond to the selfless actions of Paul and Silas? See Verses 30-34.**

**Acts 16:30-34 30**Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” **31**And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you and your household will be saved.” **32**So they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to everyone in his house. **33**He took them in at that hour of the night and bathed their wounds; then he and all his family were baptized at once. **34**He brought them up into his house and provided a meal and with his household rejoiced at having come to faith in God.

1. **Why did Paul insist on being released by the magistrates personally? See verses 35-40.**

**Acts 16:35-40** But when it was day, the magistrates sent the lictors[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31839h)] with the order, “Release those men.” **36**The jailer reported the[se] words to Paul, “The magistrates have sent orders that you be released. Now, then, come out and go in peace.” **37**But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, even though we are Roman citizens and have not been tried, and have thrown us into prison. And now, are they going to release us secretly? By no means. Let them come themselves and lead us out.”[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+16&version=NABRE" \l "fen-NABRE-31841i" \o "See footnote i)] **38**The lictors reported these words to the magistrates, and they became alarmed when they heard that they were Roman citizens. **39**So they came and placated them, and led them out and asked that they leave the city. **40**When they had come out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house where they saw and encouraged the brothers, and then they left.

1. **What is the significance of Paul being a Roman citizen? Check footnotes and verses 35-40 above.**