



Lesson 19 – Exalting the Cross

Based on Acts 15:36-16:6

1) Where does our lesson begin today?

Acts 15:36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in _____ where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

Our Lesson today begins at the beginning of Paul and Barnabas discussing a second missionary journey. They had finished their first and were continuing on at Antioch teaching the people.

2) What were Paul's goals for the churches he served?

2 Corinthians 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all _____ of the flesh and spirit, perfecting _____ in the fear of God.

Both Paul and Barnabas had a tender regard for those who had recently accepted the gospel message under their ministry, and they longed to see them once more. This solicitude Paul never lost. Even when in distant mission fields, far from the scene of his earlier labors, he continued to bear upon his heart the burden of urging these converts to remain faithful.

Constantly, he tried to help them to become self-reliant, growing Christians, strong in faith, ardent in zeal, and wholehearted in their consecration to God and to the work of advancing His kingdom.

3) What did Barnabas suggest to Paul?

Acts 15:37-38 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was _____. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who _____ from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

Paul was not inclined to excuse Mark's weakness in deserting the work for the safety and comforts of home. He urged that one with so little stamina was unfitted for a work requiring patience, self-denial, bravery, devotion, faith, and a willingness to sacrifice, if need be, even life itself.

4) How did that end up?

Acts 15:39-41 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they _____ one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

5) Where did they end up after that?

Acts 16:1-2 Then came he to Derbe and _____: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named _____, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.



Paul and Silas at length reached Derbe and Lystra in the province of Lycaonia. It was at Lystra that Paul had been stoned, yet we find him again on the scene of his former danger. He was anxious to see how those who through his labors had accepted the gospel were enduring the test of trial. He was not disappointed, for he found that the Lystrian believers had remained firm in the face of violent opposition.

6) Who joined Paul and Silas?

Acts 16:3 Him (Timothy) would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the _____ which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Here Paul again met Timothy, who had witnessed his sufferings at the close of his first visit to Lystra and upon whose mind the impression then made had deepened with the passing of time until he was convinced that it was his duty to give himself fully to the work of the ministry. His heart was knit with the heart of Paul, and he longed to share the apostle's labors by assisting as the way might open.

7) Who were Timothy's first Bible teachers?

2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother _____, and thy mother _____; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Timothy's father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. From a child he had known the Scriptures. The piety that he saw in his home life was sound and sensible. The faith of his mother and his grandmother in the sacred oracles was to him a constant reminder of the blessing in doing God's will. The word of God was the rule by which these two godly women had guided Timothy. The spiritual power of the lessons that he had received from them kept him pure in speech and unsullied by the evil influences with which he was surrounded. Thus, his home instructors had co-operated with God in preparing him to bear burdens.

Those who had taught Timothy in his childhood were rewarded by seeing the son of their care linked in close fellowship with the great apostle. Timothy was a mere youth when he was chosen by God to be a teacher, but his principles had been so established by his early education that he was fitted to take his place as Paul's helper. And though young, he bore his responsibilities with Christian meekness.

8) What did Paul suggest for Timothy's safety?

Acts 16:3 ...and took and _____ him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

As a precautionary measure, Paul wisely advised Timothy to be circumcised—not that God required it, but in order to remove from the minds of the Jews that which might be an objection to Timothy's ministration. In his work Paul was to journey from city to city, in many lands, and often he would have opportunity to preach Christ in Jewish synagogues, as well as in other places of assembly. If it should be known that one of his companions in labor was uncircumcised, his work might be greatly hindered by the prejudice and bigotry of the Jews.

Yet while he conceded this much to Jewish prejudice, he believed and taught circumcision or uncircumcision to be nothing and the gospel of Christ everything.



9) How did Paul view Timothy?

1 Timothy 1:2 Unto Timothy, my _____ in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

The great apostle often drew the younger disciple out, questioning him in regard to Scripture history, and as they traveled from place to place, he carefully taught him how to do successful work. Both Paul and Silas, in all their association with Timothy, sought to deepen the impression that had already been made upon his mind, of the sacred, serious nature of the work of the gospel minister.

10) What should we set our eyes on?

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and _____ lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and _____, in this present world; Looking for that _____, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might _____ us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

11) What were Paul, Silas, and Timothy doing?

Acts 15:4-5 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the _____ for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches _____ in the faith, and increased in number daily.

The apostle Paul felt a deep responsibility for those converted under his labors. Above all things, he longed that they should be faithful.

12) What did he say about it later?

Philippians 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of _____, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

He trembled for the result of his ministry. He felt that even his own salvation might be imperiled if he should fail of fulfilling his duty and the church should fail of co-operating with him in the work of saving souls. He knew that preaching alone would not suffice to educate the believers to hold forth the word of life.

13) What Old Testament verse was foundational to his ministry?

Isaiah 28:10 For precept must be upon precept, _____ upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

It is a universal principle that whenever one refuses to use his God-given powers, these powers decay and perish. Truth that is not lived, that is not imparted, loses its life-giving power, its healing virtue. Hence the apostle's fear that he might fail of presenting every man perfect in Christ. Paul's hope of heaven grew dim when he contemplated any failure on his part that would result in giving the church the mold of the human instead of the divine.

14) What was Paul's desire for the churches he went to (and you)?

Philippians 2:15-16 That ye may be _____ and _____, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the _____ of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.



Every true minister feels a heavy responsibility for the spiritual advancement of the believers entrusted to his care, a longing desire that they shall be laborers together with God. He realizes that upon the faithful performance of his God-given work depends in a large degree the well-being of the church. Earnestly and untiringly, he seeks to inspire the believers with a desire to win souls for Christ, remembering that every addition to the church should be one more agency for the carrying out of the plan of redemption.

15) Where did they go next?

Acts 16:6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of _____, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

16) What did Paul teach the Galatians?

Galatians 1:3-4 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our _____, that he might deliver us from this present _____ world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Galatians 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the _____ by the works of the law, or by the hearing of _____?

Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by _____ in Christ Jesus.

Paul's lips had been touched with a live coal from off the altar, and he was enabled to rise above bodily infirmities and to present Jesus as the sinner's only hope. Those who heard him knew that he had been with Jesus. Endued with power from on high, he was able to compare spiritual things with spiritual and to tear down the strongholds of Satan. Hearts were broken by his presentation of the love of God, as revealed in the sacrifice of His only-begotten Son, and many were led to inquire, What must I do to be saved?

17) What must every minister do?

2 Corinthians 4:5-6 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the _____; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our _____, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Saviour, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin.

18) What did Paul say to the Galatians?

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should _____, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death and accepts us in the Beloved.

Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Saviour's love, and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy, for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.

Can you see the necessity of the Cross?

Do you want to glow with God's presence?

When is the time to work together in an orderly fashion?