

Subject	Lessons from Acts Series	4416
		Acts 16
Title	7 Lessons from Acts 16.	
Proposition	To study Acts 16.	
Objective	To consider seven lessons which Acts 16 helps me to consider and appreciate and apply in my own life.	

7 Lessons from Acts 16

Introduction:

1. Chapter 15 ends with two missionaries going out into the mission field their separate ways because of a difference of opinion about whether or not to take John Mark along.
2. Luke, the inspired historian, follows the work done by Paul and Silas in this, Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey.
3. They went about confirming the churches (15:41), or we might say **STRENGTHENING** the churches.
4. A couple of remarkable things to notice in chapter 16 are to be found in verse 5. *Here we see the churches:*
 - 1) Being established in **THE FAITH**; and
 - 2) increasing in number **DAILY!**
 - 1- How wonderful!
 - 2- What if the same could be said of this particular congregation?
5. Then there is also that "Macedonian Call," received by Paul: **Come over into Macedonia and help us.**
 - 1) Though not by an inspired vision, that is a call that is repeated many times today, only with a changed place name,
 - 2) **BUT**, sadly, it goes unanswered in so many instances.
6. We read also about the remarkable conversions of Lydia and of the Philippian Jailer.
7. **STPO.**

DISCUSSION: Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

I. Introduces me to an outstanding Bible character (1).

Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

In the 1969 issue of TALC, brother Leslie G. Thomas provides a very beautiful description of Timothy. I want to present some of his thought/words to you.

1. **Timothy was** "associated with the apostle during a longer period than any of his other companions."
2. John referred to himself as **THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED**. Perhaps Timothy could, in a similar way, call himself: **THE DISCIPLE WHOM PAUL LOVED**.
3. More than any other of Paul's co-workers, Timothy was described by Paul in **GLOWING** terms.

4. *“Timothy shared both his spiritual father’s outward labors and INWARD thoughts.”*
5. **Timothy was sent on some of the most delicate missions, and was given places of great responsibility among congregations of that day by Paul (of course, with the agreement of the local churches).**
6. *When Paul was in his last, and evidently his most lonely, imprisonment, it was Timothy whom he summoned to console him, and to receive his last instructions.*
7. **It appears that Timothy’s home was in Lystra, or possibly in Derbe.**
 - 1) **Likely he and his mother and grandmother were converted during the 1st Missionary Journey.**
 - 2) **2 Timothy 3:10-11 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, (11) Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.**
 - 1- **This text strongly implies that Timothy may have been an eyewitness to the stoning of Paul at Lystra (Acts 14.19-20).**
 - 2- **Perhaps that incident caused Timothy to be even more dedicated to faithfully serving the Lord.**
8. **2 Timothy 1 shows that Timothy owed his early training from the Scriptures to his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois (2 Tim 1.5).**
 - 1) **Paul said of Timothy that: from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures (2 Tim 3.15).**
 - 2) *The Old Testament Scriptures were no less a part of the growing boy’s life, than the sky which was above him, or the ground upon which he lived.*
 - 3) **If parents TODAY could always be made to realize the importance of teaching the word of God to their little children, ... it would certainly be much easier for them to learn the truth more fully from godly teachers, as they grow up.**

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

II. Describes a MOST AMAZING VISION requesting HELP (9).

- Acts 16:9** And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, **Come over into Macedonia, and help us.**
1. **Because of this vision the gospel will reach a new continent—Paul will take the saving message into Europe.**
 2. **Just the wording of that vision presents a GREAT CHALLENGE to all people of all time.**
 - 1) **The people without the gospel in Macedonia in the 1st Century needed HELP.**
 - 2) **The people throughout the entire world who do not have the gospel TODAY are in need of that very same help!**
 - 3) **World evangelism is the field of work for Christians.**
 - 4) **There is no place on earth that does not need HELP.**
 - 5) **The most VITAL form of HELP that anyone can participate in involves presenting the gospel.**

3. **The truth is that when the gospel is preached to those who have not heard it, IT IS A HELP TO THEM!!!**
4. **How do we KNOW this to be true?**
 - 1) **We know it to be true because a vision sent from God to Paul uses those very words.**
 - 2) **People who do not have the gospel NEED TO BE HELPED by someone coming to them with that message of salvation!**

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

III. Reveals that women can accomplish amazing things in the kingdom (13).

Acts 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

1. **When we read this verse we are actually reading about the BEGINNING of one of the great churches of the 1st Century.**
 - 1) **The church at Philippi was very special to the Apostle Paul.**
 - 2) **Notice some of the ways he speaks of these brethren in the epistle he wrote to them...**
 - 1- **Philippians 1:3** *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,*
 - 2- **Philippians 4:1** *Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.*
 - 3- **Philippians 4:15** *Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*
2. **So there was a great need in Philippi for HELP by hearing the saving message.**
 - 1) **There had to be a BEGINNING POINT—someone or some group would be the first to receive the message.**
 - 2) **Paul's normal practice would be to go to a synagogue.**
 - 1- **Philippi was mostly a ROMAN city.**
 - 2- **It was dominated by Gentiles.**
 - 3- **If there were Jews, there were very few of them.**
 - 1] **Had there been just TEN Jewish men in Philippi, there would have been a synagogue where Paul would naturally begin to preach.**
 - 2] **Though there was no synagogue, there were some WOMEN who were meeting at the river.**
 - 3] **What were they doing?— Acts 16:13** *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*
 - 1- **It is likely that they were doing similar things to what was regularly done in the Jewish synagogues.**

- 2- They likely would have reading of the OT Scriptures.
 - 3- That kind of interest and foundation would make the work of Paul & Silas much easier.
 - 4- They would begin preaching Christ to these women beginning with the prophecies of the coming Messiah.
 - 5- They would announce to these women that the MESSIAH was Jesus of Nazareth and that He has died for their sins.
3. Lydia of Thyatira, a seller of purple, was one of the women at the river.
- 1) She became a Christian (v. 15).
 - 2) How did this happen?
 - 3) Let's not forget that Paul had received a VISION from the Lord to go into Macedonia and HELP them.
 - 4) It seems pretty obvious that the HELP that Paul & Silas could provide was the gospel message.
 - 5) Notice what Luke records here: Acts 16:14 *And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*
 - 1- God sent the messengers.
 - 2- Those messengers went out to the river to speak to the women assembled there.
 - 3- So the messengers were sent by God; and verse 14 tells us that Lydia's heart was opened by the Lord.
 - 4- It should be obvious that the Lord used the gospel message preached by Paul & Silas to open her heart.
 - 5- The result was her baptism (v. 15).
 - 6- Evidently she became the FIRST MEMBER of the church at Philippi.
4. She had a very important request to make of Paul & Silas.
- 1) Acts 16.15... *...IF YE HAVE JUDGED ME TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE LORD, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.*
 - 2) Obviously, she had an interest in getting a strong church established in her city.
 - 3) She must have played a vital role in promoting the truth of the gospel in that city.
 - 4) Soon, the jailer and his family would also be added to this church.
5. Women were very important in the 1st Century church; they are also VITAL for the church's success in the 21st century.

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

IV. Shows HOW a local congregation can be started in any new community (13).

Acts 16:13 *And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

1. When Paul came to Philippi, there was no church. When he left it was there and later helped him greatly in his work (Phil 1:5; 4:15).
2. How did it begin?
3. The gospel was preached, people were saved by their obedience to it (cf., Acts 2:47).
4. Faithful Christians moving to a new community do not have to start a new denomination or join an existing one that does not follow the Bible.
5. They can worship and teach others.
6. Results we read about at Philippi in the 1st Century can be the same in our day: Luke 8:11 **Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.**

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

V. Teaches me that a Christian's FAITHFULNESS in adversity is a POWERFUL INFLUENCE (29-30).

Acts 16:29-30 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, (30) And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

1. If we go back up to verse 25 we read: Acts 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.
 - 1) Do you suppose that this jailer had EVER heard someone treated the way Paul & Silas had been treated actually SINGING IN JAIL?
 - 2) It is highly UNLIKELY that such had ever happened before.
 - 3) They were praising God when most would expect them to be CURSING God.
 - 4) That significant DIFFERENCE in expectation and what actually happened had to have impressed this jailer.
2. Acts 16:26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.
 - 1) Now, God presents a supernatural event.
 - 2) It is not difficult for the jailer to connect the men who were singing praises to God with the results of the miracle he was seeing with his own eyes.
 - 3) When the jailer woke up, he was ready to kill himself (v. 27), thinking the prisoners had escaped.
 - 4) Paul stopped him (v. 28).
 - 5) He realized there was something special about these men.
 - 1- The jailer correctly concluded that these men were representatives of a powerful God.
 - 2- His desire, then, was to know more—ASKING THE GREATEST QUESTION ANYONE HAS EVER ASKED—WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?
 - 3- They preached the gospel to the jailer (v. 32).
 - 4- Verse 34 tells us that his family likewise obeyed the gospel.
3. Surely, the attitudes of Paul & Silas and their behavior in the midst of the adversity of IMPRISONMENT was a factor in influencing this jailer.

4. You and I, as Christians, really need to **BE AWARE** of the fact that people are **WATCHING US**.
- 1) It is a serious matter when Christians live lives that are not consistent with the doctrine of the One whose name they wear.
 - 2) We have opportunity to be a **POSITIVE** influence every day and in so many ways.
 - 3) Let's learn from Paul & Silas what **CAN** come of living a life consistent with our profession.

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

VI. Makes CLEAR that one CANNOT BE SAVED BY FAITH ONLY (33).

Acts 16:33 **And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.**

1. Faith was not all the jailer was taught.
2. They spoke the word to him (v. 32), so he would know what to believe (Rom 10:17).
3. What he heard and believed prompted him to repent (shown by his washing their stripes to soothe them rather than beating them, v. 33).
4. And to be baptized, even at the inconvenient hour (v. 33).
- 3) The subsequent obedience of the man after believing coincides with other scriptures:
 - 1) James 2:24 **Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.**
 - 2) Acts 22:16 **And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**
 - 3) Acts 2:38-41 **Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. (41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.**

Acts 16 Helps me in that it—

VII. I see that there is POWER in the gospel to CHANGE OUR LIVES and our Destines (34).

Acts 16:34 **And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.**

1. When this chapter began, what type of man was the jailer?
2. When he despaired of his life and wanted to end it, almost certainly fearing that his life was going to be taken--what was his state?
3. When the story ended, what type of person was he? He was a rejoicing man in a happy, Christian household (v. 34).
4. What made the difference?

Conclusion:

1. **Acts 16 is an important chapter.**
 - 1) **We meet a close fellow-worker of Paul's: Timothy.**
 - 2) **We read about THE MACEDONIAN CALL.**
 - 3) **We meet Lydia and learn about the establishment of the church in Philippi.**
 - 4) **We read about one of the great CONVERSIONS recorded in Acts—the Philippian Jailer.**
2. **We should open this chapter and study it often.**
3. **There are a multitude of lessons to be found within its 40 verses.**