

Study of Philippians – Acts 16:1-15 Bellevue Church of Christ – Winter 2011 / 2012

Acts 14:19-20

I. The Circumcision at Lystra (1-5)

a. The Recipient (1-3)

II Tim 1:5 }

b. The Reason (3)

Acts 15:1-2, 19
Gal 5:2-3

c. The Results (4-5)

Acts 15:22-29

¹ Paul came also to **Derbe** and to **Lystra**. A disciple was there, named **Timothy**, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek.

Paul's "child in the faith"
-I Tim 1:2

² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium.

³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and **circumcised him** because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.

⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they **increased in numbers daily**.

⁶ And they went through the region of **Phrygia** and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in **Asia**. *Proconsular Asia - Seven Churches (Rev)*

Gal 4:13-14

⁷ And when they had come up to **Mysia**, they attempted to go into **Bithynia**, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

⁸ So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

¹⁰ And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately **we** sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Beginning of the "we" passages in Acts. This ceases after the group leaves Philippi, but begins again when Paul comes back to Philippi in Acts 20.

¹¹ So, setting sail from **Troas**, we made a direct voyage to **Samothrace**, and the following day to **Neapolis**,

¹² and from there to **Philippi**, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.

Present day Kavalla
Port city 10 miles from Philippi

¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. *Possibly "woman of/from Lydia"*

¹⁴ One who heard us was a woman named **Lydia**, from the city of **Thyatira**, a **seller of purple goods**, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.

¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

It was Paul's custom to visit the Synagogue when going to a new city

*Salamis (13:5)
*Antioch (13:14)
*Thessalonica (17:1)
*Berea (17:10)
*Athens (17:16-17)
*Ephesus (19:1,8)

There was apparently no synagogue here...

II. The Call at Troas (6-10)

a. Don't go to Asia (6-8)

b. Go to Europe (9-10)

"Poseidon's Island"
Mount Fengari

III. The Conversions at Philippi (11-34)

a. A Businesswoman (11-15)

1) The Place

Gangites River

2) The Person

Western Asia Minor
-Province of Lydia
-Rev 2:18

Dye or Fabric
(Murex Shell)

b. Come back next week (16-34)

The first European converts. Lydia's house became the center for Paul's outreach in Philippi.

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Facts and History of Philippi

Philippi was ten miles northwest of Neapolis, on a plain bounded by Mount Pangaeus to the north and northeast, with the rivers Strymon and Nestos on either side. It lay astride the Via Egnatia and near the Gangites River, a tributary of the Strymon. It was located in ancient Macedonia, or modern day Greece.

The history of the site of Philippi begins in 360/359 B.C. when the colonists from Thasos founded the first city, called Krenides (“springs”). In 356 B.C. the city is endangered by the Thacians and it turns to king Philip II for support. Philip had already foreseen the economic and strategic importance of the city, so he conquered it, he fortified it and he renamed it after himself (Philippi).

Philip II of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great) established a large Greek colony there in 356 B.C. He changed the name of the area from Krenides (“springs”) to Philippi. Philippi became part of the Roman Empire in 167 B.C., following the battle of Pydna. Shortly after 146 B.C. it was connected to other important Roman cities by the Via Egnatia.

During Roman times, the fame of Philippi stemmed from its having been the site of the decisive battle of the second civil war in 42 B.C., when Mark Anthony and Octavian (later Augustus Caesar) defeated Brutus and Cassius. After the war many Roman army veterans were settled at Philippi and the city was designated a Roman colony. Philippi’s importance during the NT period, therefore, resulted from its agriculture, its strategic commercial location on both sea and land routes, its still functioning gold mines, and its status as a Roman Colony.

Excavations

Archaeological work has revealed a large and well-preserved forum, a theater, the alleged jail of Paul and several Byzantine churches, including one of the earliest churches known in Greece. The number of churches in the city in the Byzantine period indicate Philippi's importance to Christians at this time. A series of earthquakes apparently destroyed many of the buildings and probably contributed to the city's decline.

Paul’s Second Missionary Journey

"Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached The Word of The Lord and see how they are doing." (Acts 15:36)

The second journey began on a rather unfortunate circumstance: "Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the word. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left." (Acts 15:37-40)

The reason for the quarrel was that during Paul's First Missionary Journey, the young Mark had left Paul and Barnabas and returned home early in the journey. Although Paul and Barnabas apparently never again traveled together, there was no lasting animosity between them - Paul later spoke highly of Barnabas. Paul also made up with Mark, who later was with him during Paul's imprisonment in Rome (Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11).

Paul's second missionary journey began about 49 AD, and like the first journey, it was no "10-day excursion." He would not return for about 3 years, until 52.

The previous journey began by sailing to Cyprus, but this time he set out overland through Syria and Cilicia, to revisit the churches he had earlier established in Asia, including those at Derbe, and then at Lystra where Timothy joined him (Acts 16:1-5). From there they continued northward through Phrygia and Galatia (Acts 16:6). Paul remained in Galatia for some time due to an unspecified illness (Galatians 4:13-14).

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From Galatia, Paul then intended to travel northeastward through Bithynia, a region on the shore of the Black Sea, however "they tried to enter Bithynia, but The Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas." (Acts 16:7-8). Troas was on the shore of the The Aegean Sea - Jesus Christ Himself was directing Paul westward from Asia, where Paul had intended to remain, toward Greece. Paul was taking the Gospel across to Europe.

At Troas, "During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:9). Paul realized that the vision was a message from The Lord, so the very next day he sailed across the Dardanelles, also called the Hellespont, which separated him from Europe.

In Macedonia, churches were established through Philippi (Acts 16:11-39), Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9), and Berea (Acts 17:10-15). The journey was not without its problems - Paul and Silas were often opposed by those who refused to believe, and were once thrown in jail for casting the spirit out of a Fortune Teller (Acts 16:16-40). It seems that riots and mobs were always close at hand.

To escape the deadly threats made against him, "the brothers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. The men who accompanied Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible." (Acts 17:14-15). It was then, while waiting for them, that Paul made his now-famous visit to Athens (see Paul In Athens).

From Athens Paul crossed over to Corinth, the seat of the Roman government of Achaia. He remained there for a year and a half, spreading The Word to Jews and Greeks with much success. Also at Corinth, he wrote his two epistles to the church of Thessalonica, his earliest apostolic letters - today known as First and Second Thessalonians.

After numerous other spiritually profitable visits throughout the region, Paul then began making his homeward journey because he wanted to observe Pentecost at Jerusalem. He was accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla as far as Ephesus. From there he made his way by sea, through Rhodes and Cyprus to Caesarea. From there he went up to Jerusalem.

Difficult Start to Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Acts 15:36-41 (ESV)

³⁶ And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are." ³⁷ Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Derbe and Lystra

Acts 14:19-23 (ESV)

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰ But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹ When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ²³ And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

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Timothy – Paul’s Child in the Faith

1 Timothy 1:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, ² To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Timothy’s Mother and Grandmother

2 Timothy 1:4-5 (ESV)

⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

Timothy and Paul

Romans 16:21 (ESV)

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

1 Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

1 Thessalonians 3:1-6 (ESV)

¹ Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, ² and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, ³ that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this. ⁴ For when we were with you, we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. ⁵ For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labor would be in vain. ⁶ But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love and reported that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, as we long to see you—

Philippians 1:1 (ESV)

¹ Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

Philippians 2:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you.

Colossians 1:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ² To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Philemon 1:1-3 (ESV)

¹ Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our beloved fellow worker ² and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house: ³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Timothy’s Circumcision

Acts 15:1-2 (ESV)

¹ But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." ² And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.

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Acts 15:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, ²⁰ but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. ²¹ For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues."

Galatians 5:2-3 (ESV)

² Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. ³ I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law.

Acts 15:22-29 (ESV)

²² Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers, ²³ with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. ²⁴ Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, ²⁵ it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶ men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷ We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. ²⁸ For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: ²⁹ that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."

Paul's Infirmary in Galatia

Galatians 4:13-14 (ESV)

¹³ You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, ¹⁴ and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.

"We" Passages in Acts

Acts 17:1 (ESV)

¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

Acts 20:1-6 (ESV)

¹ After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia. ² When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. ³ There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. ⁴ Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus from Berea, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. ⁵ These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, ⁶ but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

Paul's Visit to Synagogues

Acts 13:5 (ESV)

⁵ When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.

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Acts 13:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.

Acts 17:1 (ESV)

¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

Acts 17:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue.

Acts 17:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.

Acts 19:1-10 (ESV)

¹ And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all. ⁸ And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Thyatira

Revelation 2:18-29 (ESV)

¹⁸ "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: 'The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze. ¹⁹ " I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. ²⁰ But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. ²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. ²² Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, ²³ and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve. ²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. ²⁵ Only hold fast what you have until I come. ²⁶ The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, ²⁷ and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. ²⁸ And I will give him the morning star. ²⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

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Acts 16:9-15 – Their Small Beginning

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

(vs. 10) Beginning of the "we" passages in Acts. This very likely means that Luke joined Paul, Silas and Timothy in Troas, and traveled with them to Philippi. The "we" passages cease after the group leaves Philippi, so it is reasonable to think that Luke stayed in Philippi, especially considering that "we" is again used once Paul comes back to Philippi in Acts 20.

11 Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next day came to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. And we were staying in that city for some days.

Samothrace is an island in the northeastern part of the Aegean Sea, lying between Troas and Philippi. Mountainous island that was referred to as Poseidon's Island because from the top of Mount Fengari Poseidon, the Greek god of the waters, earthquakes, and horses, was said to have surveyed the plains of ancient Troy.

Neapolis – (present day Kavalla) port for the commercial center of Philippi, which lay ten miles further inland. Neapolis was on the Via Egnatia, which ran east to Byzantium and West to Philippi, then to Thessalonica, and finally across the Balkan peninsula to Dyrrhachium and its port Egnatia on the Adriatic coast.

13 And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.

It was Paul's custom to visit the Synagogue when going to a new city

- *Salamis* *Acts 13:5*
- *Antioch in Pisidia* *Acts 13:14*
- *Thessalonica* *Acts 17:1*
- *Berea* *Acts 17:10*
- *Athens* *Acts 17:16-17*
- *Ephesus* *Acts 19:1,8*

There was apparently no synagogue in Philippi. The rabbis required that a synagogue be built if ten or more Jewish men (or families) were present in a specific area. Where the Jews had no synagogue they sometimes had an open-air place near the river or sea ; they needed the water for ceremonial washings. These women were either Jews or proselytes.

This river would have been the Gangites which is a tributary of the Strymon river.

14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

Seller of Purple – Either the purple dye or the fabric that was already dyed. Purple dye, which was made from the murex shell, was one of the most valuable commodities of antiquity. The crimson color of royal purple was created by using the Murex brandaris shell. The rare and brilliant color was used by the emperors of Rome. At that time, the dye cost the equivalent of \$10,000 a pound. Purple fabric was used on the official toga at Rome and in Roman colonies. The term "royal purple" is still used today.

Thyatira – famous for making purple dyes and dyeing clothes. City was located in western Asia Minor, in the province of Lydia. Thyatira was one of the seven churches of Asia mentioned in Rev. 2:18.

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Lydia – could refer to “the Lydian lady.” Some have speculated that this could be Euodia or Syntyche (Philippians 4:2), or possibly the “true companion” (4:3). This is all just conjecture.

15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

Small Beginnings... the conversion of Lydia and her household – first European converts. Lydia's house became the center for Paul's outreach in Philippi.