

**POWER OF GOD IN MISSION!**  
**ACTS CH16:6-15**

**INTRODUCTION**

What words would you use to describe our current “culture climate?”

- Fearful, Uncertain, Disconnected, Conspiracies, Kindness, Dedication, Change, Mental Anxiety, Compassion and Opportunities!

We are living in very unusual times! Or are we?

Are we the first generation to live through a pandemic? No!

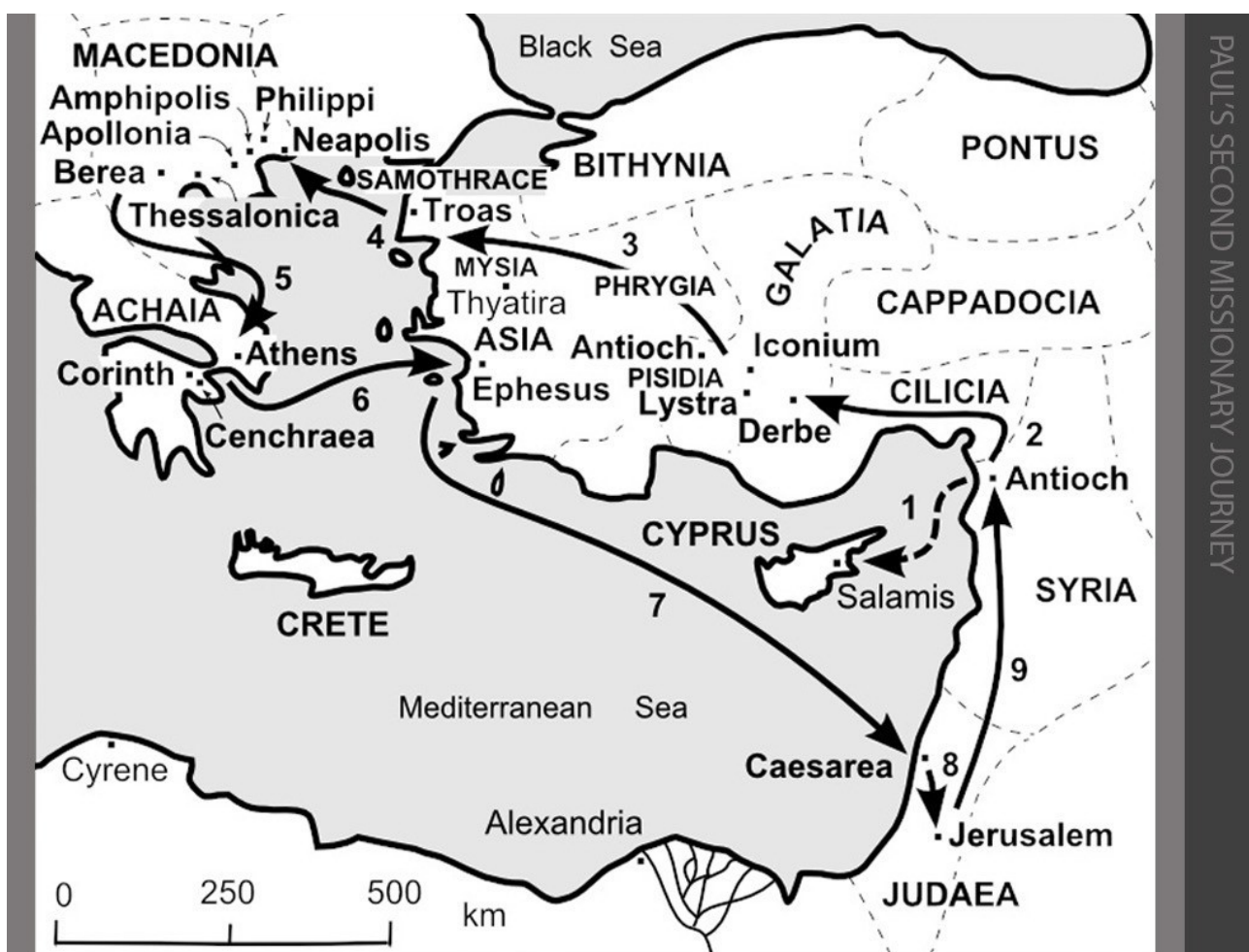
Are we the first generation to live through economic uncertainty? No!

Are we the first generation to live through restrictions? No!

Are we the first generation to live through the implications of a pandemic? No!

***But, we are being affected in various ways! So what do we need to learn?***

The Bible, God's Word, has much to say about the times that we live in! You see (literally) looking through the eyes of the Gospel, which is God's authoritative Word, it reveals to us that the moment Jesus ascended into heaven and sent His Spirit on the day of Pentecost (the out pouring of God the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers), the end times started! Matthew Chapter 24 defines what these “end times” look like! So, in light of the truth of God's Word, where should the Christians confidence lie? In the last days, where can Christians get their confidence from? ***IT HAS TO LIE IN THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL!***



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## **GOD'S PRIORITY! v6-10**

Paul's second missionary journey starts between Acts Ch15:36 – Ch16:6 and finishes in Ch18:22! This mission itself takes place somewhere around A.D. 49-51 and lasts for around 2.5 years! On the map below point 1 shows Barnabas and Mark heading off to Cyprus (Ch15:39) and points 2-9 show the journey of Paul and his team.

The team v6-9, Paul, Timothy and Silas are prevented by the dynamic work of God the Holy Spirit on two occasions v6+7! Not prevented by man, or the world or by satanic forces, but by God's Holy Spirit. When we are sometimes prevented how do we usually interpret things?

***The issue of divine intervention given to guide individuals at crucial times in their lives, occurs here again (Ch7:31, Ch7:55 - Stephen; Ch8:26-40 – Phillip; Ch9:10 - Ananias; Ch9:12 - Saul; Ch10:3 - Cornelius; Ch10:9-19 + Ch11:5 - Peter; Ch16:10, Ch18:9, Ch22:17 - Paul) through a vision given to Paul, directing as to where God wants the work to go next! Amazing! Luke takes time to record for Theo (and us) the dialogue between human purposes and divine purposes! Even those called by God, will have to wait and work patiently in order to discover where God's next opportunity lays! **God's priority is Europe and for that, Dr Luke is needed! What do we know about the team?*****

### **Luke**

- Luke is only mentioned **three times in the New Testament** and each time through the apostle Paul's writings we learn something about the qualities of Luke, **Colossians Ch4:14 (my dear friend Luke the Doctor), Philemon 24 (my fellow worker) and 2 Timothy Ch4:11 (Only Luke is with me).**
- Col Ch4:14 – Companion of Paul and a doctor!
- Luke Ch1:1-4 + Acts Ch1:1 – A writer of two Books in the New Testament!
- Acts Ch16:10, 11, 12, 13, 16, Ch20:5-Ch21:18, Ch27:1-Ch28:16 – A regular gospel worker!

### **Paul**

- Philippians Ch3:3-6 – He was a Jew!
- Acts Ch7:58, Gal Ch1:1, 1<sup>st</sup> Cor Ch15:9 – He was influential!
- Acts Ch9 – He was Christian!
- *Acts Ch13-28 – He was a Gospel Minister and Worker!*
- *Acts Ch13:45 – Filled with jealousy and talking abusively about what Paul was saying!*
- *Acts Ch13:50 – Stirred up persecution for Paul!*
- *Acts Ch14:5 – Plot afoot to ill-treat Paul!*
- *Acts Ch14:19 – They stoned Paul!*
- *Acts Ch16:22 – Paul was stripped and beaten!*
- *Acts Ch16:23 – Paul was severely flogged!*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch1:8 – Thoughts of suicide!*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch11:24 – Flogged with 39 lashes on 5 occasions (195 lashes)!*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch11:25 – Three times beaten with rods!*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch11:25 - Three times shipwrecked!*
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch11:25 - Twenty four hours in the open sea!*

### **Timothy**

- 1 Timothy Ch4:12, 1 Timothy Ch5:1-2- He started off young in ministry!

- 1 Timothy Ch5:23 – He had ongoing health issues!
- 1 Corinthians Ch16:10 – He could be fearful of ministry!
- **How does Paul describe him?**
- 1 Cor Ch4:17 – Faithful in the LORD
- Philippians Ch2:19-23 – No-one else like him
- 1 Thess Ch3:2-6 – God's fellow worker in spreading the Gospel
- Hebrews Ch13:23 – A prisoner, released
- **Timothy co-wrote with Paul in no less than 6 Books -**
- Romans Ch16:21
- 2 Corinthians Ch1:1
- Philippians Ch1:1
- 1 Thess Ch1:1 + 2 Thess Ch1:1
- Philemon Ch1:1

### **Silas**

- Acts Ch15:22, 32 – He was gifted!
- 2 Cor Ch1:19, 1 Thess Ch1:1, 2 Thess Ch1:1, 1 Peter Ch5:12 – Also called Silvanus!
- Acts Ch15:22-35 – Commissioned by the Church for mission!
- Acts Ch15:36-41 – Silas accompanied Paul!
- Acts Ch16-18 – Could be left to oversee things!
- 1 Thess Ch1:1 + 2 Thess Ch1:1 – Associated with Paul in writing letters!
- 2 Cor Ch1:19 – Was involved in preaching the gospel!

What a team! Ministry is always a “team” ministry. God will always provide the workers, with the gifts, to carry out His work! Always! Teams will always be shaped in working closely together, praying together, hurting together, celebrating together, there will be ups and downs, and only Jesus can keep us together and He will, to accomplish what He has ordained!

### **GOD'S PLACE! v11-13**

The total distance from Troas to Neapolis is around 156 miles and with a favourable sea wind the journey could be done within a couple of days, although the return journey took 5 days (Acts Ch20:6)! Here for the first time we find Luke's fascination with details of sea travel (Ch20:5-6, 13-17; Ch21:1-8; Ch27:1-Ch28:16). Bird watcher's are known as “Twitchers” but those whose passion is the seas and voyages, what are they known as? “Squids!”

Philippi was located in Macedonia about 10 miles inland from the Aegean Sea. The original settlement was called Krenides (meaning “Springs”) but in 356B.C. the name was changed by Philip 11, King of Macedonia (359-336 B.C.), when the City was enlarged with many new inhabitants and considerable construction. Following the battle of Actium in 31B.C. the City was given the title “Colonia Julia Philippensis” and later in 27 B.C. “Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis.” The change in status provided the inhabitants with numerous advantages, including autonomous government, immunity from tribute, and treatment as if they actually lived in Italy.

***The first European Church was founded around A.D.49/50*** in the course of Paul's second missionary journey (Acts Ch16). While the apostle was in Troas, he was instructed in a vision to proceed into Macedonia, and ***Philippi became the first European City in which he preached.*** Apparently the Jewish population in Philippi was

small, at least there was no Jewish synagogue.

Paul's practice in spreading the gospel in a new City was always to go first, to the synagogue. When invited as a visitor to address the congregation, he would take the opportunity to show from Scripture that the crucified and risen Christ was the long-awaited Messiah (Acts Ch9:22, 13:5, 14; 14:1). ***The fact that no synagogue existed must have been discouraging.*** It meant that there were less than 10 male Jews in this significant city, the number necessary to form a synagogue. There is no passionate speech in the Synagogues or public preaching in city centres, it's totally different. ***This time the focus is on individual encounters and evangelism!***

### **GOD'S PEOPLE! v14-15**

Here besides the river, they found a small group of women (Acts Ch16:13) and not men, despite the vision! These were the people the Lord had prepared. When Paul spoke, one particular heart was opened; others joined her.

The first convert, Lydia by name, was a business woman with servants and a substantial home. She graciously invited the apostolic missionaries to share her home and to receive her hospitality. While the first Christians continued to meet at the riverside, it was probably in this house, the home of Lydia, that the first church in Philippi began to meet (Acts Ch16:14-15). ***When hearts are opened, so are homes!***

This is the second "household" of baptisms! Ch10:33, Ch10:48, + Ch11:14 – The Centurion, now Lydia and her household – Ch16:15 and soon the jailer and his household – Ch16:33 and the Synagogue ruler and his household – Ch18:8!

### **APPLICATION**

God's directing to save those families that God has chosen. There are families connected to us, connected to this Church and connected to this community that God is going to save. We just need to be open to the leading of God the Holy Spirit and faithful in our evangelism! He will open hearts!