



Decade of Availability Spirit-Led Night Vision

Follow the Cloud Not The Crowd

This passage reveals that God's purpose in missions does not change but His strategy may be different from place to place and people to people.

Following the cloud: The 'cloud' is representative of the presence of God. It was in the cloud and the fire that God led the Israelites through the wilderness. He'll do the same for us as we stay in the cloud of His presence.

A. The Man From Macedonia vv. 6-12

1. Yes—get going: Acts 15:36-16:5 Paul sensed from the Holy Spirit that he and Barnabas were to go back and visit the churches they had planted. Paul and Barnabas split up and Paul took off with Silas and then Timothy.

2. No—don't go there: vv. 6-7 Twice the Holy Spirit tells Paul that he is NOT to go and preach in a specific area. The first NO probably came as a prophetic word while he was in Lystra. The second was 'on the way' and may have had a similar impact as when Jesus met Paul on the road to Damascus.

3. Help—"come here": vv. 9-10 In a dream/vision Paul sees a man from Macedonia calling for help. The man does not say what kind of help. However in verse 10 Luke reveals that when Paul shared the vision they all took it to mean: "Come here and preach the Gospel."

Interpreting a dream/vision: It's important to note that Paul's vision needs an interpretation. Some dreams/visions have nothing to do with God's direction—others do. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the meaning. Often we need others to confirm that meaning.

4. We're coming as fast as we can: vv. 11-12 Paul and his team got going to Macedonia as soon as they got passage on a ship from Troas.

B. The Woman From Macedonia vv. 12-15

1. Arrival in Philippi: v. 12 Philippi was a Roman controlled city. It was the first European city that Paul stopped at. They arrived during the week and spent time getting to know the city.

2. Down by the riverside: v. 13 There were no Synagogues in Philippi so on the Sabbath Paul and the team went down to the river where they heard a group gathered on the Sabbath to worship.

3. From crowds to small groups and individuals: It's important to note that much of Paul's ministry through the rest of Acts is to individuals and/or small gatherings. God is MOST glorified when we are **lead by the Holy Spirit**—to large crowds or to one individual.

4. The work of salvation: v. 14 Be clear...we don't work for our salvation—it is the gift of God. But that is not to say that 'work' is NOT being done.

First: The 'Lord' had opened Lydia's heart.

Next: Paul preached the good news of the Gospel

Lastly: Lydia believed...put her faith in the Messiah.

5. Evidence of salvation: v. 15 Lydia and her whole house was saved and baptized in water.

6. The first house church in Europe: v. 15 Lydia's home became the first church in Philippi and in Europe. **The "man from Macedonia" turned out to be a woman who was mighty in the Lord.**

Acts 16:6-15 (KJV)

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were **forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,**

7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the **Spirit suffered them not.**

8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

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.

10 And after he had seen the vision, **immediately we** endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a **straight course** to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

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.

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.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.