

## Acts 15: 30- 16:5

As we look at Paul's return to Antioch and to the beginning of his second missionary journey, we will be focusing on two aspects of his ministry. The corporate encouragement of the church and individual discipleship.

v.30 they return to Antioch, they have gone up because some came in trying to put the believers under the law and now we see Paul and Barnabas coming back with the continued message of grace.

v.31 the church rejoiced over encouragement- we are to be encouragers  
- contrasted with discouragement we get in the world  
- don't be - I could have gotten it better or for less, etc.

v.32 Judas and Silas prophets- from Jerusalem  
- Vines Expository dictionary defines prophets like this- the office of prophet in the NT was both a preaching of the divine counsels of grace already accomplished and the foretelling of the purposes of God in the future

### **How did they minister to the church? 5 ways**

#### ***1) they taught the Word***

- Sunday and Wed. studies
- women's Tuesday studies
- children's ministry
- home fellowships
- radio
- web page studies
- tapes
- daily devotionals

#### ***2) they encouraged***

- Romans 12:15- rejoice with those that rejoice, weep with those that weep  
- 1 Cor. 1:4 through 1 Cor. 1:7 <sup>4</sup>I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, <sup>6</sup>even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, <sup>7</sup>so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Eph. 1:15 through Eph. 1:16 <sup>15</sup>Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the

*Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup>do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:*

*Phil. 1:3 through Phil. 1:6 <sup>3</sup>I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, <sup>4</sup>always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, <sup>5</sup>for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup>being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

*Col. 1:3 through Col. 1:5 <sup>C3</sup>We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, <sup>4</sup>since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; <sup>5</sup>because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,*

*1 Thess. 1:2 through 1 Thess. 1:4 <sup>2</sup>We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, <sup>3</sup>remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, <sup>4</sup>knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.*

*2 Thess. 1:3 through 2 Thess. 1:4 <sup>3</sup>We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, <sup>4</sup>so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,*

*Philem. 1:4 through Philem. 1:7 <sup>4</sup>I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, <sup>5</sup>hearing of your love and faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints, <sup>6</sup>that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in <sup>£</sup>you in Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>For we <sup>£</sup>have great <sup>£</sup>joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.*

### **3) they strengthened them**

- military terms-give them tools and resources they need to do the work
- give a safe place to be restored
- let them lean upon you

### **4) exhorted**

- see *Ezek. 34*- part of exhorting is sometimes destroying the fat and strong, in other words, the works of the flesh

**5) *they stayed there for time/ some remained***

- people need to know that we are in their life for the long haul
- stay the course
- dance until the bear wants to stop

v.36-39 division of John Mark

- v.38 he departed- *aphisteômi* to *remove*, to revolt; desert, depart, draw (fall) away, refrain, withdraw self.
- Paul's heart was that Mark would be a hindrance to the ministry
- Barnabas (his uncle we find out in Col.4) has a heart to restore
- neither man's heart was particularly wrong here, both sought God's work to be done
- God uses this- some teach this was God's plan, I disagree, God does not bring division to believers, perhaps God wanted them to split to increase the work but not through division- BUT God uses it for His purpose- that is great comfort to me

Chapter 16

We see Paul now take Timothy as his disciple

v.1- II Timothy tells us of the faith passed on by His grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice

- Timothy was well spoken of, had a good reputation

v.3 Paul had him circumcised even though Paul had just argued against forcing Gentiles to be circumcised

- the issue before was circumcision to obtain righteousness; now the issue is not stumbling others but your freedom- *see 1 Corinthians 9:19*

***1 Corinthians 9:19 through 1 Corinthians 9:23 (NKJV)*** <sup>19</sup>*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;* <sup>20</sup>*and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the <sup>£</sup>law, that I might win those who are under the law;* <sup>21</sup>*to those who are without law, as without law (not being without <sup>£</sup>law toward God, but under <sup>£</sup>law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;* <sup>22</sup>*to the weak I became <sup>£</sup>as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* <sup>23</sup>*Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I*

*may be partaker of it with you.*

Now we approach the area of individual discipleship, although we are following the story of Paul and Timothy, the same thing is going on with Barnabas and Mark which is evidenced in **2 Tim. 4:11 as Paul writes to his disciple concerning Barnabas' disciple**<sup>11</sup> *Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.*

Discipleship involves a personal touch,

- spending time with someone developing a relationship
- letting someone know of your belief in them, in their gifts, their call
- training them
  
- Short term mission trips
- Bible college
- home fellowships

In 1 Timothy Paul Encourages Timothy  
to fight the fight

To be a man of prayer

To set a standard

Chapter 5 to deal personally

2 Timothy 2- commit these to faithful men

- criteria for discipleship- faithful

As a church, as individual believers, we are called to these things to strengthen the Body- look for ways to do this

To disciple and to be discipled-

- \* Have a Paul in your life- more mature believer you can learn from, follow
- \* Have a Barnabas or Silas in your life- someone you are shoulder to shoulder with in the work of the ministry, prayer partner
- \* Have at least one Timothy or Mark in your life- someone you can help along and train- not with the idea that you are more spiritual but simply someone you can comfort with the comfort you have been comforted with