

In Step with God

Scripture Reading — Acts 15:36-16:40

After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. — Acts 16:10

Missionary work is hard. To enter a new community and join in with the work of God takes wisdom and a heart in rhythm with God. As we try to keep up with all the places where Paul goes, we see changes. Paul and Barnabas have a dispute about including John (Mark) in their next journey, and they separate. Silas and Timothy join with Paul's traveling group. It seems also that Luke, the writer of Acts, joins them a little later (see Acts 16:10, where the narration suddenly changes to "we").

Paul remembers the churches that he helped to start and grow. Paul knows the value of strengthening faith communities, but he also follows the Spirit's direction. Stopped from going into one area, Paul obeys a vision from the Spirit and turns toward Macedonia. Paul seeks to be in step with God.

In Macedonia, God was already preparing the hearts of people when Paul showed up. For example, a woman named Lydia was already a worshiper of God when "the Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message" about Jesus. Even the resistance of a hardened jailer crumbled. Trembling before Paul and Silas, he asked, "What must I do to be saved?"

As we walk in this world, do we trust that the Spirit is going before us? What does it mean for you to be in step with God?

Prayer

Dear God, you invite us to join you in your work in this world. Help us to follow you and to join our hearts to yours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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