

The Call To Macedonia

Acts 16:6-10

MEMORY VERSE

MATTHEW 28:19-20

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A baby doll, a long strip of paper, and markers or crayons.

A tape recorder and a pre-recorded audio tape.

As many Ziploc bags, paper towels, dry beans, and water as the number of children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Save the Baby

Use a baby doll and a long strip of paper. Have the kids in your class draw and color different things on the long "mural" that could be dangerous. Ask one child to draw a mommy at the end of the paper. Let a volunteer "walk" the baby down the mural, trying to get to its mommy. Let the class shout out to try to save the baby from the dangers.

Just like we can see the dangers and want to save the baby, God sees every good and bad thing and guides us accordingly. So, **we must be obedient to the voice of the Lord.**

LESSON TIME!

ACTS 16:6

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

The ministry of Paul was very diverse. He was a pastor and a teacher, an Apostle and also a wonderful author, but at the heart of Paul's ministry was the call of an evangelist. Paul's desire and love for evangelism is unquestionably one of the greatest of all time.

When God calls someone to the ministry of evangelism, it generally means a life on the mission field. A missionary is one that is sent out, whether that is across the world or across town. Paul and his friends were sent out by the Christian church in Antioch to evangelize or to teach the message of Jesus to people in other areas and countries. Do you know any missionaries who are serving in other countries?

Paul and his companions (probably Silas and Timothy) had already been missionaries to Phrygia and Galatia; now they wanted to go into Asia. The Holy Spirit forbade them to go. Sometimes God will make it clear to us what His will is concerning a direction that we are taking. Sometimes we may want to do something, even a good thing and He tells us no, but it is always because He loves us and knows what is best.

What are some of the ways that God can change our direction? God can lead us in another direction by closing the door on the direction we are presently going. Sometimes He speaks to us by His Spirit in a still, small voice in our heart. At other times He may speak through someone else, which is called a word of wisdom or prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). Sometimes He speaks, as He spoke to Paul, in a vision or dream. No matter how God chooses to speak to us, **we must be obedient to the voice of the Lord.**

ACTS 16:7-8

After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.

So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

Paul and his companions kept moving in a forward direction. They kept trying to open doors into other areas and countries to see if God would allow them to go in that direction. Sometimes we may not know exactly where God would have us to go, we

just move in a direction and trust that He will make the way clear for us as we go. That is what Paul and his companions did.

This is a very important lesson for us to learn. Until God shows us specifically what direction to go in, we should always be busy doing the work God has called us to do. Sometimes God closes a door and does not show us the next door to open, but we should keep a diligent heart for God in ministry. Never give up serving the Lord; eventually He will unlock the next door for us to go through. Just keep being faithful and do your best to serve the Lord in whatever situation you find yourself. **We must be obedient to the voice of the Lord.**

ACTS 16:9-10

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."

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.

Finally God showed Paul an open door. The way God chose to show Paul was through a vision. A vision can either be a night dream (Acts 2:17; Daniel 2 & 4; Genesis 28:12) or a daydream (Matthew 1:20; Matthew 27:19). God gave Paul a dream about a man from Macedonia who needed help. He was calling Paul to come and help him.

It is important to note that not every dream we dream is from God. Sometimes it only means we had too much pizza. How do we determine that our dream was from God? Ask the class to recall their dreams. Ask if they feel as if they have ever had a dream from God? What makes them think it was from God?

The Shepherd's Voice

Tell your class that you are the shepherd and that they must obey your voice. Make an audio tape of several commands, but have two other people with different sounding voices make similar commands like: touch your toes, pat your head, clap your hands, hop on one foot, etc. Play the tape for the class and have them follow only the commands made by your voice. If they follow the false shepherds they must sit down.

Explain to your class that in order to hear and obey the voice of our shepherd, Jesus, we must know Him, His nature, and His word.

Several things are important when trying to determine if our dreams are from God.

- 1) Does it agree with the Bible? God will never ask us to do anything against His Word.
- 2) Does the dream give us a confirmation of something He has been speaking to us about or about an area He is leading us? Paul's dream was an answer to his prayers. His dream was a confirmation of the direction in which God was already leading him.
- 3) If the dream includes someone besides ourselves, then the dream must also be a confirmation to their hearts. In verse ten, we see that his companions confirmed Paul's dream to be of God. Each of them felt that the dream was of God, so they acted in obedience to the direction of God and headed into Macedonia. Luke uses the word "we" in verse ten. This must mean that He went along with Paul and his companions.

The important lesson to learn here is that when we know we have heard from God, we must be obedient to His voice. What is God leading you to do today? What is God's direction for your life? Are you willing to be obedient and follow His direction? **We must be obedient to the voice of the Lord.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to listen to and obey the voice of the Lord. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.