

GOD IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH, PERSON BY PERSON

Acts 16:6-40

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1.) GOD IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH

Acts 1:6-11

- Are you gonna fix everything now - no, not for you to know
- Go witness - Jerusalem, Samaria, ends of the earth (San Diego)
- Jesus floats away, Angels say “why looking up to heaven?” - really funny!
- Jesus is coming back, until then - you have your job (Witness)
 - might say “Xians need to keep it to themselves”
 - witnessing is natural reaction to something amazing
- Our job is to witness, God’s job is to build his church

Acts 16:1-10

- 6-10 - Working their way toward Europe, try to go down to Southern Turkey (Holy Spirit forbid) then to Northern Turkey (Spirit did not allow) - sometimes God leads through open doors, and sometimes through closed doors
 - Maybe their donkey broke down, or they missed their connecting flight
 - Vision appeared to Paul at night of a person in Macedonia (Greece) - come over here and help us
- God knows whom he wants to save, he will guide you to those he is working on - sometimes he uses cool things like visions
- Notice that God guided them as they were in motion - Not sitting on butts - believed that God said “go to all nations”

A: This is an invitation for us to get moving: GOD IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH!

2.) PERSON BY PERSON

LYDIA

- 11-15 Philippi (leading Roman City)
- After a few days want to worship, no place of worship - go to river
- Lydia - seller of purple cloths - rich businesswoman, non-Jewish
- God opened up her heart, to pay attention
- This is what it takes to believe in Jesus (opening of the heart) - aha moment!
- “But I thought I chose God, I opened myself up to him!” - 3 steps
- Believes and immediately gets baptized - New Life, New Family, New Lord, New purpose
- She also responds with hospitality - prevailed upon us
- When you experience the love and hospitality of God, you immediately give it to others

Notice: This is the first church in Europe - the first convert is a woman!

If this were an ancient legend, the writers never would've written it this way, because they didn't value women to the same degree as God; Be encouraged ladies!

SLAVE GIRL

- 16-18 - Followed by a slave girl - spirit of divination (ability to talk to unseen spirits. Sorcerer, Witch)
- Brought owners much gain
- Followed saying "These men are servants of the Most High God" - that is a true statement
- Even demons know the truth and have to bow to Jesus
- But what she doing - trying to be annoying and illegitimate their message
- Paul gets annoyed and commands the Spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus
- In a Great act of Power, the Spirit leaves

Interlude:

Owners saw, spread lies, and had them beat and thrown in jail - sometimes this will happen
Sometimes things go bad, doesn't mean you are doing something wrong

But God had a plan because HE IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH, PERSON BY PERSON

JAILER:

- 25 - In jail, in inner stocks, singing hymns - joy! honey badger - joy has nothing to do with circumstances, it has everything to do with your focus
- nothing but blood
- All prisoners listed - when Xians have joy in midst of suffering, catches everyone's attention
- Catches God's attention too!
- 16-34 - jailer about to kill himself, Pauls says NO
- The jailer says "What must I do to be saved?" - Irony, free is asking one in chains
- Believe in the Lord Jesus - not get your act together, say 10 hail Mary's
- Shared the message of Jesus -
- Simple: you are worse than you think
- But you are more loved than you can imagine
- Baptized with house
- Rejoice!

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A couple takeaways:

- God works in Many places - peaceful river, scary situation, jail/suffering
- God is working to build a diverse and unified church - RAGE
- God wants to make a statement, not just to the people he is saving but the ones he is working through "Thank you for not making me a woman, slave, or a gentile"
- Tim Keller says God meets us where we are at
- Lydia - showed himself to be beautiful
- Slave - Powerful
- Middle-Class Jailer - practical
- True encounter with God, will open your heart (Lydia, slave, jailer) but it will also motivate you heart like Paul and Silas

CONFESSION

LORD JESUS, WE HAVE FAILED TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE BUILDING YOUR CHURCH
WE HAVE BEEN TIMID TO SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS
WE HAVE DISOBEYED YOUR VOICE

ASSURANCE

Hear the word of our Lord Jesus, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." WE HAVE FAILED, BUT HE HAS FORGIVEN. HE IS WITH US. HE WILL ACCOMPLISH WHAT HE STARTED.