

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 28th Nov 2021 Hymns 100, 430, 488, Read: Acts 16:6-12 Text Acts 16:9-11

Series: Philippians (2) Title: The Macedonia Call

In considering the road that led to Philippi and the establishment of the church at Philippi, we are going back to the historical and scriptural record to see how the Spirit of God, the third person of the Trinity, moved in the lives of His people to be in the place where God wanted them to be.

Paul along with his missionary team, Silas, and Timothy, set out to preach the gospel in Asia.

However, we read in **verse 6** they "**were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia.**" The word **forbidden** means **prevent, to refuse, to withhold**. The idea is to cause something not to happen, to keep back.

Leaving that area behind, they **were come to Mys-i-a**, where **they assayed to go into Bi-thyn-ia.**" But once again we read, in **verse 7** "**but the Spirit suffered them not.**"

The phrase **suffered not**" means the Holy Spirit did **not give permission, His authorisation His approval go into Bi-thyn-ia**".

And one may think all is lost, and lose heart, however Paul and the team pressed on, seeking to go forward to serve God.

The Holy Spirit in closing doors will always open up another door of service and opportunity to live for God.

God closed Asia and Bythnia to Paul so he would go Troas then to Macedonia and then Philippi.

Macedonia was in Europe. Therefore, leaving Troas on the borders of Asia, Paul would sail into Europe to spread the gospel

calling on sinners to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

I FIRST, THE REVEALING OF THE MACEDONIA CALL.

During the night at Troas, **verse 9** states “**a vision appeared to Paul...**” the word **appeared** means **to gaze, to look upon, to behold, to pay attention.**

Before the word of God was complete in written form, God revealed His will, ways and word to men through dreams and visions.

But now we have the word in its completion and therefore, when God reveals His will for your life you will find it revealed in His word.

The vision itself is not to take our attention, but the word of the Lord, the instruction given in the vision.

We know this vision was of the Lord because the instruction given in the dream, Paul said in **at the end of verse 10 that the Lord had called us for the preach the gospel.**

The word **called** in this verse 10 means **to summons, to call unto, to separate from.** It is interesting to note that the same word is used in **Acts 13:2** “... **the Holy Ghost said separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.**” Paul and Barnabas were called to a particular work for God.

Paul makes it clear, this vision was of the Lord, **the Lord had called**, it is the Lord who summoned them to go and preach the gospel of saving grace in Europe at Macedonia and particular to the city of Philippi.

Its not that that other places didn't need the message about redemption through the blood of Christ, they did, but at this time

in Paul's life God decreed first to bring the gospel into Europe, to Philippi a city of Macedonia.

I could say it like this, England needs the gospel, but God in closing every door to any other town or city, the LORD has called me, our family to this place in London to labour for Him.

And that is important, (as we have considered the Lord did not summon them to any other place at that time, but where He called to them go.)

In this vision ***there stood a man of Macedonia and prayed them saying come over into Macedonia and help us.***

The Lord in calling the men to Macedonia, used instrumentality, ***there stood a man of Macedonia.*** The very fact the man was from Macedonia gave Paul insight of the place God was leading.

It was a timely vision, a word in season, from God which told Paul exactly where to go. This vision had to be a great comfort to Paul concerning his ministry.

The man from Macedonia whoever he was, pleaded with the missionary team to come and help, to preach the gospel.

But I stress, Paul going to Macedonia was not based upon the call of the man to come and preach though right and sincere he was to desire the word of God to reach that area for Christ, ***Rather Paul would go to Macedonia because the call of the Lord.***

When the LORD revealed this vision to Paul, he told the other team members and notice their response, in **verse 10** "***we endeavoured to go into Macedonia assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.***"

The words ***assuredly gathered***, are one word in the original Greek. It means ***to conclude, to prove to join together, to come to the same conclusion.***

They all agreed, going into Macedonia, was the call of God, and they went forward in unity as one group to carry out the will of God.

That's what makes the difference in taking any step forward for God, while hearing about the need in any place, or by a particular person, one must say, **I go because the Lord has called me**.

Like this man, people come and go, but the call of God to serve Him remains.

There maybe one who will come and tell you about a job, house church at a certain location, or a ministry in the church, or a Bible collage, and they will share the need for labours which is scriptural to do,

but unless you can say the Lord has called you to labour in that place, that area, unless He has so impressed it upon your heart that you must go, then you better stay where you are.

The Lord in His unlimited Knowledge, has planned your tomorrow with its trials and triumphant, therefore the challenge of His call comes with comfort.

When we face trouble, and over period of time, as Paul & Silas did.

When life is not going your way, Church life is not moving forward, things get tuff, frustration sets in, the burdens increase, pressure is on, and you think have I got it wrong, and start to question the way, places, job's you didn't go, or the relationship you have ended.

Then the call of God is our refuge, our stronghold in that day of trouble, He will deliver us.

we go back and say Lord this situation has arisen, you have called me and I know you will work this out for your glory and bless me.

It is important to know this is God's will and way because when Paul and the team came to Macedonia, and to Philippi they faced opposition. People turned against him.

In the place God called them to go, Paul and Silas were accused of causing trouble in the city, they were physically beaten and then thrown into prison.

I tell you this, had they only come to Europe to Macedonia, because of the man of Macedonia, they would have nothing to depend upon, no word from God to hold unto, or prayer over, they would have lost all confidence, why? because their reason of going was due to the words or will of a man.

but knowing they came to Macedonia because the Lord had called, they could trust in the Lord at all times that whatever took place in their lives, God had meant it unto good.

Therefore, we must learn to trust God all times and pour out our heart unto Him. His ways are perfect, and when we submit to His perfect ways then we recognise that **Jesus is leading us all the way, every day, then we will say, for I know what ever befall men Jesus doeth all things well.**

The Lord Jesus in coming into the world knew the will of God for His life, He said in **John 6:40** ***“And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.***

Can I ask are you in the word of God, are you in the will of God. Believer to discover the path or will of God for your life, you must be in the word of God. God's word is our infallible guide. **Psalm**

119:105 “*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*”

That path we travel, that is the will of God for our life must conform to the Word of God, or it is not the will of God

II SECOND, THE RESPONSE TO THE MACEDONIA CALL

V10 *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.*

Having concluded going into Macedonia to preach was the word and will of God, *immediately we endeavoured to go*. This speaks of their immediate obedience to God's vision! No delay.

The word in **endeavoured** means *to seek, to strive after, to crave after, the idea of determination devotion and delight.*

The word given was as clear and powerful as when God said to the children of God in **Exodus 14:15** *go forward*, Paul responded as Jeremiah when God spoke to him in **Jer 32:8** “*then I knew that this was the word of LORD.*”

Though the Lord's servant May not have understood why the Lord would lead in such a way, yet to be assured this is the way was enough.

What a wonderful example for the missionary team, when they knew they had a word from God, immediately straight away, they desired to go, they were seeking to go the way of the Lord, to obey as the servants of God.

They were devoted to obey the Lord in preaching the gospel in Macedonia. They were surrendered to the call of God. They were willing to go anywhere, God gave the permission to preach the word. God's will and way was their will and way.

They were united this was the call of God to leave all and follow Him, how could they linger, how could they remain where they were, but immediately they desired to **go into Macedonia.**

You see there is a difference in knowing and doing the will of God.

You can know what God wants you to do and not do it. You can know where God wants you to be and not be there.

James urges God people **“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.”**

The missionary team were hearers and doers of the word. It was at the word of God, they obeyed and to their place.

Please keep in mind, none of them knew what awaited them at Macedonia.

But the voice of God was clear, and their response can be summed up by the words wherever you want me to go Lord, my heart is already there. in Going forward they rested upon the call of God.

We must do likewise.

These are great examples of surrender in response to the will of God, but we must look at the greatest servant and response to the will of God, Jesus Christ. Christ is the supreme obedient servant who perfectly responded to the will of God.

Christ was devoted to the will of God, for that is why He came from heaven. He said in **Psalm 40:7-8** **Lo, I come,” said He, “In the volume of the book, it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God.”**

Christ had been commissioned in the covenant of redemption to come into the world and save guilty sinners whom the father had given Him.

Christ had a zeal to do His Father's business. **Luke 9:51** records Christ committed to redeem His people. "...**He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem...**"

Look at those words in **Isa 50:5** these are the prophetic words of Christ regarding His earthly ministry; "**the LORD God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.**"

Christ surrendered Himself to the will of God in that He laid down His life to purchase sinners by His blood sealing their full deliverance from the wrath of God that awaits all who reject Christ as Saviour.

As a result of Paul going into Macedonia, sinners were saved, added unto the Church. Think of the people who could testify of Salvation due to Paul preaching Christ.

How many have been saved, grown in grace due to previous ministers in this place.

Therefore, as a result of Christ response and perfect obedience to God, **Romans 5:19** "**by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**"

Believer you are saved today because Christ was devoted, desired and determined to obey God, Christ was obedient unto death even the death of the cross, to save you. but are you surrendered today?

III THIRD, THE ROUTE AFTER THE MACEDONIA CALL.

V11 **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...**" I just make this point in closing, when God called, He also brought them to Philippi. A similar expression is

found when God called Nehemiah to Jerusalem having left Persia, he said in **Nehemiah 2:12** “***so I came Jerusalem***”

The Lord Jesus is the good and great shepherd of His people, He calls them by name and they follow Him into pastures green.

The route in God's perfect will and way may take time to get here, there may be hills and valleys, rough seas, but Jesus leads all the way, in earth and to our final destination which is heaven.