

# SERIES 10: Life of Paul      TIMOTHY AND LIDIA      SFC141

To Study:            Acts 14:24-28; 15:36, 40-41; 16:1-15.

To Read in class:    Acts 16:1-3. 9-15.

Memory Texts:

Younger:    2 Timothy 3:15 "The holy scriptures .. are able to make thee wise unto salvation."

Older:      2 Timothy 3:15 "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

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**OBJECTIVES: To teach that:**

1. The purpose of every gospel message is that people might hear it and be saved.
  2. Knowledge of the Scriptures prepares the heart of the young to receive Christ as Saviour.
  3. The objective of all Bible teaching is that once converted, a person will want to serve God and communicate the truth to others.
  4. The apostles were guided not by their own ideas and preferences but by the will of the Lord.
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**SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS: Timothy's home. Flannelgraph background separated into two halves, using a thick string of wool. On one side, figures of a young boy in the company of his mother and grandmother reading the scriptures and the words "Timothy learns". On the other half, Timothy as a young man with the apostle Paul, as well as his mother and grandmother, and others who accompanied Paul in his travels and the words "Timothy obeys".**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- Paul and Barnabas communicated to the church of Antioch "all that God had done with them".
  - Paul did not forget what had been accomplished before and now he wants to continue to spread the gospel even further afield, and at the same time, to confirm in their faith, those who had believed.
  - After a period of time, Paul and Silas prepared to depart on a second missionary journey.
- Sug.** As you start telling about this second journey, it would be well to comment some of the differences between the first and second one.
- Exm.** Different companions, (not Barnabas and Mark); this time they were to confirm the new churches (Acts 15:41); they acquired a new helper (Timothy) and increased the area reached with the gospel.
- From Antioch in Syria they travelled by land to reach Derbe y Listra, places where they had established Christian assemblies on their previous trip.
- Cmt.** Paul's evangelistic zeal carried him forward to preach in new areas, but at the same time he did not forget the places he had visited earlier and returned to confirm the believers in their faith.
- Apl.** Gospel preaching has as its chief purpose the salvation of the hearers and growth in their Christian lives.
- In Listra, they find Timothy, a young man who had been saved during Paul's first visit.
- Cns.** It must have been a great encouragement to Paul to see fruit from his previous labours.
- Timothy was the son of a Gentile father. His mother was a Jewess who believed on the Lord Jesus.
  - Although we know little about his father, because the name Timothy means "God fearing" and Timothy heard the Scriptures in the home, we conclude that the father at least considered the things of God be important.
- Left side, Timothy's childhood:**
- His mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois taught Timothy the Holy Scriptures from an early age.
  - This knowledge of the Bible prepared Timothy's heart to receive the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Note:** This should encourage the teacher to teach the truth to children because in many homes there is little or no Bible teaching given.
- Cmt.** The Scriptures give a solid base on which people of any age can build their lives.

**Sug.** In order to back up the efforts of Christian parents who teach their children the Word of God, it is well to stress that parents want their children to be saved, and for this reason they give Bible reading an important place in the home.

**Cns.** To appreciate the importance of being truthful and the need to obey parents and also to know what is right and good, children need an absolute and unchanging point of reference. This is found in the Word of God.

**Sug.** Ask the students to suggest what Bible stories Timothy might have heard when he was small and what lessons he would have learned from them.

**Cmt.** The answers will have more to do with the Old Testament than with the life of the Lord Jesus.

**Right side:**

- Possibly Paul and Silas stayed in the house of these believers, who might have seen how Paul suffered on his previous visit to Listra when he was stoned.
- Paul and Silas heard a good report of Timothy from the brethren in the area.
- No doubt Paul would mention to the mother and to the grandmother their need to have the help of a young man such as Timothy in their travels to preach the Gospel.
- They would also talk with the elders of the churches of Listra and Iconium about their interest in taking Timothy with them.
- Timothy might have been about 15 or 20 years old at this time, for 15 years later, Paul refers to his youth. (1 Timothy 4:12).
- Timothy, like every truly saved person, shared in the desire of Paul and Silas to reach others with the gospel.
- Paul invited him to accompany them.
- This provided Timothy with a good opportunity to learn from older, experienced brethren.

**Cmt.** It must have been sad for the mother and grandmother to be separated from the young man, but in this way, they also had a share in the spread of the gospel.

- Timothy's obedience to the call of God would mean sacrifice and suffering for him, but he was willing.

**Apl.** The object of all Bible teaching is:

- 1) that individuals might be converted and then,
- 2) that they may be willing to serve God, communicating the truth to others.

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**SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS: (H-9) A bedroom. Figures of Paul and Silas in bed and a figure as in a vision of a man inviting them to Macedonia.**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- The missionaries reach Troas, a port at the western side of the Asian continent.
- They had wanted to preach the gospel in the province of Asia Minor, but the Holy Spirit forbade this.
- Neither were they allowed to go to the northern province of Bithinia.
- Cmt.** We do not know what means were used to forbid them, but their humility is seen in not going against the will of God. Timothy would learn that the apostles were not guided by their own ideas and preferences but by the Lord's direction.
- They stayed in Troas praying and seeking the Lord's guidance as to their next activity.
- One night the Lord revealed His will in a vision to Paul in which a Macedonian man begged them to come over to Macedonia to help them. Macedonia was the most northern of the Greek provinces.
- Apl.** When God closes one door, He opens another for those who have the faith and patience to await His will.
- At once they made ready to travel to Macedonia, certain that God was calling them to go there.
- Luke, the writer of the book of Acts joined the group in Troas. He wrote "the Lord had called US."
- They entered the continent of Europe and although this had not been their original intention, but it was according to the will of God.
- They went to the important and central city of Philippi, a Roman colony, populated by many Romans and with few Jews.
- They remained there for some days, perhaps seeking ways to make contact with the people and locate persons who were interested in the gospel.

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**SCENE No.3. VISUAL AIDS. (J-11) Near the Gangites River, outside of Philippi, figures of Paul, his companions, and some women, praying.**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- It appears that there were few Jews in this city, since they did not meet in a synagogue.
- Cmt.** In order to form a congregation using a synagogue, at least ten men were needed, which seems to indicate there were few Jews in Philippi.
- On the Sabbath, the apostles gathered with a group of women who met at the river for prayer, the place where they were accustomed to meet.
- The women who gathered there were God-fearing individuals.
- One of them was Lidia, who came from Thyatira, a city famous for its production of a rare purple dye or cloth. This colour was produced from a certain shellfish.
- She was a businesswoman, but wanted to know God and for this reason had left her work to gather with those who also desired to draw near to God in prayer.
- The Lord opened her heart in such a way that she paid rapt attention to what Paul had to say.
- Apl.** God works in those who pay attention to His Word. Lidia was one of these and is revealed as one who wanted salvation.
- Others also came to know Christ as their personal Saviour at the same time.
- Cmt.** When one believes the Word of God, not only does that person accept the truth for him/herself but also communicates it to others.
- For Lidia, that would include parents, children, relatives, servants or co-workers.
- The reality of her faith was soon shown in her baptism.
- In this way, a small prayer meeting prepared the ground for implanting Christianity in Europe.
- This was the beginning of the church in Philippi.

**SCENE No. 4 VISUAL AIDS. (H-4) Lidia’s house. Figures of Lydia, Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke and other people of different ages.**

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- Lidia invited the apostle Paul and his companions Silas, Luke and Timothy to stay in her house.

**Cns.** When Lidia said: "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord," she showed that she realized that her testimony had to back up the preaching the servants of the Lord were doing.

- Were it not so, she could have hindered the work of the Lord.

**Apl.** The life of the believer ought to be pleasing to God so that one can be useful in His hands.

- Not only did they have a house in which to stay, but God also provided Lydia’s home as a place where they could preach the gospel in Philippi.

**Cmt.** It would be well to refer to the lesson that is to follow about the Philippian jailer in order to mention Lydia and others of his family forming part of the same local church.

- Later on, once they were set free from prison, the apostles would go to Lydia’s house to see and comfort the brethren before leaving Philippi.

- The Philippian church, planted amidst suffering, would become a church that would stand out for its joy and Christian love, according to what we read in Paul’s epistle to the Philippians.

- It would also be a church outstanding for its generosity (Philippians 1:5-6), a virtue that Lydia herself demonstrated from the beginning.

- In his letter to the Philippians, Paul refers to two women "who laboured together with me in the gospel". It is evident that Lidia is another that did the same.

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