

Timothy Joins Paul And Silas

Acts 16:1-5

MEMORY VERSE

ACTS 16:5

So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Be a Do-Bee!

Do the Word; do not just listen to it! If you only listen to the Word and never do it, you will forget what it says (James 2:22-23).

Divide the class into two groups. Have an aid teach the class the memory verse by rote (I say you say). You teach using an active learning technique:

1. "So"-pretend to sew with a needle and thread.
2. "the churches"-put finger tips together forming a housetop shape several times to indicate more than one.
3. "were strengthened"-flex arm and feel biceps.
4. "in the faith"-have each hand form an "f" or "OK" sign. Tap the little finger side of the right "f" hand on the thumb side of the left "f" hand, palms facing each other in a repeated motion.
5. "daily"-touch elbow with one hand and with the free hand palm open, make an arc indicating the sun rising and setting to be the sign for "day."

Let each group show the other how well they learned the verse by reciting with or without actions. The actions will aid the long-term memory of the verse. Teach the actions to the whole class.

LESSON TIME!

The apostle Paul and others with him were persistent in their preaching of the good news. They considered the cost to themselves to be nothing in comparison with obedience to Christ. Their love for God was expressed by a passion to serve and minister the gospel to others, regardless of the cost.

This was evident as the Jews of Antioch and Iconium tracked down Paul to stone him as he preached in Lystra (Acts 14:19-20). Though Paul was left for dead, he got up and returned to the city to preach the gospel. Wow! Now that's a true commitment!

Being a disciple of Christ sometimes calls for costly commitment. As Christians, we no longer belong to ourselves, but to our Lord. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** In our lesson today, we find the apostle Paul demonstrating his love for God by ministering in the very town he almost lost his life.

ACTS 16:1

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek.

Paul and Silas set out on a second missionary journey to visit the cities Paul had preached in earlier. This time, with Silas as his partner (Acts 15:40), Paul began this journey approximately three years after his first one ended. The two visited many of the cities covered on Paul's first journey, plus others. This journey would lay the groundwork for the church in Greece.

Silas was involved in the Jerusalem Council and was one of the two men chosen to represent the Jerusalem church by taking the letter and decision back to Antioch (Acts 15:22). Silas was a faithful man who was selected by the apostle Paul to be his new partner in ministry. He was a chief man in the church, a prophet (Acts 15:22,32), and one chosen to take the Jerusalem conference decrees to the churches (Acts 15:27).

Paul and Silas were men who loved God and committed their life in serving Him. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** Our calling is to love with all our being the God who first loved us and to love others as ourselves. Paul and Silas demonstrated this joy-filled, satisfying life to all the believers they came into contact with.

We can be an example to others in the same way as we leave our home going to various places, such as our schools, playgrounds, and neighborhoods. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** If you truly love God, you will want to live for Him.

Paul and Silas met a young man by the name of Timothy. He was probably converted through Paul's ministry when the apostle first visited Lystra. It was Timothy's mother and grandmother who prepared the way for his decision by being the first in the family to trust Christ (2 Timothy 1:5).

ACTS 16:2

He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.

Living for the Lord leaves a lasting legacy, and Timothy is a perfect example of it. His love for the Lord was known by all that knew him. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** We can do nothing by ourselves, but as we let our Savior live through us, others will see Christ in all we do.

Young Timothy undoubtedly witnessed Paul's suffering in Lystra (Acts 14:19-20; 2 Timothy 3:10-11), and was shown by the Lord to the apostle. Timothy would end up being Paul's favorite companion and co-worker (Phil. 2:19-23) for he was like a son to him.

It's exciting to think of what God can do in the life of someone who loves Him. The apostle Paul modeled this kind of unselfish love for God so that others may follow, and Timothy did. Do you have a reputation of one who loves God? What a blessing it would be to the Lord if we expressed our love for Him through all our words and actions.

Timothy was a young man who loved God, and others could see it in his life. He was well spoken of by others, not only in Lystra, but also in Iconium. His love for God was not only known by his family and friends, but by others in nearby towns. This was a man that the apostle Paul wanted as a companion to help spread the gospel; his reputation had proved his love for God.

ACTS 16:3

Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.

The apostle Paul knew what kind of commitment it would take to serve as a missionary. He knew that Timothy loved God and desired to live for Him. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** Timothy was a young man who had surrendered his life to God and was willing to do whatever God wanted him to do.

A servant of God is simply one who has chosen to surrender their life to God, giving Him control. We have been chosen by God as His very own, and we have been called to represent Him to others (1 Peter 2:9) no matter what we grow up to be. God's ultimate goal for us is to make us like Christ (1 John 3:2). As we become more and more like Him, we discover our true selves, the persons we were created to be.

What is Love?

Let the children act out this modern day version of the Good Samaritan.

Have one child lie on the floor and say, "I'm so hungry; I haven't eaten for days." Have another child come to him and say, "I love God so much I go to church every Sunday! Oh, but I can't help you now; I'm late for church." Have another person say, "I love God so much, I tell nearly everyone. You go to a different church than I do; sorry, I can't help you." Have the third person say, "I love God so much, I will live my whole life for Him. Come to my house; I will feed you."

Discuss who really loved the Lord and why.

Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother and a Greek father and to the Jews, he was looked upon as a half-breed like a Samaritan. So Paul asked Timothy to be circumcised to erase some of the stigma he may have had with Jewish believers.

Though Timothy was not required to be circumcised (Acts 15); he voluntarily did this to overcome any barriers to his witness for Christ. The apostle Paul had a deep concern for his people, Israel, by saying he would willingly take their punishment if it could save them (Romans 9:3). Paul showed a rare depth of love and like Jesus, he was willing to sacrifice for others. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.**

How concerned are you for those who do not know Christ? Are you willing to sacrifice your time, money, energy, and comfort to see others come to faith in Jesus? We must remember what Jesus did for us; He deserves the glory of a life that is committed to Him.

ACTS 16:4

And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:23-29). The churches would be grounded in the foundation of the gospel and the decisions the council made regarding the cultural barriers of both the Gentiles and Jews.

Gentile believers did not have to abide by the Jewish law of circumcision, but they were asked by the council to stay away from idolatry, sexual immorality (a common part of idol worship), and eating meat of unclean animals. If Gentile believers would abstain from these three practices, they would please God and get along better with fellow Jewish Christians.

ACTS 16:5

So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

As time went on, Timothy's faithfulness to God played an important role as he traveled with the apostle Paul to expand and strengthen the churches. He traveled with Paul and was used as a special ambassador to the churches that were struggling because of disobedience, such as in Corinth.

The Lord blessed Timothy with a remarkable ministry, which made an eternal difference in the history of Christianity. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.** Timothy's love for God resulted in a life that was committed to serve and obey which in turn blessed the lives of others.

Timothy would become the pastor of the church in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3) and probably joined the apostle Paul in Rome shortly before Paul was martyred (2 Timothy 4:21). Timothy was a man that others wanted to be around, even in their last hours.

Timothy's life is over now, but the faithfulness of his life lives on through history and eternity. He was a man that loved God and lived for Him. You too can make a difference in the lives of others. **Love for God will cause us to live for God.**

Guest Speaker

Invite a guest to your class to tell how he or she followed God's leading possibly under difficult circumstances. If you cannot find anyone, have someone dress up as a Bible character and share.

PRAYER

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