

BUILDING INSPECTOR, BUILDING MATERIAL'S

Acts 16:6-18, 23-33; text vs. 6-9

INTRO: Last week we ended on the idea of waiting on the Lord. I have had comments this week about the power of that word in the Hebrew “qavah.” *Psalms 27:14* says to “wait on the Lord and be of good courage and He will strengthen your heart. *Isaiah 40:31* says: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” The word wait in the Hebrew is a word “qavah” meaning to bind together, perhaps twisting together. To be so entwined with His life that you can relax in Him knowing that what comes out of your life in every area is what is coming out of His desires for you. That is if you are bound with Him. Let’s look at how this practically plays out in the life of Paul the Apostle.

PREVENTION: 16:6 Sometimes a local building inspector will just plain deny you to even start building. This is the flavor of this passage. As they tried to move out in missions they were flat forbidden by The Holy Spirit from even attempting to go. *The Message* says: *Their plan was to turn west into Asia province, but the Holy Spirit blocked that route.* There was nothing wrong with their intentions, but these folks were bonded with Christ. The bottom line of that is that their plans were not the ultimate goal in their lives. It was the carrying out of His plan.

PERMISSION: 16:7 has a lightly different flavor. For some reason a different word is used to talk about how they were stopped from going to Bithynia. At first it appears to be the same thing said differently. Yet a different Greek word is used in verse 6, for forbidden or prevention, than for the way they were stopped in Acts 16:7. I find there is probably a reason. In verse 7 it is more like not being left alone. Being bugged, until you change course, rather than being altogether prevented. The Holy Spirit at times just stops us, and other times interferes in some way to turn our direction right. One paraphrase of vs. 7 would be “and the Spirit of Jesus would leave them alone....NOT!!” A side note, but important, would be the phrasing in verse 6 and verse 7. The oldest manuscripts have often the “Spirit of Jesus,” not just Spirit. There is such a merging of Jesus and the Holy Spirit of God that it is clear the Christ is still directing them now even as He did when He walked the earth, only more so. Remember when Jesus said the Holy Spirit will speak only what He hears, and will bring to mind those things that Jesus had said to them on earth? And Jesus also said all things the Father had were His, and that He would take what is His and show it unto us. That makes it possible not to just have God prevent or intervene in our lives but also to PRECEDE us in our lives.

PRECEDING: 16:9 may not seem to be the most common expression of God’s purpose, and you don’t see it a lot in the Epistles, but it is a way in which God operates also. Please remember that the whole theme of the manifest Christ from birth to now, is to bring about a merging of God with man to demonstrate Himself and perform His purpose, which is to bring all into the place of knowing Him. Paul has a vision that clarifies the reasons for the difficulty in verses 6-7. This is seen also in the gifts of the Spirit in the body. That discernment, wisdom, and knowledge can work together to manifest God’s direction ahead, rather than being prevented or “disturbed” until things are right. Stephen Manley recently said, that virtually every time you see the Holy Spirit’s fullness demonstrated in Scripture, it is to communicate. The Holy Spirit is about communicating God’s desires to us. God will right things in you life if your seeking Him, but wouldn’t you rather have Him precede you than have Him interrupting “your” plans?

POSITION:

WITH ONE ANOTHER: This is a huge matter in the direction of the Holy Spirit. What is our position with one another? What is our position with the Holy Spirit. Let's look at one another first. In 16:10 Paul has said that after the vision, they set out for Macedonia "assuredly gathering," (KJV), "concluding" (NKJV) that God had called them to preach there. I would like us to look at several places where this same word for concluding, (sumbibzao) is used, and how it is translated. It is **knit**, (2 times) Col 2:2, Col 2:19, **together**, (2 times) Col 2:2, Col 2:19. It is only used 9 times in Scripture. In Ephesians 4:16 of the King James, it is: "*From whom the whole body fitly joined together and **compacted** by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*" There is this powerful, unifying, result when the Holy Spirit has moved, NOT division amongst believers. There may very well be division and opposition among those who are not listening or whose hearing has waxed dull. Seekers of God, however, will be together just as they were in one accord at Pentecost.

WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT: We cannot have proper position with one another, if we do not have proper position with the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of Christ. Let's look at Acts 16:6 again. This prepositional type phrase forbidden "of the Holy Spirit, " is interesting. The Greek word "hupo" is translated 52 times. Fifty times it is translated UNDER, as in this passage, one time, "among," and one time "into." In other words, Paul is saying we were "forbidden UNDER the Holy Ghost. We are in a position of submission and servanthood to the Holy Spirit and therefor our lives are directed by Him.

OPERATION: So what does this mean to my life practically?

- I.** I must be under the authority of the Holy Spirit if I am to expect the guidance and safety of the Holy Spirit in my everyday living.

- II.** I will be in unity, and knit together with the body, not off on my own, if I am hearing and submissive to the Holy Spirit.

- III.** I will know that the Lord, under the Holy Spirit will use all kinds of means in my life to make the ministry of my life flow properly. He will prevent things that are not beneficial to the Gospel and to my life, He will keep "not permitting" me to succeed in things where I am on my own, and He will precede me if I have open eyes and ears and expect Him to speak to me.

Importantly, in all of my activities, I can rest in Him. I do not need to live in fear of failure. I do not need to agonize over every decision. There is a rest that remains for the people of God. You have to ENTER into that rest though. And that is your part. What a thrill, just take hold of it, your big work, your big effort is simply to enter His rest.