

ALLOWING GOD TO CHOOSE

Acts 16:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

- A. How many have always realized their first choices in life? (Examples: picking a college after graduation, a vocation, a place to live.) Sometimes we have to settle for our second choice. Paul wanted Bithynia, but got Troas.
- B. Discuss Paul's first choice:
 1. To go to Bithynia (to preach). (Coastal mountainous area, well watered and with a fertile plain sloping toward the Black Sea.)
 2. Troas had nothing quite so romantic or attractive.
 3. Yet Troas was God's choice for Paul and turned out to be the right thing to do (Text: vss 6-8).
 4. Later significance: was the first step in taking the word into Europe (Text: vss 9-12).
- C. There will always be more second choices realized in life than first choices. It is very important for each of us to know how to deal with them. Here are a few suggestions.
- D. To allow God to choose our course in life we must:

DISCUSSION:

I. HAVE A FULL FAITH IN GOD Heb. 10:22.

- A. Full conviction is a strength to continue on.
 1. Abraham Rom. 4:19-20
 2. Job Job. 13:15
- B. Deep faith accepts what happens to us in life as God's choice for us Rom. 8:28; Psa. 16:8.
- C. Paul's experience in prison: "I know this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" Phil. 1:19. Illus: Sir Walter Scott, great English novelist, first wanted to be a poet, but Lord Byron's fame dimmed his hopes so much he turned to writing novels. His fame is a matter of record. He wanted one thing but attained something different

II. HAVE A DEEP COMMITMENT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT

- A. Paul again: 2Tim. 1:11-12.
- B. The courage of an Esther: Esth. 4:16.
- C. A commitment to do right is a strong ally when tempted to go astray.
 1. Why some leave the church Eph. 4:14; Lk. 8:13.
 2. Deep roots required to weather heavy winds.

III. HAVE GREAT CONCERN FOR PEOPLE

- A. We live in a self-centered world.
 1. Few think of "What can I do" -- More of "what I can get" from any adventure in life.
 2. Divine principles: "Greatest commandment" Mat 19:18-19; based on Lev. 19:34

3. Look on things of others ... Phil. 2:4.
4. Such a disposition generates strength for any task. (A mother who is completely exhausted, when her child is sick and cries out in pain, finds a deeper source of strength to care for the child.)
- B. Paul's desire to go to Bithynia rather than Troas turned out best for others.
 1. Paul hadn't considered Troas. (God's choice: 2Cor 2:12 - "an open door.")
 2. A congregation of Christ started Acts 20:7
 3. Result: Some saved who would never have heard gospel.
 4. A place where Paul did much work 2Tim. 4:13 (Left some of his work tools there.)

IV. PRAY WITHOUT CEASING 1Thess 5:17; Lk 18:1

- A. Prayer is an integral part of our life as a Christian
- B. Prayer is a very powerful weapon
 1. Avails much Jas 5:16
 2. Note Elijah's example Jas 5:17,18
 3. Pray for one another 1Thess 5:25
- C. Jesus prayed much Matt 14:23; Lk 9:28-30; Matt 26:36
- D. Jesus Taught his disciples to pray Matt 6:9
- E. Pray for Wisdom to make the right choices Jas 1:5,6
 1. This wisdom we seek comes from God's word 1Cor 2:1-12
 2. To obtain this wisdom we must learn God's word 1Tim 4:13-15

CONCLUSION:

- A. There are many times when we must take second choice
- B. But there is one place where only our first choice is possible -- salvation from sin, membership in the church.
- C. Any other choice is fatal. Second choice (and there are only two choices) at the end of life is a choice that results in eternal loss and ruin.
- D. You can have one first choice which no one can take from you.
- E. Come today and accept it in obedience to Christ Jesus.