

1313.

Guidance by Hindrance:
Acts xvi. 6-8.

2509

⁵⁶
Hymns 47 "God move in a mysterious way"
39 "I worship Thee, Sweet will of God"
51 → 36 "The God of love my Shepherd is"

1906

Scripture Acts xv. 36 - xvi. 8, 10.

455 Jesus, still led on.

2509

2509

1906

2509

[Faint vertical text, possibly bleed-through or additional notes]

Place.

Town.

Date.

Place.

Town.

Date.

Oct 15, 1916
 May 8, 1932
 July 16
 June 26, 1935

London
 Philadelphia, Pa.
 London
 "

Westminster Chapel
 "Tabernacle"
 Westminster
 "

Handwritten notes in the top section of the table, including "Sanctified by the Spirit" and "8-2, 1932, 1935".

415

READ. ACTS XV. 36 - XVI. 10.

⑥ "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the Word in Asia and when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not and passing by Mysia they came down to Troas." Acts XVI. 6-8.

INTRODUCTION.

This is a most interesting paragraph.

Men of God, full of the true passion are seen apparently hindered and thwarted by the Spirit of God.

Knowing the sequel, we immediately recognize that the words "hindered" and "thwarted" are not the right words to describe the experience.

Prevented, -- in the true old sense of the word -- and directed, would be the proper words to employ.

That however does not alter the fact that the experience must have been perplexing to them at the moment.

It is an illustration of a high level of Christian experience, and we do well to examine it carefully.

This we will attempt by considering;

- A. The Experience of the Men.
- B. The Activity of the Spirit.

A. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MEN.

Note. Let us at once recognize that this is not a story of men being hindered from doing important work, by circumstances.

There are such stories (very valuable). This is rather the story of men being forbidden to do important work, when the circumstances were entirely favourable.

I. The Men and their Work.

1. A Christian.

Apostle.

Prophet.

Evangelist.

a. Men who had the new Vision.

They had seen the Lord.

As "Lord of all".

King and Redeemer.

They saw the world from His Standpoint.

Dislocated. Chaotic. Suffering

b. Men who were out on the King's Business.

They were conscious of His Call

They were authorized by the Church.

To proclaim Him Lord (as above):

c. Men who were completely loyal.

They were consecrated.

They had no mixed Motives.

Their Work was not a Pastime, a Hobby.

ii. The Pathway. (see over).

ii. The Pathway.

a. The first Business accomplished.

The Churches confirmed.

The new Worker found.

They were ready!

b. The open Doors.

Proconsular Asia.

"One of the most wealthy and
populous and intellectually
active of the Roman provinces"
(Ramsey)

Bithynia.

"A rich, fertile, peaceful and
highly civilized province".
(Ramsey)

c. The Barrier.

"Forbidden to speak the Word".

"Not suffered to enter."

II. The Men and the Spirit.

i. The two Declarations.

"Forbidden of the Holy Ghost".

"The Spirit of Jesus suffered them not."

a. The Vagueness.

Nothing said of how.

The mystic Secret, defying explanation.

The abiding Value of this Silence.

b. The Light.

1. The Holy Spirit-forbidding.

The Correction of highest Inclination, by the wisdom of ultimate Holiness.

2. The Spirit of Jesus, not suffering them.

The Correction of the Driving of Compassion, by the eternal Compassion.

ii. The Revelation.

a. The deepest Factor in the lives

of these men was that of the actuality of the Communion of the Holy Spirit, that of the Activity of the Fellowship of the risen Lord.

1. They were in direct Communication.

2. They were not trusting to their Christian feelings.

b. The Outward Activity was governed by this deepest Fact.

1. They obeyed.

2. Without Explanation.

3. This is the Courage of Faith. Courage to be silent. Courage not to enter an open door.

i.e. Courageous enough not to trust their own judgment.

III. The Teaching-so far.

Here we are brought face to face with the deepest thing in Christian Experience;

The direct Dealing of the Christian with the Lord by the Spirit.

i. The Value.

a. The Cancelling of low Motives.
The Things of Men, denied.

b. The Controlling of high Motives
The Things of God, interpreted

ii. The Responsibility.

a. The Maintenance of Fellowship.
The New Birth creates the Possibility.

The Laws observed. Habits formed.

b. Obedience to its Guidance.

B. THE ACTIVITY OF THE SPIRIT.

NOTE.

Really everything has been said, for it goes without saying that there can be no higher sanction than the Will of the Lord, and no safer Guide than the making known of that Will by the Lord Himself.

Nevertheless we are so constituted that we ask questions, as to the meaning of the Spirit, when He thus checks high Inclinations, and sends us along some pathway which does not appear to be as advantageous as the one forbidden.

These questions are largely answered by the sequel to this story.

Add to the text verses 9 and 10.

"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them."

I. The Way of the Spirit is always bigger than that of Men.

i. Geographically.

Across the Aegean.

Philippi.

Thessalonica.

Beroea.

Athens.

Corinth.

What seems narrowness is breadth.

ii. Racially.

A Man of Macedonia.

Man is the Problem everywhere.

Man is the Possibility everywhere.

The Spirit created the Desire in the Man of Macedonia, as surely as He guided the Christian Apostle.

What seems exclusive is inclusive.

A great enveloping Movement.

II. The Guidance of the Spirit is always in the Interest of the Larger, and so includes the Less.

i. As to Area.

That encircling Movement.

Presently Aquila and Priscilla.

Apollos.

Paul. Acts xix.10.

"All they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord."

ii. As to the Workers.

The spiritual Inclinations fulfilled more gloriously.

III. (see over)

III. The Spirit asks Obedience by Faith, and gives Vindication by Sight.

- i. The Hindrance preceded the Vision.
- ii. The long Journey without explanation led to Troas.
- iii. The seeing included.
Philippi.
And on.
Even to Ephesus.

CONCLUSION.

This is a great Realm of Consideration.
We have but outlined it.

Two practical Suggestions in Conclusion.

- I. Let us guard our Fellowship with the Lord by the Spirit.

How?

Listening.
Obeying.

- II. Let us dare to act in obedience to the Voice of the Spirit.

What hinders?

Human Opinions.
Private Judgement.