

Main Idea: When we're serious about our mission, we'll give priority attention to two types of ministry, as demonstrated in Acts 16:1-10.

- I. Our mission involves edification (1-5).
 - A. It takes a team (1-3).
 - 1. To be useful you must know how to follow (1).
 - 2. To be useful you must have a good reputation (2).
 - 3. To be useful you must be willing to sacrifice (3).
 - B. It takes teaching (4).
 - 1. People need to understand God's Word.
 - 2. People need to obey God's Word.
 - C. It takes time (5).
 - 1. We must focus on spiritual growth.
 - 2. God will take of numerical growth.
- II. Our mission involves evangelism (6-10).
 - A. Sometimes we'll face closed doors (6-8).
 - 1. The Spirit said no to Asia (6).
 - 2. The Spirit said no to Bithynia (7).
 - 3. The Spirit didn't say why He said no (8).
 - B. In His time God will open the right door (9-10).
 - 1. The Lord is sovereign.
 - 2. The Lord has people He is preparing to reach.
 - 3. The Lord uses available people to reach people.
 - 4. The Lord usually gives only enough light for one step at a time.
 - C. When God opens a ministry door, it's time to move ahead.

Response: If we are serious about our mission, three commitments follow...

- 1. I will do God's work.
- 2. I will do it God's way.
- 3. I will do it according to God's timing.

I was just standing there a week ago, watching people get thrown into the lake. That happens every Friday at Scioto Hills Camp for the campers and staff members who've received a package during the week. Their "penalty" is getting tossed into the water.

Sherry and I were standing there watching the excitement, and after the final camper hit the water I noticed people started looking at me. Not good. And then the chanting began, "Pastor Brad! Pastor Brad! Pastor Brad!"

I knew I was in trouble. There I stood in my nice and dry street clothes having a sense that the "nice and dry" part was about to change. I started thinking of ways to talk myself out of the predicament. *I'm too old for this. I don't have the right clothes for this. I don't like this. I'm a camp board member and I'll dock your pay for this.*

But at that moment, with excuses swirling in my mind, my daughter Katie looked at me and said one simple statement, "Remember, dad, *camp is for the camper.*"

And so I reached for my wallet and cellphone, handed them to my wife, and surrendered to the will of the masses. Which means I got shot off of the blob fifteen feet into the air and into the lake.

It's amazing what happens when you know what your mission is and then live in light of it. Excuses fall away when you're gripped by your mission. You attempt things you otherwise would never consider when you're gripped by your mission.

You don't work at Scioto Hills because you love the hills. You're there *for the camper*, to show the love of Christ to campers so they in turn will love and live for Him. That's your mission if you're part of the team at Scioto Hills Camp.

Is it only those at Scioto Hills Camp who have a God-given mission? It's not, is it? The fact is, every one of us who belong to Jesus Christ have a mission.

I want to tell you right up front why I'm preaching this message, for two reasons. One, I've just returned from the annual board meeting of the Association of Baptists for World Evangelization. I've been reminded that we who know

Christ have a mission. It's called world evangelization. It's why some fifty people traveled to Harrisburg, PA to interview with the board to become career missionaries, and why those people now need the financial and prayer support of churches like ours...*because we have a mission.*

The second reason is that this will be my last opportunity to speak to you, the summer staff of Scioto Hills Camp. We've enjoyed getting to know you this summer, but in another week the forty of you will be leaving to return to your homes and campuses and lives. But I don't want you to return the same. I want you to go back feeling the wonderful, life-changing reality of *your mission.*

That's what this message is all about. We have a mission, and I want to remind you what it is, and call you to live in light of it.

Years ago the old Standard Oil Company offered an enormous sum of money to a missionary in China to work for them, to help with the development of Standard Oil in China. The missionary turned them down. So they doubled the salary offer. He turned them down again. They said, "What do you want? We can't give more money than that. He said, "The money doesn't have anything to do with it. The job is too small."^[2]

Brothers and sisters, we are under marching orders from the King of kings and Lord of lords. We have a mission that will reap dividends for all eternity. There is no greater undertaking than to devote yourself to the mission the Savior has given to His church, the mission of introducing people worldwide to Him (Acts 1:8) and teaching them how to live as His disciples (Matt 28:19).

Let's turn to the book of Acts this morning. Our forefathers in the early church took that mission seriously, as the book of Acts demonstrates. In Acts 1:8 Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth." And that's what the first Christians did.

Just scan the book of Acts and you'll see it. In Acts 1-7 the church took the good news of Christ to their fellow Jews. Then they reached out to the Samaritans in Acts 8. Then in chapters 9 and following they started witnessing to Gentiles. In Acts 13 one church really got missional and sent out two of their key leaders, Paul and Barnabas, to take the gospel to Cyprus and several cities in southern Galatia (in what we call Paul's first missionary journey).

By the way, not everybody is happy when you take your mission seriously. Some would prefer the status quo. That's what Acts 15 is all about, where Paul had to travel to Jerusalem to put out some fires over the issue of Gentiles being saved, which the Jerusalem Council resolved with a letter.

And missional living creates messes at times, too, as we see at the end of Acts 15 when, Paul and Barnabas split over a disagreement regarding John Mark. Consequently, Barnabas took John Mark and returned to Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas and began what we call his "second missionary journey."

And that brings us to our text in Acts 16. When we're serious about our mission, we'll give priority attention to two activities, as demonstrated in Acts 16:1-10. Not lip-service, but *priority attention.* What are these two activities?

I. Our mission involves edification (1-5).

To "edify" means to "build up." Ephesians 4:11-13 says, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ *may be built up* ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

When we introduce a person to Jesus Christ, that person enters the family of God as a *baby*. When a baby is born, there's reason to celebrate. But know this. When a baby is born, the work is just beginning.

Our mission starts with introducing people to Christ, but it doesn't end there. We must give attention to *edification*, to helping them grow up, mature, and function in the local church. The job isn't done until that's happening.

"What's involved in edification?" you ask. We see three essentials in verses 1-5.

A. It takes a team (1-3). "He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. ² The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³ Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek."

The team started with Paul and Silas (13:40). The duo left Antioch and headed overland, intending to return to cities evangelized on the first missionary journey.

I urge you to look at a map. Look at the places mentioned in the biblical account. Sometimes I don't think we appreciate just how difficult and dangerous traveling was for these first century missionaries. The journey from Antioch to Derbe (that's about 200 miles) probably took the missionary team across the Amanus mountains by the pass

known as the Syrian Gates. They went through the area where Alexander first waged war with Darius and his Persian army.

Though the text doesn't specify, my hunch is Paul headed for Tarsus, his home city. From there the team headed north across the Taurus mountains, doubtless by another pass known as the Cilician Gates. It wouldn't be wise to cross this mountain range in the middle of winter. LaSor conjectures that the group traveled through this region before the winter of A.D. 49-50.^[3]

Paul visited Derbe first and then Lystra, reversing the order of his travels on the first missionary journey since he's coming from the east this time. Do you think anybody asked him about Barnabas?

The scenery must have brought back memories for Paul, and not all pleasant. It was in Lystra that he healed a man lame from birth and heard the crowd cry out, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" (14:11). But moments later the fickle people turned on him, blasted his body with rocks, and left him for dead outside the city. Yes, I'm sure Paul remembered Lystra.

Yet there was a pleasant surprise waiting for Paul in Lystra this time, a young man named Timothy. He had quite a reputation in the churches in the area, so much so that Paul ended up recruiting him to join the missionary team.

I'm impressed by Timothy. We can learn a lot from Timothy. If you want to be used of God, you must possess three characteristics this young man exhibited.

1. *To be useful you must know how to follow (1).* In verse 1 Luke identifies Timothy as a "disciple," the term used throughout Acts to identify true Christians (some thirty times). A disciple is a follower, primarily a follower of Jesus but also a follower of those who follow Jesus. He's not a lone ranger, nor an island. He is a person who has surrendered his life to the Master.

Let that sink in. There's a disease today that is paralyzing the church. It's called "easy believism," the notion that if you merely believe a few statements about Jesus, you are a Christian.

"Do you believe Jesus is the Savior and Lord?" the question is raised. "Sure, why not?" someone answers. But there's no understanding of what those terms really mean, no life change that results when a person comes to know Jesus as *my* Savior and *my* Lord. Just easy believism.

A person who settles for easy believism won't take the mission seriously. In fact, though he professes the name of Christ you won't see Christ in his life.

That certainly wasn't the case with Timothy. He was a *disciple* of Christ, a sold-out follower who took the mission seriously. It's possible Timothy came to know the Lord during Paul's first missionary journey. 2 Timothy makes it clear that his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois laid the groundwork in his heart by teaching him the Old Testament Scriptures (1:5; 3:14-15).

So to be useful in ministry, you must know how to follow. Secondly...

2. *To be useful you must have a good reputation (2).* Luke says the "brothers...spoke well of" Timothy [KJV says he was "well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium"]. That's significant. Lystra and Iconium were towns some fifteen miles apart. That indicates Timothy's reputation went beyond his hometown. Believers a good day's walk away knew about him. He had more than a good local reputation. He had a *regional* reputation.

That's critical. You don't develop a good reputation merely by getting a job title. Young people, if you don't have a godly influence on your peers at school now, it won't happen merely by signing up for an overseas missions trip.

Timothy was a diamond in the rough and the church could see it. By the way, the church *should* see it. We ought to be looking around for the Timothy's in our midst and encouraging them to pursue ministry. That's the church's obligation, to identify, recruit, develop, and then send the cream of the crop into the ministry of the gospel.

Timothy would turn out to be Paul's #1 junior associate. The apostle later sent him to do trouble shooting in Corinth (1 Cor 4:17) as well as follow up work in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). Paul later told the church at Philippi (Phil 2:19-22), "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰I have *no one else like him*, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. ²¹For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²²But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel."

But Paul would end up having far more than a working relationship with Timothy. We might say he considered Timothy his best friend. Throughout his letters he referred to Timothy as his *son*. And just before his execution Paul wrote to Timothy and asked him to come (2 Tim 4:9). To be useful you must have a good reputation.

3. *To be useful you must be willing to sacrifice (3).* Verse 3 says, "Paul wanted to take him along on the journey." How old was Timothy at the time? In 1 Timothy 4:12 Paul later told Timothy, "Let no man despise your

youth.” The term could refer to a man roughly between the ages of twenty and forty. Timothy received that letter fifteen years *after* he joined Paul’s team which would indicate he was somewhere between sixteen and twenty-five years old in Acts 16.^[4]

Do you see the sacrifice here? Here’s a young man with his whole life before him. He could make money or pursue fame or enjoy the “good life,” but no, he chose to invest his life for the sake of our mission.

And think of what this sacrifice meant not only for Timothy, but also for his mother and grandmother. They knew this would be no pleasure trip for Timothy. They were well aware of the danger. They probably could still visualize the picture of Paul’s bloody and battered body, left for dead outside their city gate some five years earlier. They knew that could easily happen to Timothy now. But after counting the cost, all parties said, “Timothy, you must go.” And so Timothy was ordained by the elders of the church (as 1 Tim 4:14 indicates) and left town with Paul to do the work God had for him.

Parents, are you willing to let your children go wherever the Lord wants to use them? Know this. If God blesses us with children it’s not so we can hoard them, but rather so we can raise them and send them out into the world for the service of our Savior.

It’s very possible that Timothy’s father was dead, as the force of the Greek verb in verse 1 would indicate (“his father *was* a Greek”). Eunice and Lois could easily have said, “We won’t let you go, Timothy.” But they didn’t. 2 Timothy 1:5 indicates they were women of *faith*, not fear.

But there was one “little” detail that needed attention before the team could leave. If you’re still not convinced Timothy was willing to make sacrifices, ponder the next statement in verse 3, “Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, *so he circumcised him* because of the Jews who lived in that area.”

Wow! What does that teach us about Timothy? Here was a young person who was humble, submissive, and willing to sacrifice personal interests for the good of the work.

You say, “Why did Timothy have to be circumcised?” He didn’t *have* to be, not for salvation, that’s for sure. That’s what the council in chapter 15 settled. Why then? It wasn’t to open up the door to heaven, but to open up a door for ministry. We see here the principle of “all things to all men” (1 Cor 9:22).

When Paul recruited Titus he didn’t circumcise him, but Titus was a full-blooded Gentile and everybody knew it. Not so Timothy. He was born to a mixed-marriage—his dad was a Greek and his mother a Jew. If he wasn’t circumcised, the unsaved Jews would assume that meant he had abandoned his Jewish heritage. That’s not the message you want to communicate if you’re trying to reach unsaved Jews with the gospel. So he was circumcised.

Answer this. How much are you willing to sacrifice so others can hear the good news about Jesus? If there’s something you could do to become a more effective witness for Christ, will you do it? Perhaps debt is standing between you and front line ministry (many young people couldn’t go to the mission field if they wanted because they’ve strapped themselves with car payments and school loans). Are you willing to change your spending habits and work hard to get out of debt? Possibly you could be more effective in the ministry if you took some Bible classes. Are you willing? Maybe you’ve got an ungodly habit that’s tarnishing your reputation. Will you get serious about godliness for the sake of the mission?

Far too often here’s the way we think... “I like my life just the way it is. Sure, I want to experience the abundant Christian life, and I want God to use me, but I don’t want to have to change anything.” Beloved, if that’s the way we’re thinking it’s evidence we’ve lost sight of our mission.

Missional living is sacrificial living. To clarify, I’m not talking about works-salvation. Christ died on the cross for sinners and rose again, and if you want to be saved you must place your faith in Him and in His work alone. On that basis God forgives us and gives us eternal life. But if we have been gripped by the sacrifice Christ made for us, how can we do less than look for ways to sacrifice our all for Him?

Edification takes a team. There’s a second essential.

B. It takes teaching (4). “As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.”

Luke says the missionary team went from town to town. Remember where they are, in the region of Galatia, the same region where the false teachers tried to undermine Paul’s previous ministry by teaching a false gospel of works. That’s what prompted him to write the letter called Galatians. Now he, Silas, and Timothy went to those towns again, this time with the letter from the Jerusalem council.

Don’t miss what they’re doing. They’re *teaching*. This was a teaching ministry. As they went from town to town and talked about the decisions reached by the apostles and elders, they were teaching theology. They were using the Scriptures to address the subjects of God, grace, righteousness, law, and atonement. These were themes Paul no doubt taught about on his first trip, but now he goes deeper.

I can't emphasize this too much. It's not enough to lead people to Christ. We must help them grow. We must give attention to *edification*, and that requires *teaching*. To put it another way, people need two things...

1. *People need to understand God's Word.* That's why Paul's team went back to the same towns and "delivered the decisions reached by the apostles." If people are going to grow, they need to understand God's Word. But that's not all.

2. *People need to obey God's Word.* The missionaries didn't teach God's Word in a take-it-or-leave-it fashion. They delivered the decisions "for the people to obey." God's Word calls for a response every time we hear it.

We see a third, related essential for edification in verse 5.

C. It takes time (5). "So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers."

Verse 5 is one of those "big picture" kind of verses. It gives us a panoramic view of what happened when first century missionaries went to a region. It gives us a lesson, too.

It's not enough merely to evangelize lost people. In order to fulfill our mission we must link those believers into meaningful relationships with local churches. Since there were no churches in the regions where Paul went, he organized these new churches, trained and appointed elders to lead them, and made return trips to make sure they were standing firm. He even sent letters to the churches he established to help them deal with their problems in a God-honoring way (that's what the epistles are). All that took *time*.

Notice carefully the order in verse 5. Good teaching (given in verse 4) produced strong Christians which resulted in growing churches. In personal terms that means two things...

1. *We must focus on spiritual growth.* If we do that...

2. *God will take of numerical growth.* A lot of folks these days are hung up on numbers. In fact, what drives the way they "do church" is getting numbers. But that's putting the cart before the horse (which is a dangerous combination if you're sitting in the cart!).

The Bible makes it clear that if you have these three essentials—a *team* of godly followers of Jesus, the *teaching* of God's Word, and *time*—growth will occur. There will be spiritual growth, and there will be numerical growth, according to God's plan.

We're talking about what happens if we're serious about our mission. If we are, we'll give priority attention in our lives to the ministry of *edification*. That means we'll be looking for ways to invest our time, energy, money, gifts, resources, houses, cars, talents, yes, all we are and have, to help our brothers and sisters and their churches grow up in Christ.

But it's not just our brothers that should matter to us. There are people who are not in God's family that should matter to us, too.^[5] Which brings us to our second point.

II. Our mission involves evangelism (6-10).

What happened next fascinates me. It's so *real*.

When I was in Papua New Guinea in 2001 I learned that a big part of missions involves just *living*. And responding to the unexpected. Bob Litteral told me about having to wait for an airplane to arrive in the village...for *seven* days. I get frustrated when I have to wait seven minutes in a line at the bank!

I discover three insights about evangelism in verses 6-10. First of all, if we're serious about ministry...

A. Sometimes we'll face closed doors (6-8). "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas."^[6]

We might as well face it. Life is full of the unexpected. The same goes for ministry. Should we plan? Yes. Paul did. He recruited a team intending to edify the reached and evangelize the unreached. Apparently, he even thought about where the most potential for fruit was. But then he encountered some closed doors. Three things happened...

1. *The Spirit said no to Asia (6).* It wasn't because there weren't lost people there either, for there were plenty. In fact, there were a lot of important cities in the province of Asia Minor. Its capital was Ephesus, which some referred to as "little Rome" and "more Roman than Rome itself."

But the Spirit said no. "I don't want you to go there." In fact, the KJV uses the word "forbidden." As LaSor observes, "Paul's strategy was excellent. But his timing was off."^[7] He would reach Ephesus alright, but later. It wasn't God's time, not yet.

So he set his sights on Bithynia, a province on the Black Sea. That too, made sense. There were a lot of important cities there. But once again, it was a closed door.

2. *The Spirit said no to Bithynia* (7). Notice the connection between the “Holy Spirit” in verse 6 and “the Spirit of Jesus” in verse 7. Remember Jesus’ parting words? “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matt 28:20).”

It must have been frustrating for Paul. “Why did I come all these miles from home? I came to preach, but the Lord keeps closing doors!” Have you ever felt that way? When God closes a door, He always explains why, right? Not exactly. In Paul’s case...

3. *The Spirit didn’t say why He said no* (8). The doors kept closing so Paul and his team just kept moving. Finally they arrived at Troas, a coastal city, where they could go no further unless they started swimming. Some feel God used an illness to shut the door for Paul, since Luke a physician joined the team right after this.

Most of us don’t like closed doors. We tend to think that a closed door means God isn’t listening or that He doesn’t care. Actually, a closed door is one of the ways God guides us. Paul and his teammates may not have known yet where God wanted them to go, but they knew for sure where they were *not* to go. Sometimes that’s half the struggle.

James Boice offers this insight, “When God closes doors, it is not because he has nothing for us to do. He does not want us to take a vacation. It is to keep us from getting into a work to which we are not called in order that we might be saved for a work to which we are.”^[8]

Here’s a second insight about evangelism.

B. In His time God will open the right door (9-10). “During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Now the closed doors began to make sense! God kept closing doors in Asia because He had a whole new continent for Paul to reach. The gospel was about to penetrate a region yet unreached, Macedonia, located in modern day Greece.

Before the Scriptures were complete, God often communicated His will to His people directly through visions and dreams. We can learn four truths about God from this episode.

1. *The Lord is sovereign.* In his sovereign grace God led this missionary team exactly where He wanted it to go, west into Europe rather than east into Asia. My friend, that’s why we are here today. We can only speculate what the world would look like today had Paul taken the gospel into Asia then rather than into Europe. But in our day the Spirit is taking the gospel into Asia and penetrating the 10/40 window in wonderful ways.

2. *The Lord has people He is preparing to reach.* Just think of it. Were it not for the sovereign seeking of a gracious God, no sinner would ever be saved. But God is seeking a people for His glory. He is preparing them.

You say, “You mean God is actually at work in people’s hearts, softening them, giving them a desire to hear His Word?” Yes. Listen to one, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” And He’s preparing hearts today, too.

3. *The Lord uses available people to reach people.* The Lord loves to redirect moving objects. Paul, Silas, and Timothy just kept moving ahead. They probably didn’t understand why God kept shutting doors, but they knew He had His reasons. So they kept moving and they kept themselves available.

Are you available to God? Maybe you’re in a closed-door-phase of life. Don’t be discouraged. Just keep serving and keep being available.

4. *The Lord usually gives only enough light for one step at a time.* He doesn’t put a floodlight on the whole road. Typically He puts a lantern to light the way for the very next step. And after that step will come the light for the next. Otherwise we’d forget how much we need Him.

Are you serious about reaching lost people? Then know this. Insight #1—sometimes we’ll face closed doors. Insight #2—in His time God will open the right door. And #3...

C. When God opens a ministry door, it’s time to move ahead. Don’t miss two important words in verse 10, “After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready *at once* to leave for Macedonia.” Let this last insight sink in. When God opens a ministry door, it’s time to move ahead, without delay, without hesitation, and without fear.

G. Campbell Morgan was right when he said, “It is better to go to Troas with God, than anywhere else without Him.” God had some first-rate evangelism opportunities waiting for this missionary team once it arrived in Philippi. A jail cell, too.

A one-legged school teacher from Scotland came to Hudson Taylor to offer himself for service in China. “With only one leg, why do you think of going as a missionary?” asked Taylor.

“I do not see those with two legs going,” replied George Scott. He was accepted.^[9]

C. T. Studd was a famous and wealthy athlete in England in the 1800s who left it all to become a missionary to

China. He once commented, “I had known about Jesus dying for me, but I had never understood that, if He had died for me, then I didn’t belong to myself. Redemption means buying back, so that if I belong to Him, either I had to be a thief, and keep what wasn’t mine, or else I had to give up everything to God. When I came to see that Jesus had died for me, it didn’t seem hard to give up all for Him.”

It’s no wonder he made this conclusion, “Some wish to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.”

I love that. There’s a man who knew what his mission was in life. How about you?

Response: If we are serious about our mission, three commitments follow...

1. *I will do God’s work.* Brothers and sisters, there are people for whom Christ died who have yet to hear the gospel. They live next door to us, and on the next street, and in the next country, and the next continent. They can’t believe what they don’t know. They can’t know what they have never heard. They can’t hear without a preacher. There will be no preacher unless we take seriously the work of God. I urge you to tell the Lord right now, “I will do what You’ve called me to do. I will do God’s work.”

2. *I will do it God’s way.* God’s way involves self-denial and sacrifice and investing in things that matter for eternity rather than the temporary treasures of this world.

Last week Lebron made his big announcement. He’s heading for Miami to play for the Heat. 120 million dollars weren’t enough to keep him in Cleveland. That’s interesting. Why did he go? He told us, saying in essence, “I want happiness and championships, and I’m going to Miami because I believe that’s the best place for me to find personal happiness and win NBA championships.”

He was being honest. He made his decisions on the basis of his values, just like we all do. If your highest values in life are personal happiness and NBA rings, it will show.

You say, “I could care less about NBA championships.” Okay, what do you care about? The answer to that question reveals your values.

“My family,” you say. “That’s what I value most.”

Really? *Most?* Above the Lord and His mission? Suppose the Son of God said, “I love my Father and I can’t stand the thought of leaving Him to go to earth.” Or suppose the Father said, “I love my Son and I don’t want Him moving too far from home.” Where would we be today? If God so values His mission, ought not we?

Will you affirm today, “Yes, I will do God’s work, and I will do it God’s way?”

3. *I will do it according to God’s timing.* Submit to His timing today. He knows what He is doing.

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

[1] This topical message has been revised from an earlier sermon series in Acts at WBC in 2002.

[2] [SimNow](#).

[3] LaSor, p. 244.

[4] LaSor, p. 246.

[5] What Paul did in verses 1-5 took place where he had already been during his first missionary journey. On journey number two, he and his team engaged in edification. That’s because edification is for believers. You don’t edify non-believers. They need something else, and it’s what we see Paul and the others modeling for us in verses 6-10.

[6] From Lystra to Troas...well over 300 miles! Like from here to Buffalo.

[7] LaSor, p. 247

[8] Boice, p. 274.

[9] [Pillar of Fire](#), January First, 1983.