**Living Life Together**

**By Experiencing the Power of God[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-34

**Matthew 6:19-21 -** Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

4 principles to help our church family serve our Lord well.

I. **Recognize that Keeping the Team Together is an Incredible Challenge.**

A. They had a great goal.

**Acts 15:36 -** Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we proclaimed the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are.

B. They had a difference of opinion over the makeup of the team.

**Acts 15:37-38 -** Barnabas wanted to take John, called Mark, along with them also. But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

C. Be sure you work hard to preserve unity whenever possible.

**Ephesians 4:1-3 -** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**II. Often You Serve Christ Best When You Sacrifice, Not because You Have to, But Because You Want To.**

A. The introduction of one of Paul’s closest associates.

**Acts 16:2 -** and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.

**1 Timothy 1:2 -** To Timothy, *my* true child in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Philippians 2:19-23 -** But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child *serving* his father. Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things *go* with me;

B. Paul had Timothy circumcised at the very time they were delivering a letter saying that people did not have to be circumcised in order to be saved.

C. Is that your spirit?

D. Ask God to give you a Timothy to train.

**III. God Rewards Sacrificial Service with Fruitful Ministry.**

**A. The Lord opened Lydia’s heart.**

**Acts 16:14** - A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

B. After being baptized, she became a great blessing and encouragement to them.

**Acts 16:15 -** And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.” and she prevailed upon us.

C. Positive ministry results are seldom universally applauded.

**Acts 16:19 -** But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities

**IV. Don’t Shy Away from Confrontation because Often There is Greater Fruit on the Other Side of the Challenge.**

**Acts 16:22-24 -** The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order *them* to be beaten with rods. When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

1. Their imprisonment became a new source of ministry opportunity.

**Acts 16:25 -** But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them;

B. The Philippian jailer and his family come to Christ.

**Acts 16:33-34 -** And he took them that *very* hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his *household.* And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

1. Dr Steve Viars [↑](#footnote-ref-1)