

St. Jerome Adult Bible Study
The Acts of the Apostles
Study Questions¹ Chapters 16 - 20

1. In 16:1-4 we meet Timothy. Who was he? Why was he so important? What can we learn from Paul's association and special love for him?

Jewish law prohibited the mixed marriage between Timothy's Jewish mother and his Greek father and, therefore, he was "illegitimate." Paul might have converted Timothy earlier during Mission 1 but until Timothy's father was out of the picture (dead?) Timothy could be of little use to the Disciples in spreading the Gospel because of his status. Now Paul circumcises Timothy which has the effect of making him fully Jewish and legitimizes him to be more accepted by other Jews to whom he might preach.

2. In vv 6 – 9, Luke speaks of Paul and his companions as "they." In v 10 the pronoun becomes "we." Did Luke actually join Paul's company or is he copying someone's diary? (See Luke 1:3-4, Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 1:24)
3. What do you infer from the reference to "purple cloth" in v 14?
4. The story in vv 16 – 40 is a powerful statement of faith and its power. How does it affect you?
5. In 17:5 (and other places), the Jews use deception to accuse Paul and his followers. How might this compare to Paul's own persecution of Christians? To the Jews' treatment of Jesus? The speech by Paul in 17:22 – 31 is famous and is often quoted by Church leaders everywhere. Study it carefully and see how Paul's statements could be used today:

²²Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. ²³For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. ²⁶From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, ²⁷so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we too are his offspring.'

²⁹Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. ³⁰While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

6. Do you think Paul had a temper? See 18:6. Or was he just practical?
7. Why did the Jews beat up Sosthenes? (See earlier notes about Corinth on the website)
8. Read the footnotes and follow the cross-references about Apollos. What is your opinion?
9. Now, explain the difference between John's baptism and Paul's
10. Are there preachers we know who fit the description in 19:13-16?

¹ Questions courtesy of *The Serendipity Bible*® (NIV®), (Littleton, CO., Serendipity House, 1998)