The Power of The Gospel

Acts 16:11-40
November 15, 2020

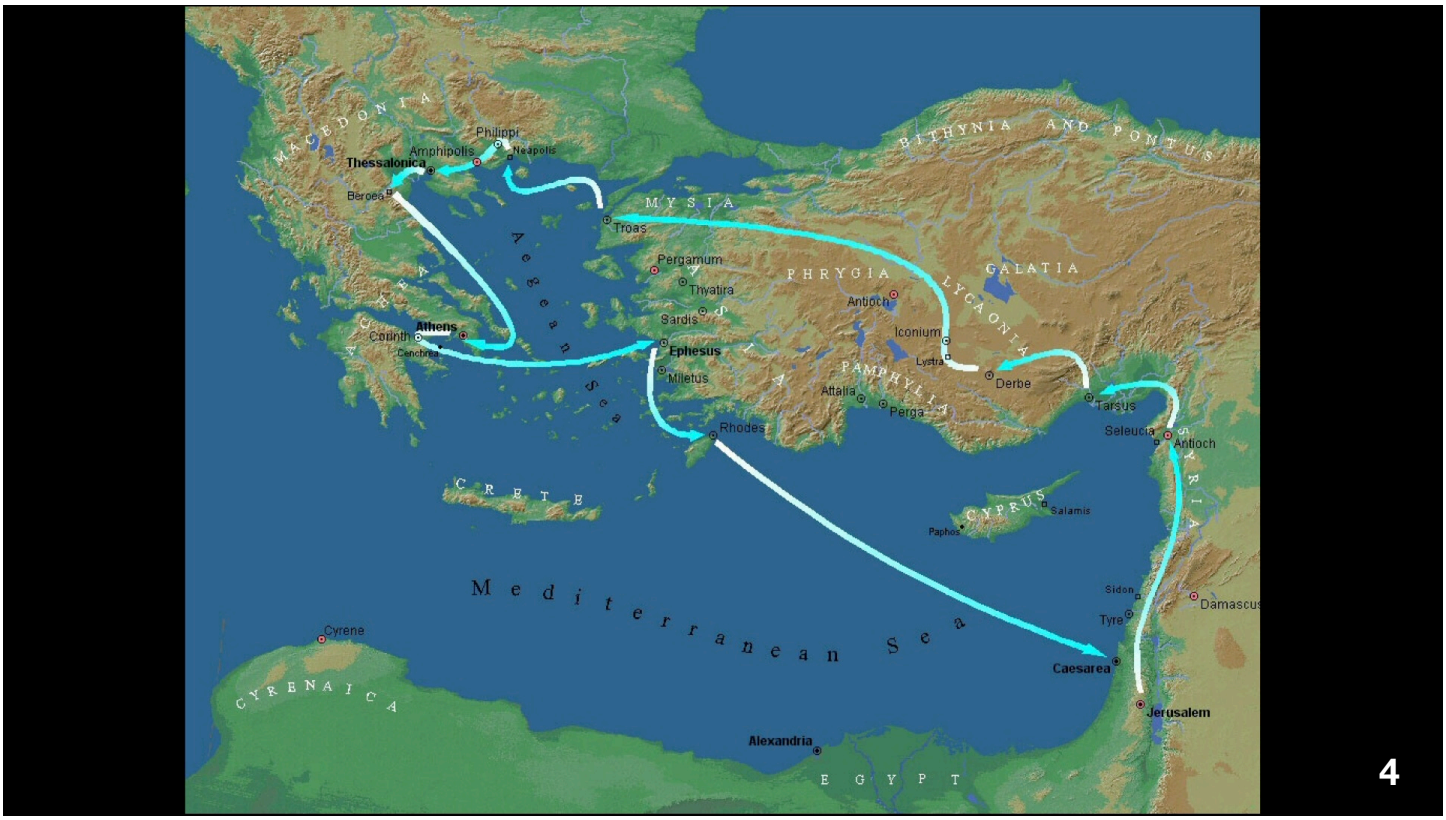
Five Displays of God's Power to Give us Hope and Banish our Cynicism

God's power to:

Lead
Open
Free
Fill
Change

So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.

Acts 16:11-12



God's power directed His servants across the sea and into a new land, precisely to where He wanted them to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. Acts 16:13-15

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour. Acts 16:16-18

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. 24 Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.
25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them… Acts 16:19-25

Even when we cannot control hard circumstances, or suffering, or injustice that comes our way, by God's grace and power, we can control our response.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing
hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,
26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that
the foundations of the prison were shaken. And
immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's
bonds were unfastened. 27 When the jailer woke and saw
that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and
was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners
had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not
harm yourself, for we are all here." 29 And the jailer called
for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell
down before Paul and Silas.

30 Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I
do to be saved?" 31 And they said, "Believe in the Lord
Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all
who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same
hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was
baptized at once, he and all his family. 34 Then he
brought them up into his house and set food before them.
And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he
had believed in God.
35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police,
saying, "Let those men go."

36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace.” 37 But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.” 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.

.....

39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. 40 So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

Acts 16:25-40

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, 4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power…

1 Corinthians 2:3-4

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you [plural] will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:6