

## Lesson 164: Paul the Missionary–Part 3

Scripture: Acts 19-21:16

Memory Verse: Acts 20:35 It is more blessed to give than to receive.

What does it mean to serve? To take care of someone completely (think physically, spiritually and emotionally) with your whole body (think actions, words, thoughts/heart).

When Jesus washed his disciple's feet at the last supper, He told them that He came to earth to **serve not to be served**. Then He proved it by giving His life so that all who repent and put their faith in Him will receive forgiveness from sin and become children of God. Jesus calls all of His believers to develop servant's hearts through the power of His Holy Spirit.

This is the account Paul's third missionary journey which shows how Paul had become a true servant. By this time - about 8 years after his first missionary journey – many churches (remember, the word church means a group of disciples who live as **family**) had been established in many cities. The main purpose of Paul's third missionary journey was to go back and visit his family in the different cities to **love and care for** (encourage) them in ways that would help them grow in Christ. This is what it means to be a **servant!**

During his journey, Paul spent much of his time **encouraging and strengthening** the Church. In Galatia, he helped keep them on the right path of following Jesus, and not letting rules made by people trip them up. Later, he warned the Ephesian leaders about false teachers who would try to steer people AWAY from Jesus!

Later, in Ephesus he discovered twelve believers who had received John's baptism of repentance, but had not yet heard the full good news of Jesus, and had not yet received the Holy Spirit. Paul proceeded to tell them about Jesus and baptized them in His name. Upon baptism they immediately received God's Holy Spirit.

Paul also did many **miracles** by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through those miracles, people were healed of sickness and evil spirits. One day, some men saw Paul casting out demons and decided to try it for themselves. But when they tried to cast out an evil spirit of a man, the evil spirit responded saying, "I know Jesus, and I know about Paul, but I don't know who you are!" The men were overpowered by the evil spirit and narrowly escaped with their lives! Through this, the people of that area learned that Paul's miracles were works of the HOLY SPIRIT. Only God has power and authority over the enemy! And as a result, they turned from their evil ways and put their faith in Jesus. They even burned their VERY EXPENSIVE books of spells and other evil-related practices.

Another time, a man was miraculously brought back to life. Paul was in Troas teaching a group of people in an upstairs room, and his teaching continued late into the night. A young man Eutychus, who was sitting in a window went into a deep asleep and fell three stories to the ground. Paul immediately ran to the young man, embraced him, and Eutychus came back to life!

Paul also served the churches by not being a burden on them. Rather than asking the people to take of him and provide for him, Paul worked hard as a tent maker to make enough money to provide for his own needs so he could provide for and take care of others! That was a powerful witness to the disciples that he ministered to; in doing this he showed that he was willing to give all of his earthly possessions toward serving Jesus' church, and encouraged believers to do the same. He even quoted Jesus' who said, "**It is better to give than to receive.**" (Memory verse)

Toward the end of his third journey, Paul began to say goodbye to people, knowing he might never see them again. He knew that bad people wanted to stop him from teaching about Jesus, and serving

believers by throwing him into jail. In fact, one day as he was planning to go back to Jerusalem, a prophet named Agabus warned Paul that if he went to Jerusalem, he would be arrested and handed over to the gentiles. Paul responded by saying, "I am ready not only to be jailed at Jerusalem but even to die for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

Through obedience to Jesus, and dependence upon His Holy Spirit, Paul was compelled to live a life of **sacrificial service, just like Jesus**. Paul gave his time, energy, money and even his own life to love, protect, take care of and provide for Jesus' people. And the Bible tells us that ANYONE who truly puts their faith in Jesus will develop a loving heart that puts will serve in a similar fashion!