

Theme: God will accomplish all his holy purposes. Our plans must conform to His plans if we want to see His purposes fulfilled in us and through us.

Intro/background - "A man plan a canal Panama." Ever had to change your plans?

## **I. A Good Plan**

A. Paul and Silas "visit" the churches then look to south west. They make a loop down to the churches along the Mediterranean via Ephesus?

B. Their way is blocked

1. Not to the SW - the Holy Spirit kept them from preaching there. v.6
2. Not to the North - the "Spirit of Jesus" wouldn't allow them. v.7
3. Only one door open - move toward the northwest.

C. Holy Spirit At Work (Need a big sign!)

NOTE: Spirit of Jesus/Holy Spirit/Spirit of God? Are one and the same. Holy Spirit is a distinct person in the trinity (Col.1:27; Eph.4:30; 1 Cor.12:3)

1. The Holy Spirit closes doors!

- a. Took the open path to keep moving ahead.
- b. Your response
  - Lord, where to now? OR
  - *I quit.*

2. Holy Spirit was leading *clearly*.

- By restraining them He turns them to Troas
- Could have gone down to Ephesus and sailed from there.
- God had other plans.

## **II. A Bigger Plan**

A. The Gospel goes to Europe

- Paul and Silas know that? No.
- Holy Spirit know that? YES!

B. The Spirit gives – an open door!

- a. Doors closed before
- b. Now? Please come!
- c. Taking counsel
  - "concluded" i.e. "they came to one mind"

### C. God's Leading is Clear!

- Go to Macedonia.

#### ASIDE: On God's Guidance

1. Paul often led directly by God. Acts 9:4; 13:2; 21:11
2. We are not led in similar fashion.
  - We have the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ.
  - Private revelations are more to be feared than sought.
  - But God does *illumine* His word. God does reveal His plans and purposes.
3. These same patterns are appropriate for us.
  1. To know His way, know His Word.
  2. God will *illumine* His Word to guide you.
  3. Act! In faith, in trust, in peace

### D. *GOD IS SOVEREIGN!!*

#### E. God's Bigger Plan??

1. Paul and Silas would have gone right to Ephesus.
  - God *delayed* it. He did not *deny* it!
2. God's plan? Establish the beachhead!

### III. The Best Plan – Salvation!

#### A. On the Sabbath Day – v.13

#### B. God's Plan Unfolds

- Preach the good news
- The Lord Opens the hearts of those he calls
- The Word bears fruit in her life.

### IV. Rest in His Plans

- Do you trust God to lead you?
- Are you engaged in His service – so that he can lead you?
- Have you heard and received this life changing news? God gives eternal life to those who repent of their sins and look to Jesus for forgiveness and eternal life?