

"FORBIDDEN TO PREACH, WHY?"

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

Acts 16:6 says, "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia..". Why was the Apostle Paul forbidden to preach in Asia. Some opinions of this difficult passage have been:

- 1) Some say this is nothing but an inward hunch, an urge, or an emotional experience. But such a treatment denies the objective reality of a personal being such as the Scriptures elsewhere pictures the Holy Spirit.
- 2) Some say this was a providential turning, such as a natural barrier has been set up (river over flowing, avalanche about to tumble down, hurricane or earthquake coming, etc.).
- 3) Some say a prophet in the church delivered the message to the missionary party (Acts 21:4) "And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem."
- 4) Some suggest God spoke directly to Paul, giving him instructions not to go to Ephesus at this time.

What do you think? Your opinion is as good as the next person's. I believe in what is called "Divine Providence". This is understood basically as, "God having the right person, at the right place, with the right message, at the right time."

In other words there are times that God wants us to wait for some unknown reason. We have all prayed and expected a "Yes Answer" immediately. However, He was slow to grant it at that time, if at any time. I John 5:14 tells us that we must always pray according to God's will. I have prayed for God to make the time right for me to call on someone --- and normally He came through on His time table, not mine.

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