

## Acts of Jesus – part 26

Hidden acoustic wonders called “whispering walls” have awed listeners since ancient times. The field of “**archaeo-acoustics**” studies the way sound and archaeological sites interact. Cathedrals and capital domes have been noted for the way they capture and amplify sound. A whispering gallery is usually a circular, hemispherical, or elliptical enclosure, often beneath a dome or a vault, in which whispers can be heard clearly in other parts of the gallery.

A whispering gallery allows whispered communication from one part of the internal side of the circumference to another specific part. The sound is carried by waves, known as whispering-gallery waves, that travel around the circumference clinging to the walls. This effect has been discovered in the whispering gallery of St Paul's Cathedral in London, the Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol, and Grand Central Station in New York, among others.

When a visitor stands at one focus the sound waves carry the words so that others will be able to hear the whispers from the opposite side of the gallery. **Even when the room is filled with many people talking, the whisper can be heard, but only by standing in exactly the right location, others in the room won't hear the whisper at all.**

*In the same way, in a noisy, bustling world, it is possible to hear the “whisper” of God (1 Kings 19:12), but only if we are standing in the right place of obedience, readiness, and quiet waiting*

### **1. We started last time looking at a topic brought up by our text:**

#### **How do we understand God's leading?**

**Acts 13:1-4** -- several observations

1. God's guidance comes to those who are really seeking it. **V. 2**

--We don't seek this Spirit's voice often because we don't like what He says.

--The starting point of God's guidance is a passionate commitment to do whatever He says.

2. God doesn't give us all the details, but He leads us through our desires.

--**VV.3-5** --clear guidance but no real details.

--We want this to say that God specifically directs them to Cyprus, but it doesn't say that.

--We want it to say that because we want God to direct our lives that way, and the fact is He doesn't always.

**Ps. 37:4** – This is not a recipe for getting what I want but for getting what God wants! **Jn. 15:7**

--God's Word changes my desires to fit His!!

--If He gives us all the details, then we won't rely on Him but instead will rely on the plan.

3. Our third observation gives us another way God leads: through the confirmation of other believers.

--**VV. 2-3** -- their decision was not made in a vacuum just between them and God.

--Christians are not independent but interdependent on the Body of Christ.

--Our mentality needs to always be, “we do nothing without the Body.”

--An independent Christian is like an independent body part = a freak of nature.

--Though I can think for myself and though I ultimately answer only to God, I need to be in submission to other believers **Eph. 5:21.**

4. A fourth observation is that God leads through our experiences.

--What had Paul and Barnabas been doing prior to this?? **Acts 11:26, 12:25**

There is a pattern in their lives:

1. Helped start a church,

2. Sent out as a representative of a church.

3. Paul's call in Damascus predicted this. (callings and gifts of God are without repentance)

4. They are also both born in Gentile lands

--These were not random experiences...they were preparing them.

--What is God preparing you for?

--Make a list of your experiences with God from the time you were saved till now.

--Listing every time God either used (and how He used you) you or to spoke you clearly or delivered you powerfully...He's preparing you for something.

5. A fifth way God leads that we can observe from our text is that He leads through our circumstances.

--Having delighted themselves in God, He leads them out by their desires to Cyprus and first to Jews. **VV. 5-7**

--I think it's safe to say that they had not gone out targeting political rulers, but it was what circumstances dictated.

--Sergius Paulus was not a part of their schedule, but he was a part of God's schedule.

Someone has said, "I don't think finding God's plan for you has to be complicated. God's will is that you love him with all your heart and soul and mind, and also that you love your neighbor as yourself. Get busy with that, and then, if God wants you to do something unusual, he'll take care of it. Say, for example, he wants you to go to Egypt"-- "If that's the case, he'll provide 11 jealous brothers, and they'll sell you into slavery."

Circumstances changing may just be the hand of God in our lives.

Remember:

1. You don't have the whole picture...God will not give it all to you.
2. Changes, interruptions, opportunities may just be God filling in more of the picture.
3. Maybe it's something you don't want to do or a direction you don't want to go but it keeps coming at you...It just may be God!

--In the midst of you being faithful to what you feel God has called you to do, don't be surprised when you get surprised by what may seem like deviation.

--It just might not be a deviation, it just might be God's continued direction for our lives bumping up against what we have decided we want to do.