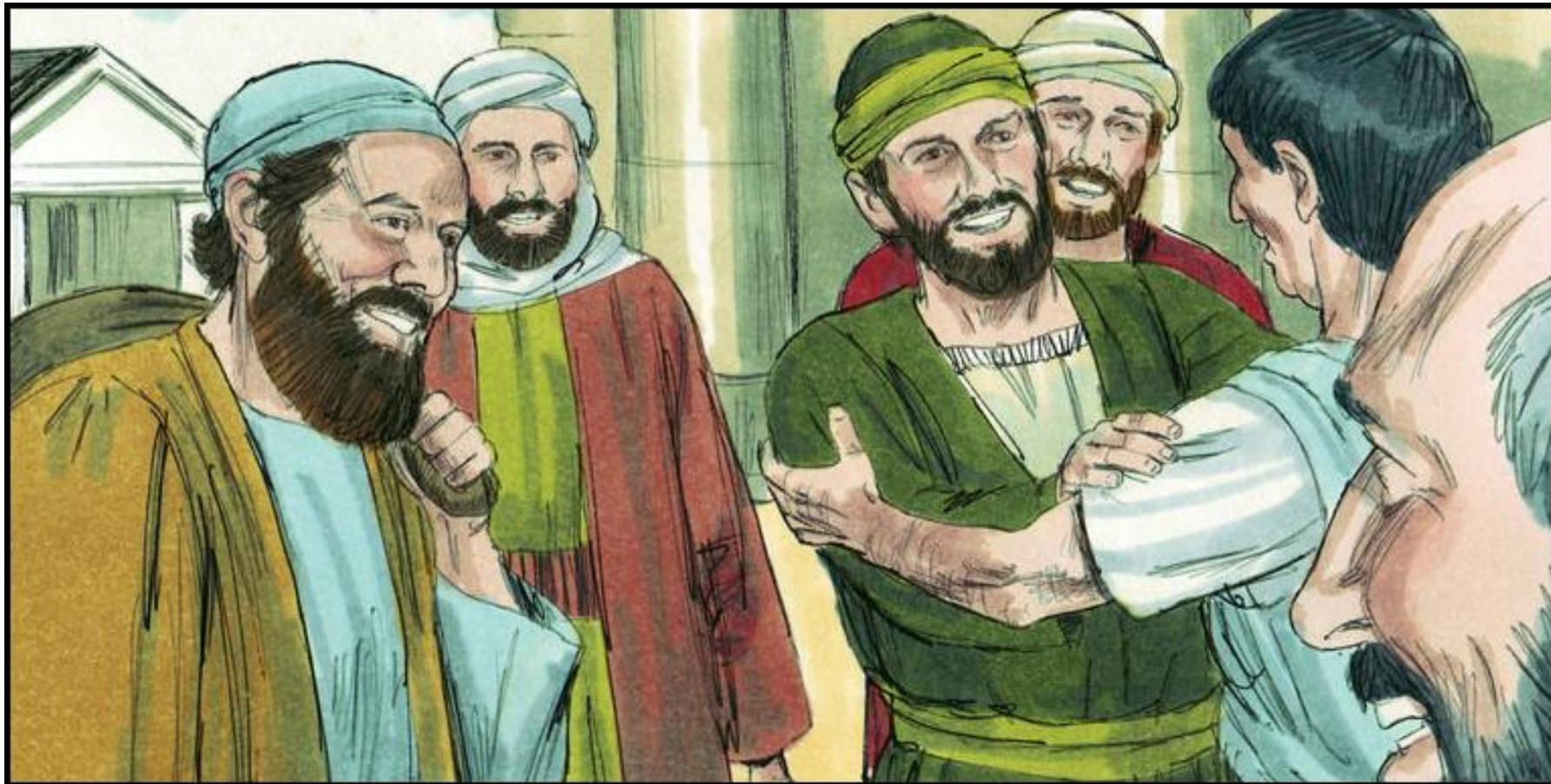
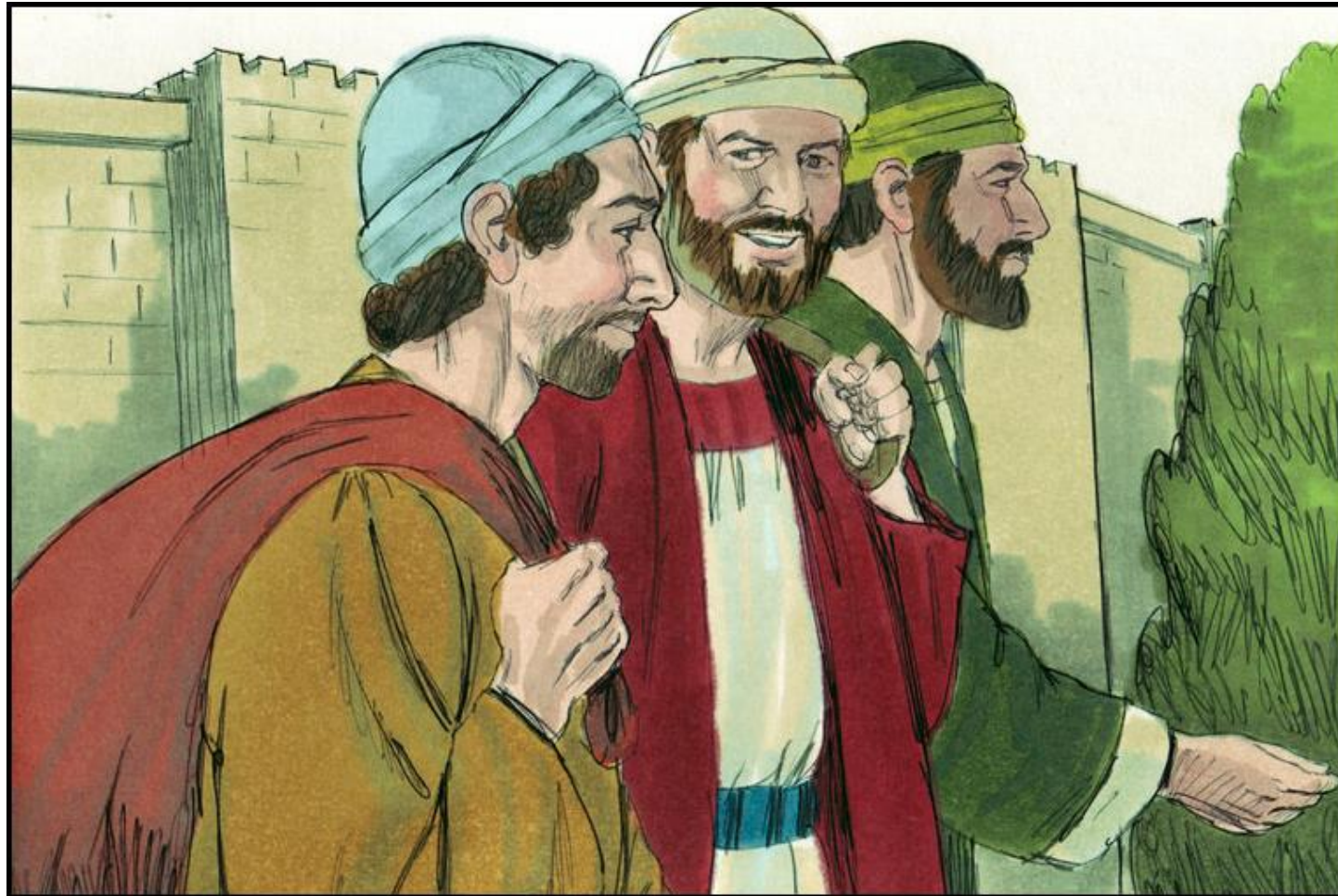


The Course of Ministry (Acts 16)

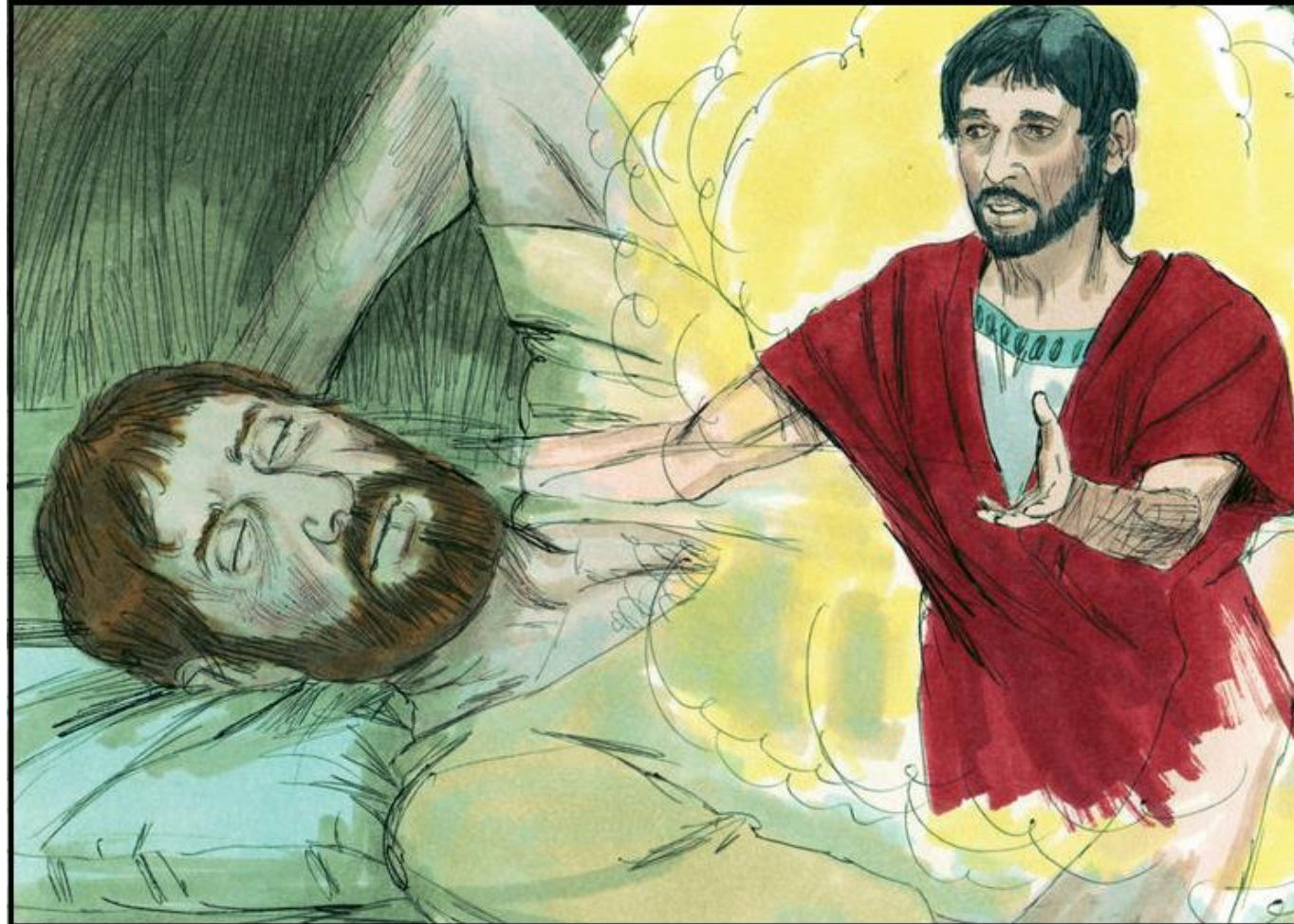
Paul came to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him...As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily. (Acts 16:1-5)



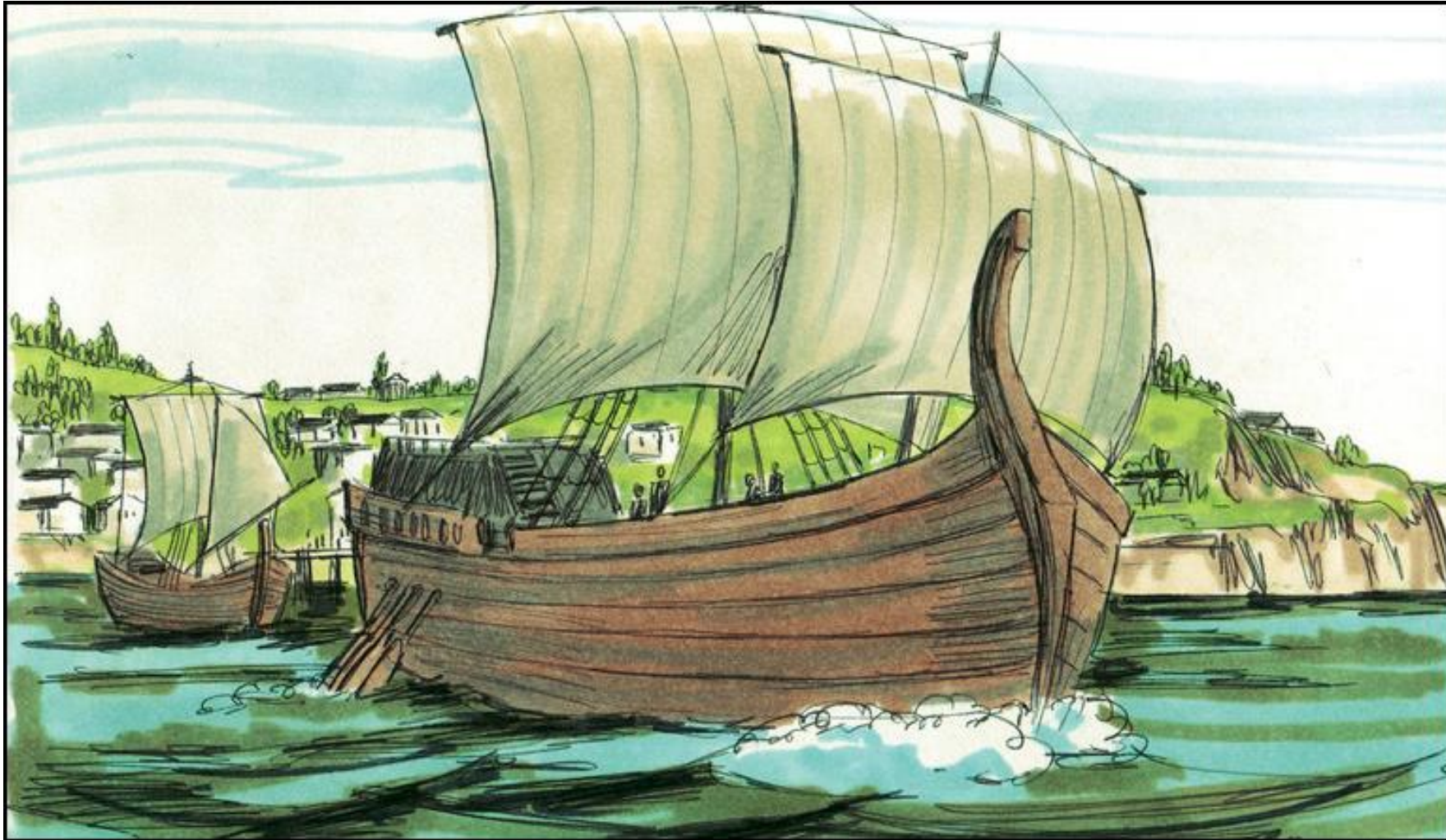
And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. (16:6–8)



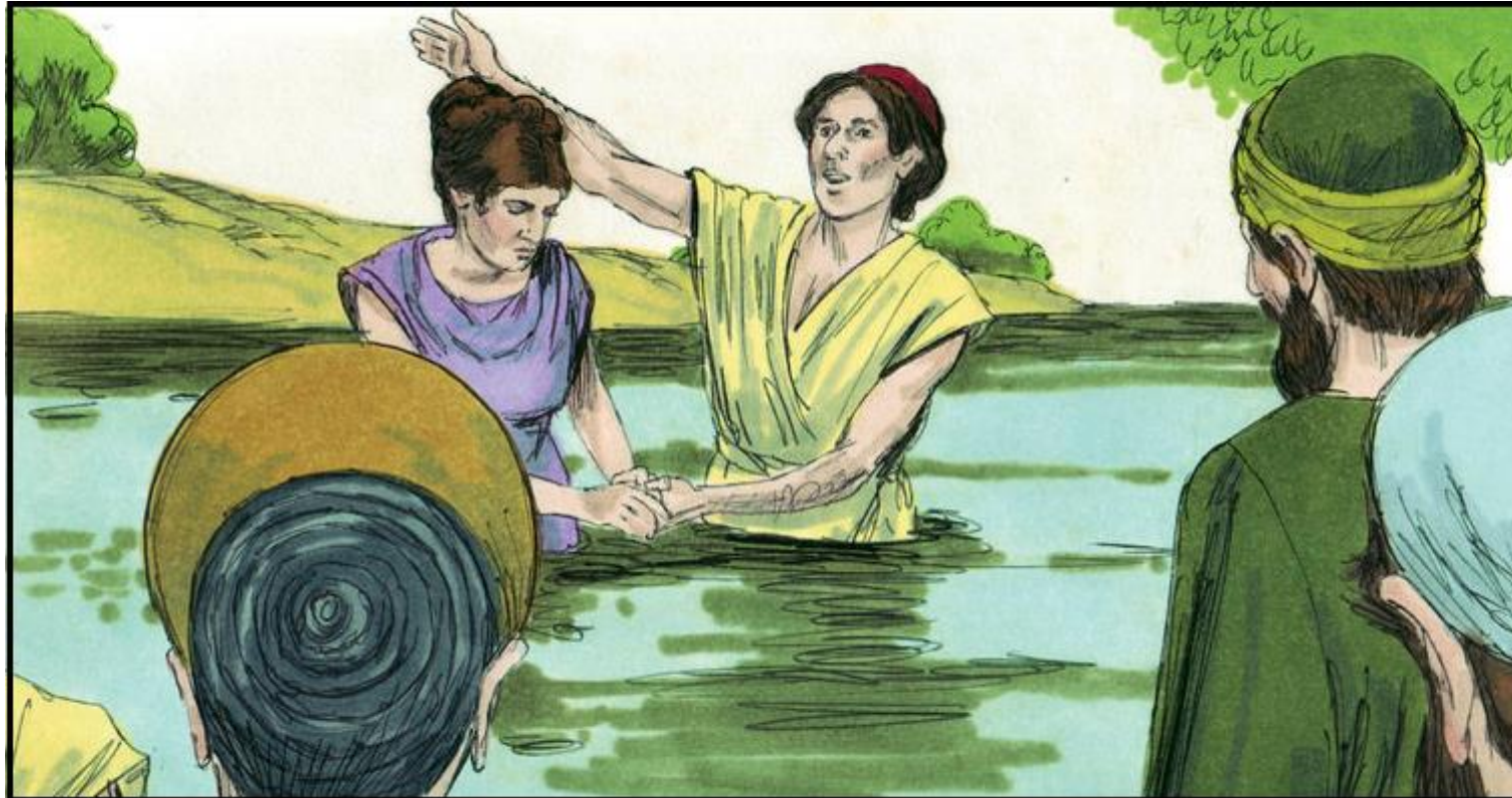
And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. (16:9–10)



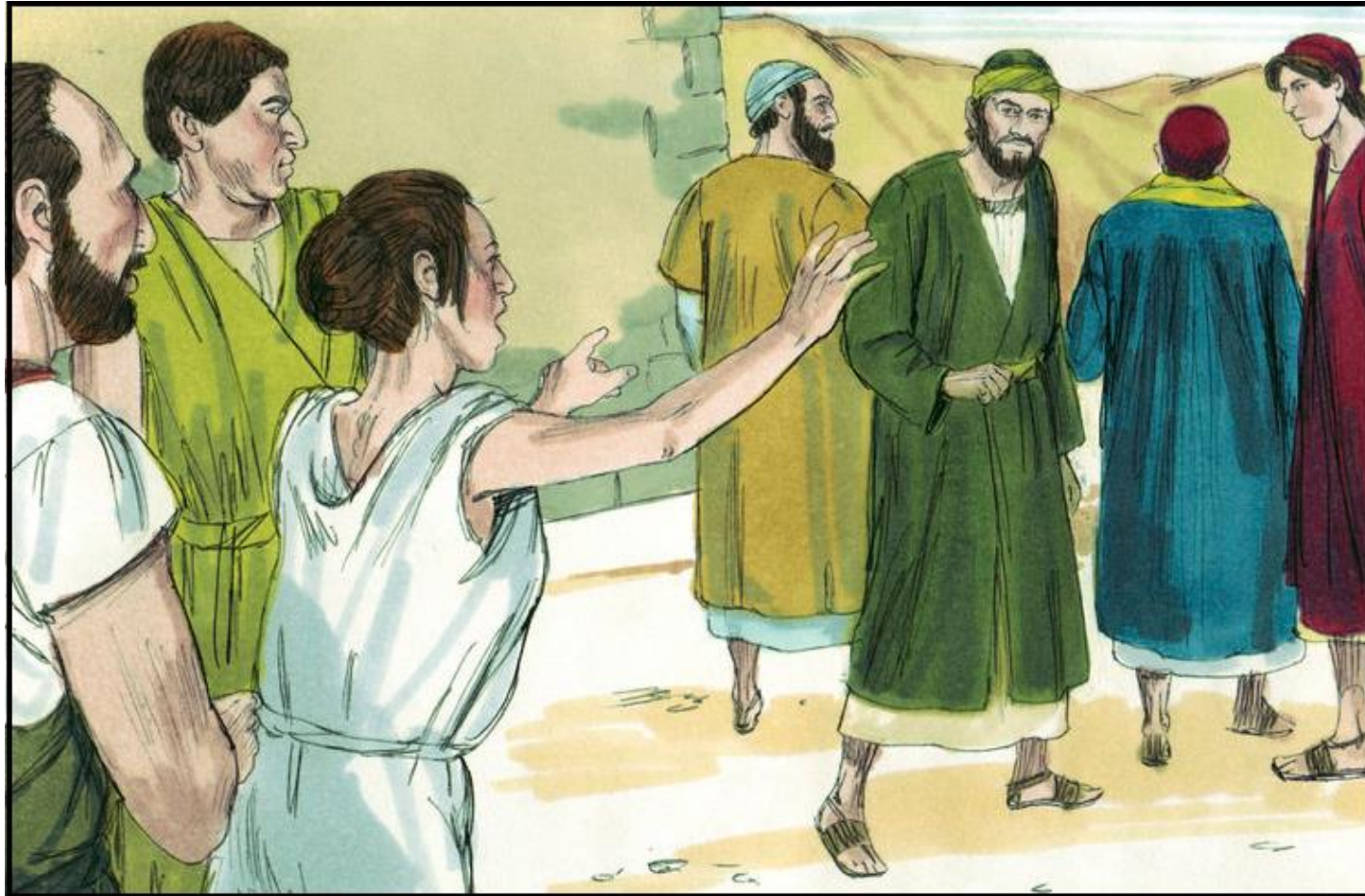
So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. (16:11-12)



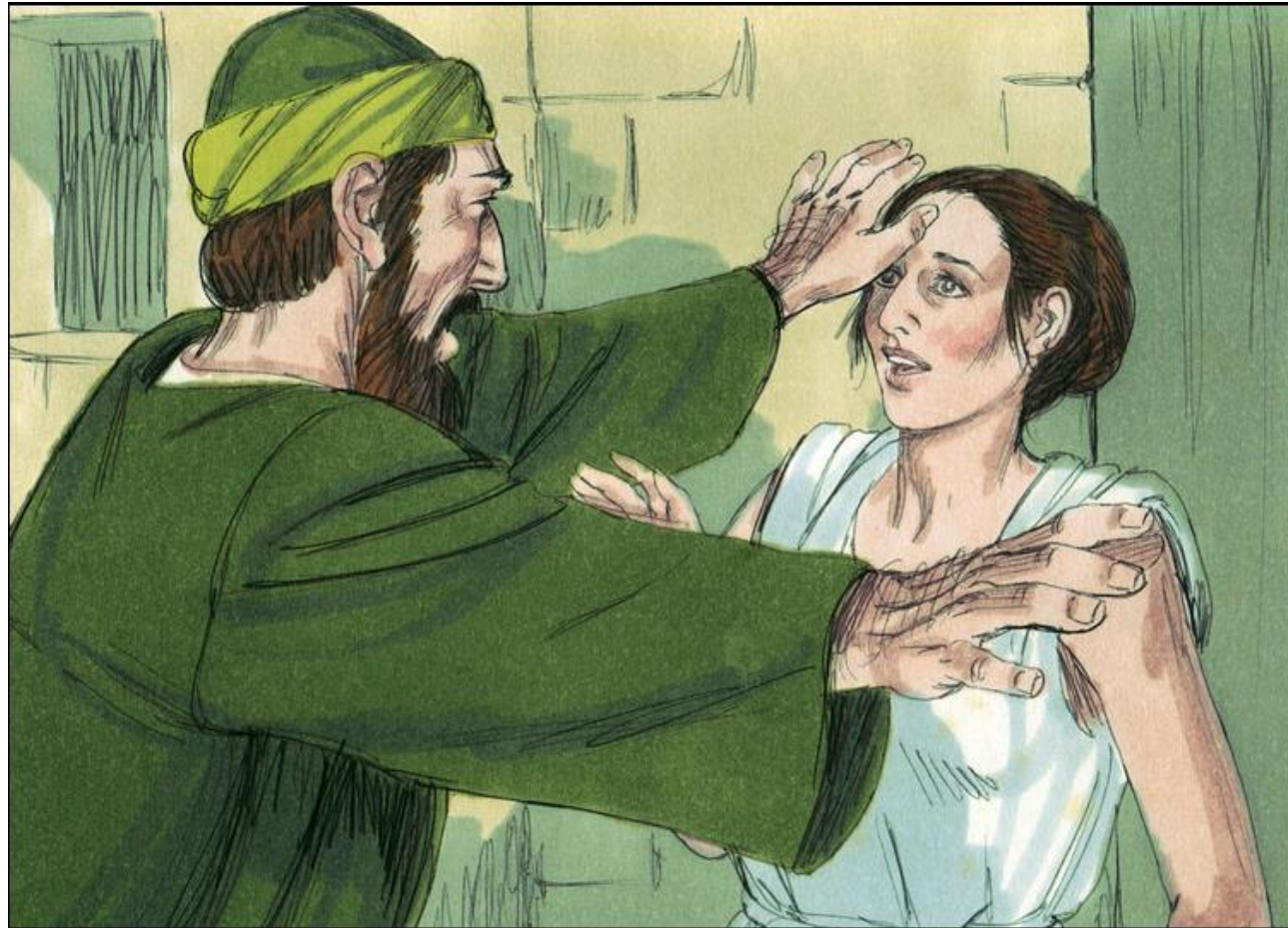
And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 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. (16:13–15)



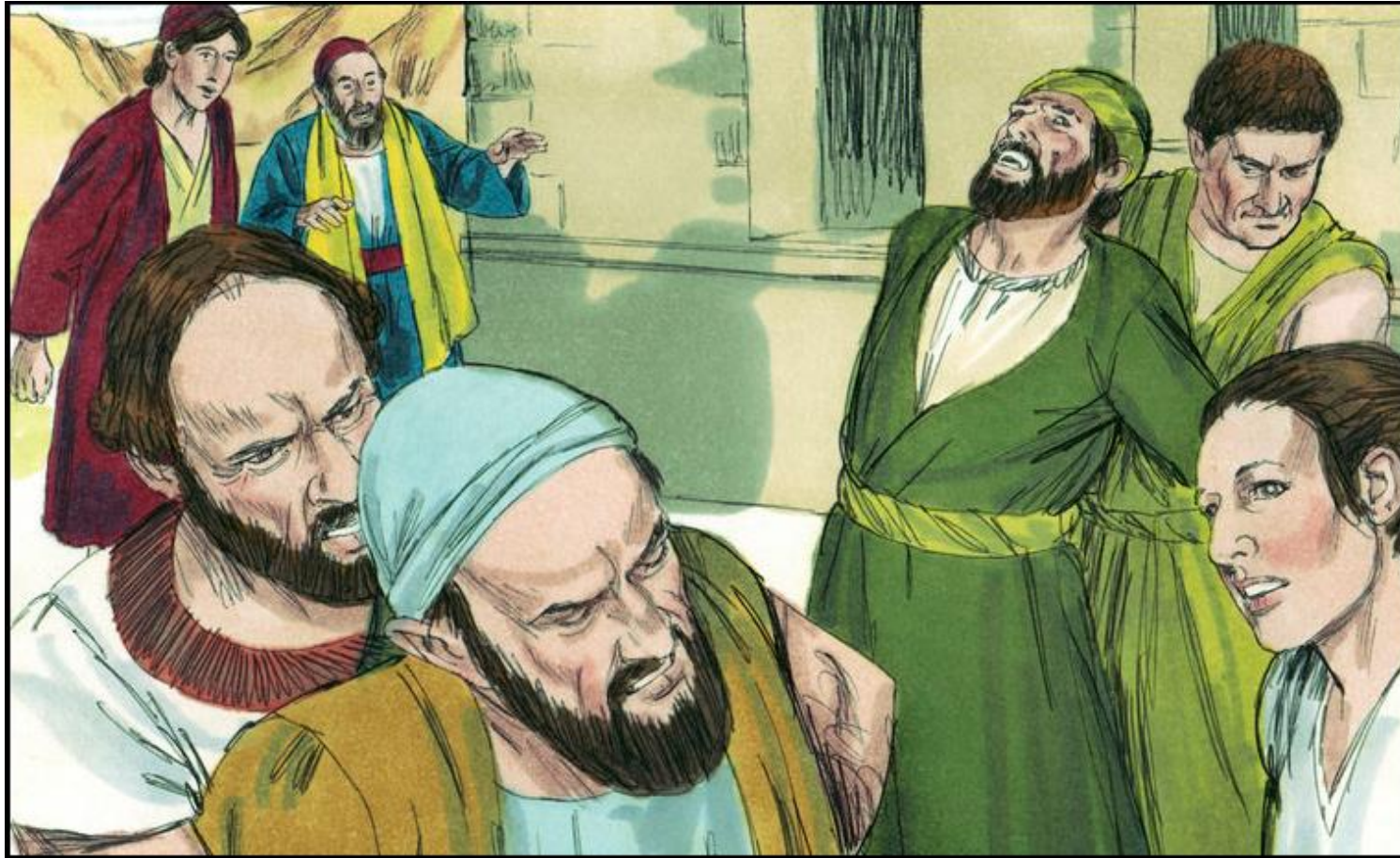
As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” (16:16–17)



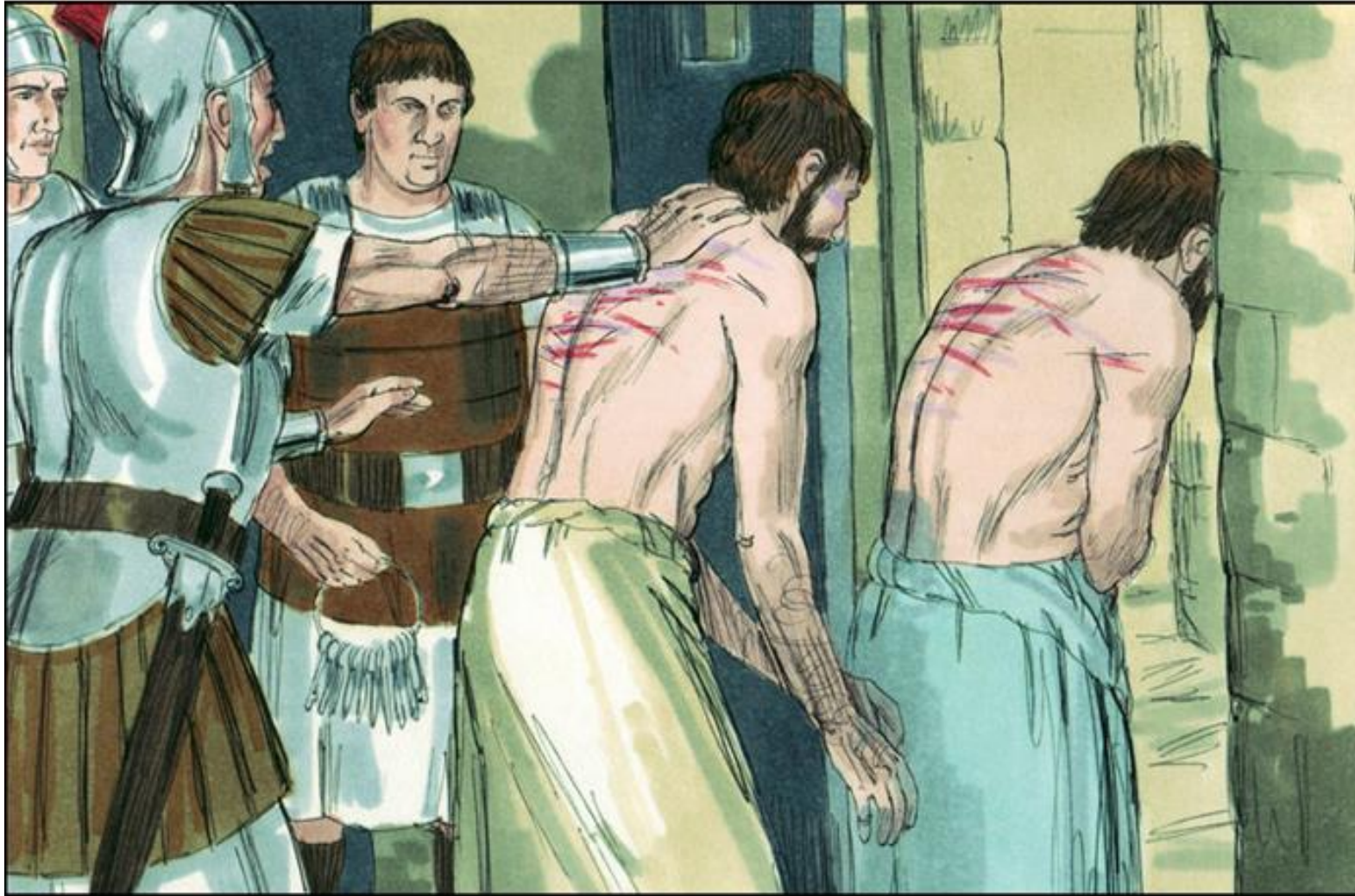
And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.
(16:18–19)



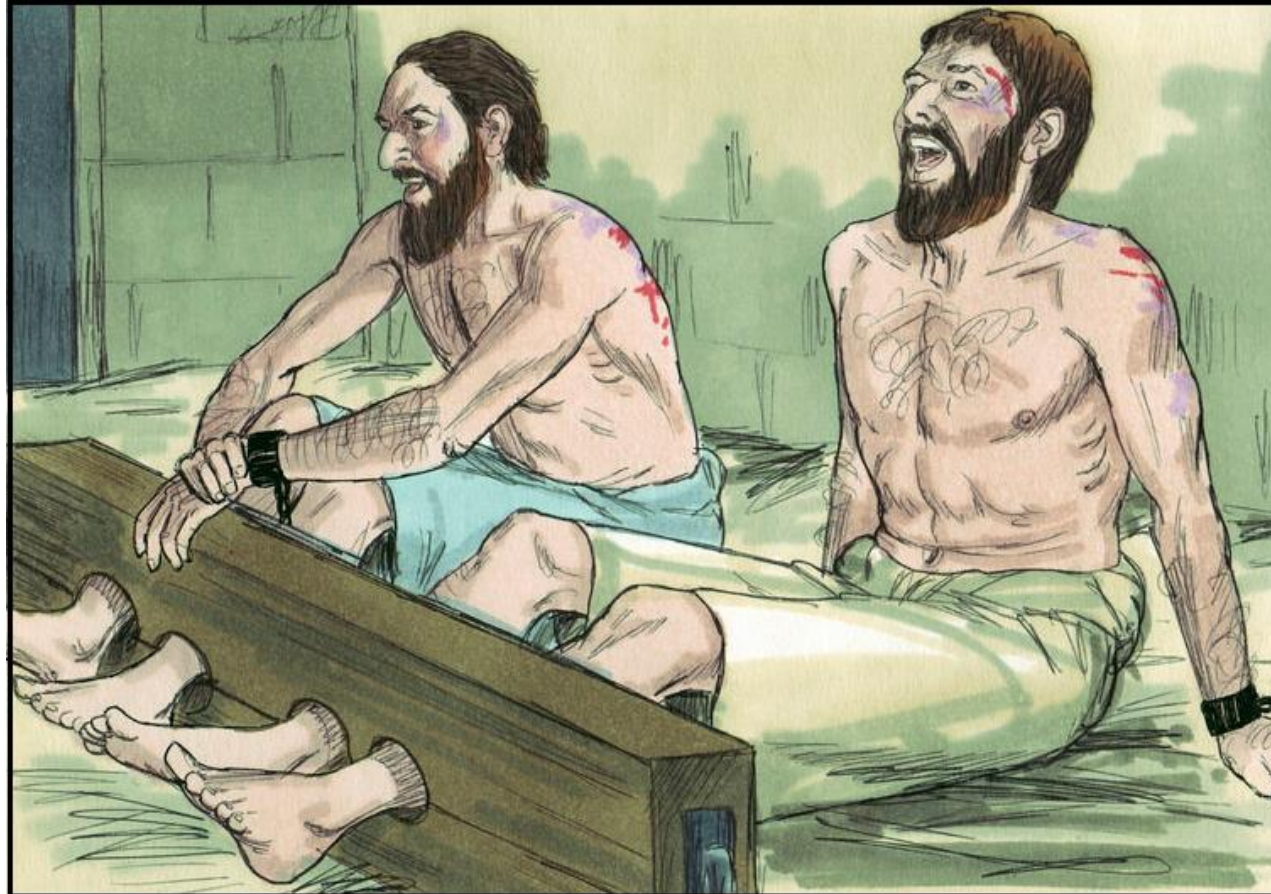
And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” (16:20–21)



The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. (16:22)



And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. (16:23-25)



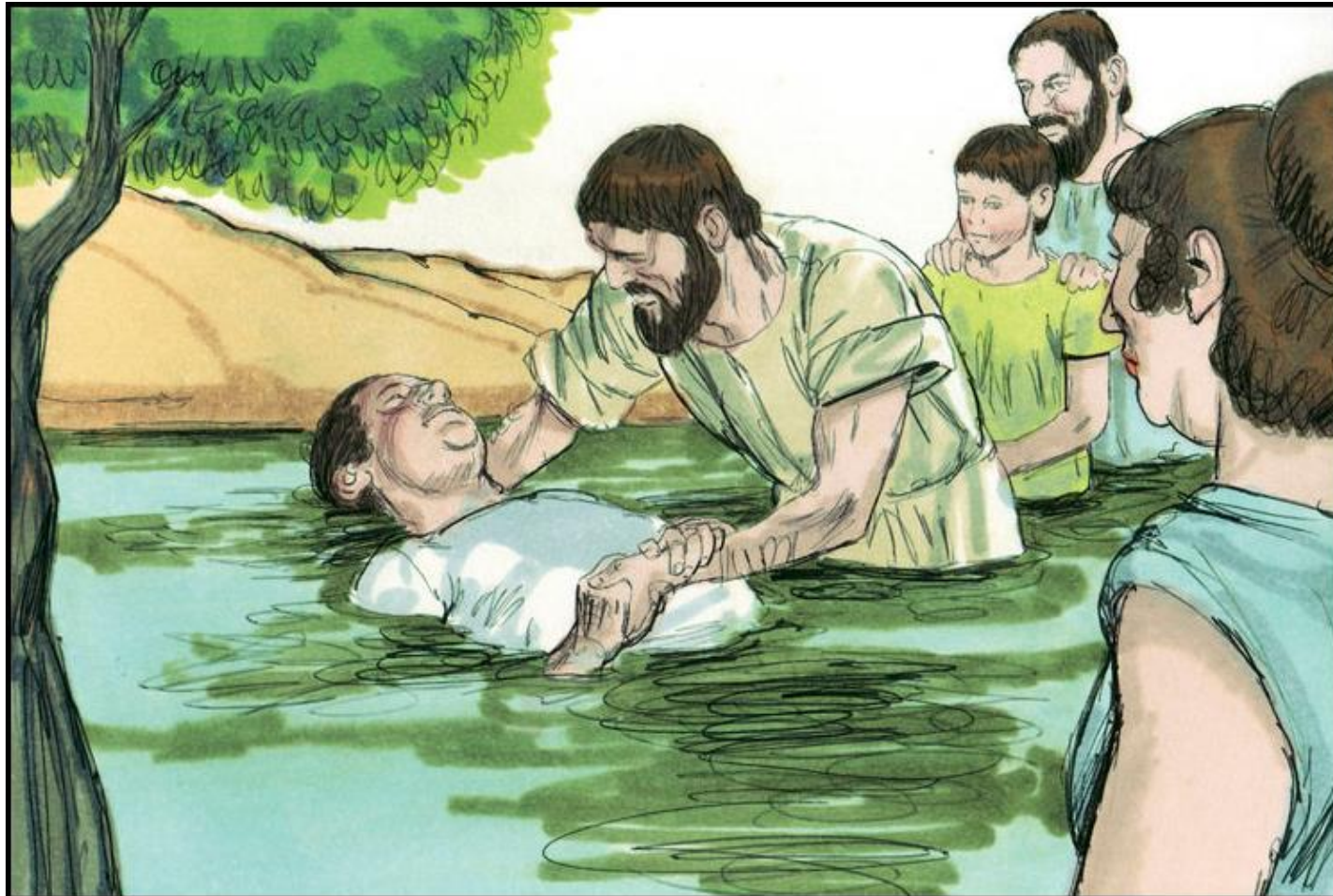
...and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. (16:26)



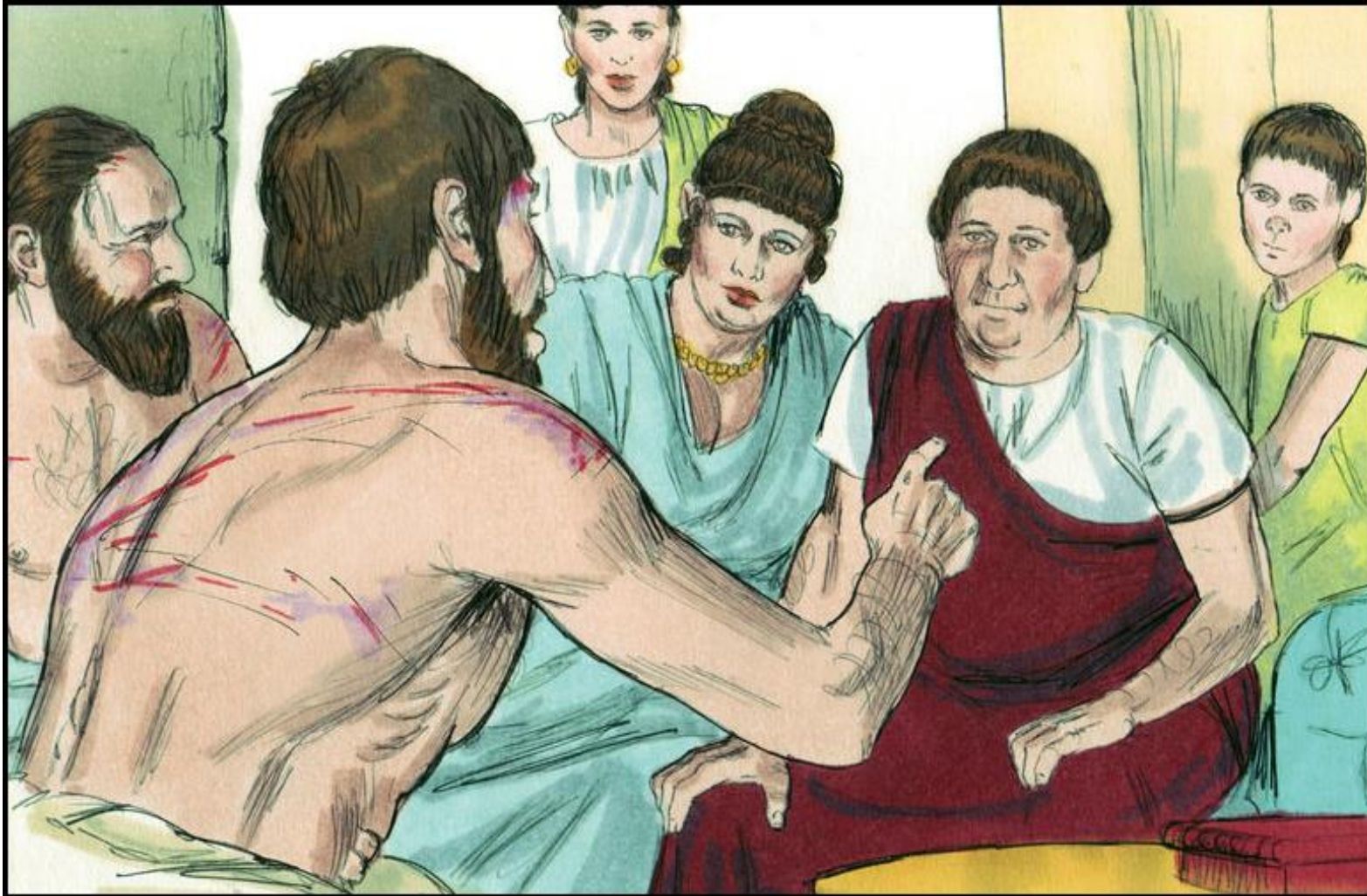
When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. (16:27–29)



Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 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. (16:30-33)



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. (16:34)



But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.” 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.” 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.” The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. (16:35–39)

This account is very important for many reasons. But today we want to cover
Seven Lessons for Ministry:



Ministry is more about the **motion** of testing
doors of obedience, rather than a **casual**
waiting for a clear calling. (16:6-12)



And they **went through** the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they **had come up to** Mysia, they **attempted to go into** Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So, **passing by** Mysia, they **went down to** Troas.... immediately we **sought to go on into** Macedonia...**setting sail from** Troas, we **made a direct voyage to** Samothrace, and the following day **onto** Neapolis, and from there **onto** Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. **We remained** in this city some days. (16:6~8, 10~12)

In life and ministry, God is
not seeking to stir up a
sitting man, but to steer a
sailing man.

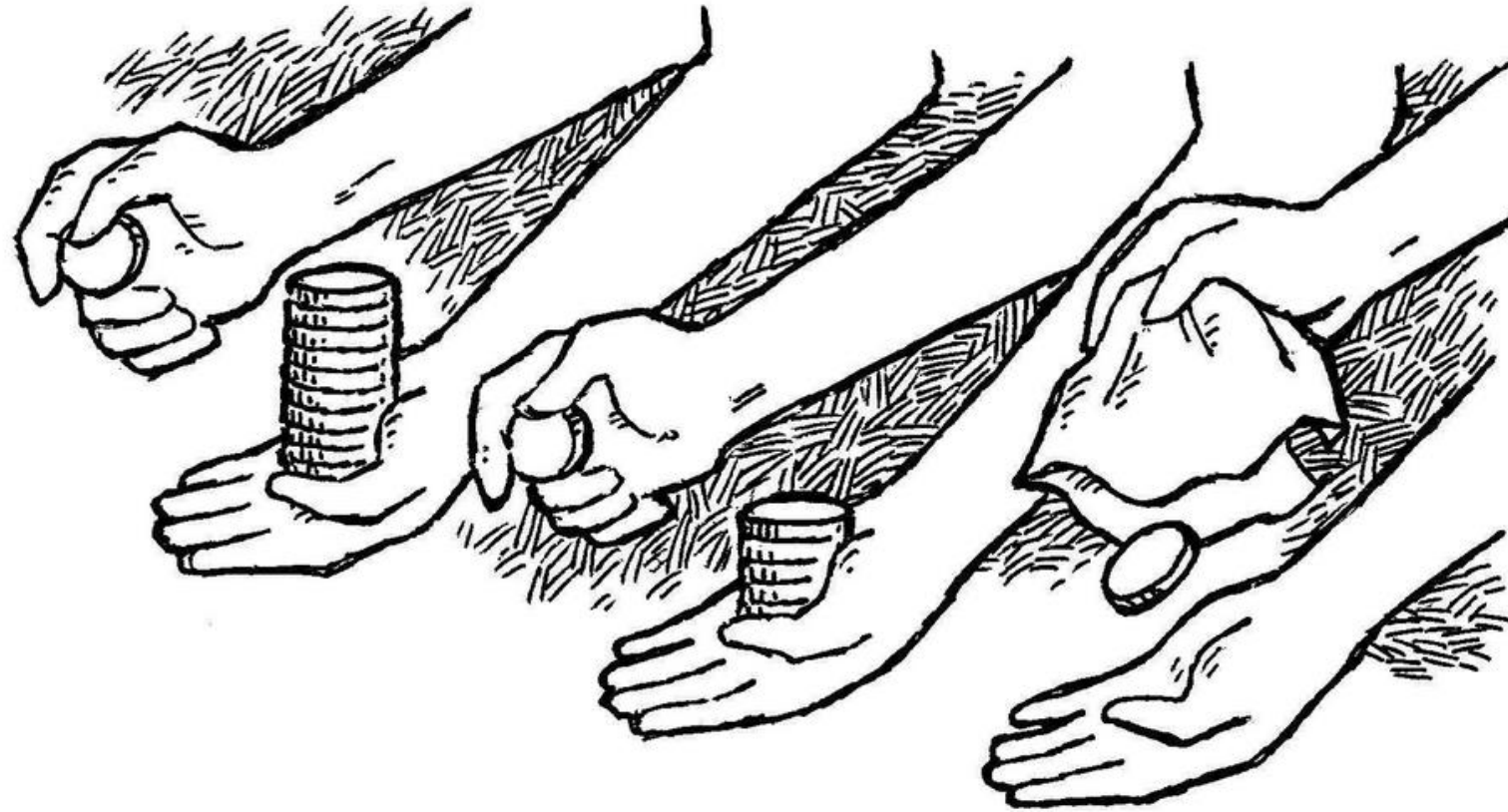
*Paul was already in motion and testing
doors to discover what God's will was.
He wasn't just sitting in Rome waiting
for lighting to strike.*

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house **to the land that I will show you...So Abram went,** as the LORD had told him
(Gen 12:1 & 4)

Ministry is about being in motion, already doing the 'obvious good' you know to do, and trusting the Lord to steer you further.



Ministry is much like the parable of the talents. God will give us small, obvious opportunities to be obedient. As we faithfully move into those small areas, larger opportunities will arrive.



(A) Ministry requires submitting to God's direction when it is clear that he has closed a door on a certain opportunity for the time being.
(16:6-8)

2

...they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit** to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but **the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.**

So...(16:6~7)

“We have tried to recognize the waves that God was sending our way, and we’ve learned to catch them. We’ve also learned to get off dying waves whenever we sensed God wanted to do something new.”

Rick Warren (*Purpose Driven Church*)

*Ministry is about being willing to walk away
from a door that has clearly been shut.*



*Ministry requires caution and realizing when you are
throwing 'pearls before swine'.*



(B) Ministry requires believing that when God shuts a good door it is because he plans to open a great door. (16:6-10)

2

...when Paul had seen the vision,
immediately we sought to go on into
Macedonia, **concluding that God had**
called us to preach the gospel to them.

(16:6~7)

Ministry is about being willing to walk away from a door that has clearly been shut...in order to find the door that has been flung wide open.



Ministry requires understanding that God's plan for us on the path of obedience may be very different than our plan for us. (16:6-10)



And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been **forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.** And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. (16:6~8)

The best laid schemes of mice and men
often go awry. And leave us naught but grief
and pain. -Robert Burns



Ministry requires understanding that God's way of working out his plan for us may be very different than the way we would have gone about it. (16:19-24)



...they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. (16:19-24)

As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are **my ways higher than your ways** and
my thoughts than your thoughts.

(Isa 55:9)

Joseph, Job, Hosea and Jesus all had
‘good reason to doubt’ or ‘question’
the way in which God decided to
work out his plan in their lives.
Understandably they probably would
have imagined a different or ‘better’
path.

But faith tells us that; if we only knew what God knows (everything) and if we only loved as God loves (perfectly) we would have gone about it the exact same way.

*Ministry is about being willing to believe that God's plan
and God's way of working out his plan is always right,
always good, always best...*

always better than what I had in mind.



Ministry requires understanding that God
always accomplishes his purposes, even if
I fail to recognize them. (16:30-34)

5

...they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 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. 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. (16:32~34)

Faith tells us that; in all the turns of
life, high and low, God is up to
something good in the life of the
faithful believer. (Rom 8:28)

“...my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

(Isa 55:11)

*Ministry is about being willing to believe that
God seeks to accomplish his purpose in all the
circumstances of my life.*



Ministry is about finding what God is
up to in the midst of the turns of life.
(16:10, 16:27-28)

6

“Our job...like experienced surfers, is to recognize a wave of God’s Spirit and ride it. It is not our responsibility to make waves but to recognize how God is working in the world and join him in the endeavor.”

Rick Warren (*Purpose Driven Church*)

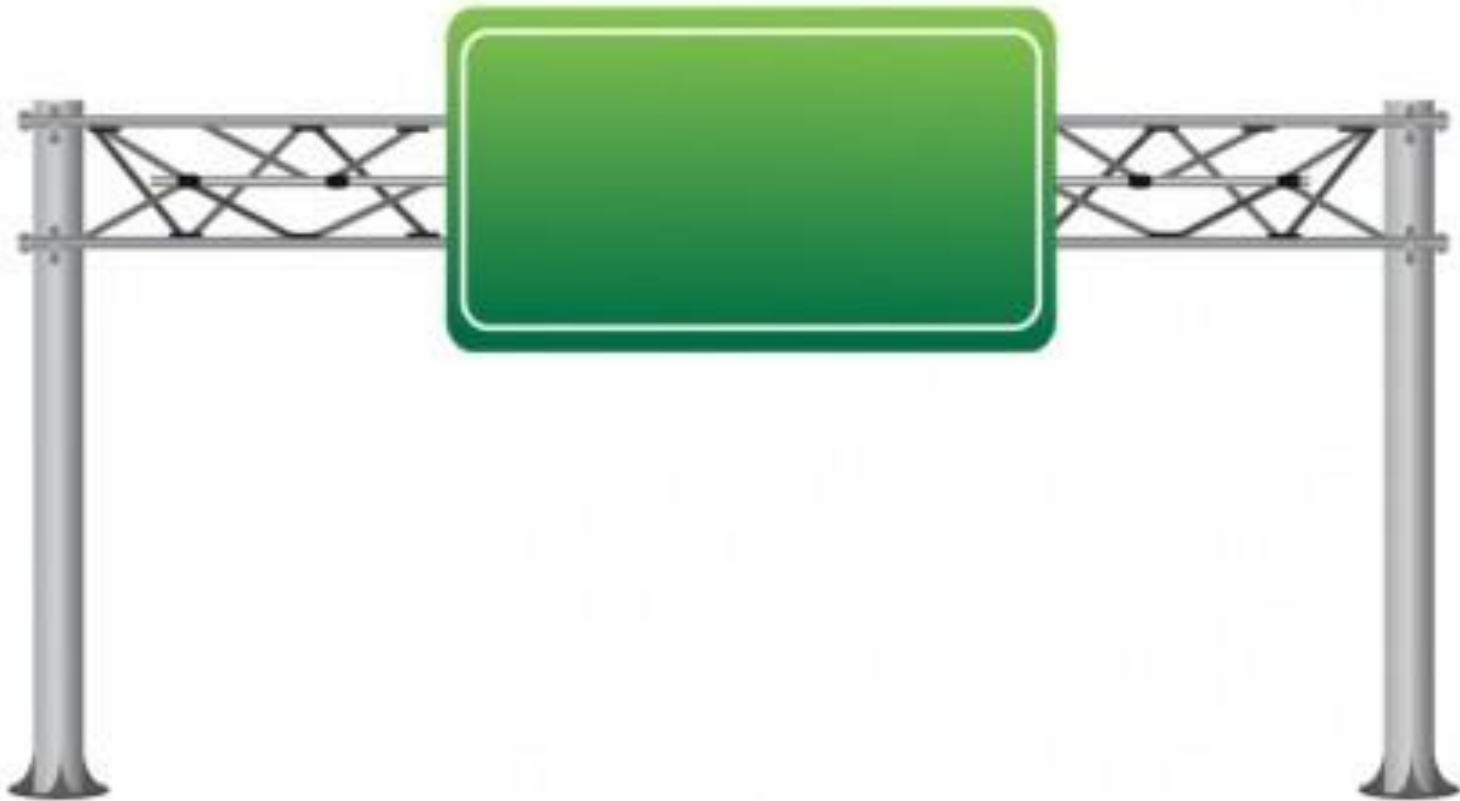
"Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

(John 12:27)

Ministry is about joining God in what
he is wanting to do...not forging our
own path. (16:6-10)



Ministry is not about discovering or creating my own course, but rather finding God's purpose for the path that he has me on.



"I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar And My daughters from the ends of the earth, **Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory,** Whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

(Isa 43:6~7)



Group/Follow Up Questions