

Intro: What families most need is for a Dad to besold-out for Jesus, and steadfastly walking in the middle of God's will.

1. In the middle of God's Will there is Clear Direction.

(Off the path, the direction is to get back on the path, on the path, the direction is clear)

Acts 16:6-12 (HCSB)

⁶ They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia and were prevented by the Holy Spirit from speaking the message in the province of Asia.

⁷ When they came to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

⁸ So, bypassing Mysia, they came down to Troas.

⁹ During the night a vision appeared to Paul: a Macedonian man was standing and pleading with him, "Cross over to Macedonia and help us!"

¹⁰ After he had seen the vision, we immediately made efforts to set out for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to evangelize them.

¹¹ Then, setting sail from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, the next day to Neapolis,

¹² and from there to Philippi, a Roman colony, which is a leading city of that district of Macedonia. We stayed in that city for a number of days.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Basics of Being in the middle of God's Will

- **Saved**
- **Spirit Walking (filled, fruit, armor)**
- **Steadfast in prayer and Bible study**
- **Step by Step obedience by faith.**

2. In the middle of God's Will there is abundant spiritual life (zoe).

Acts 16:13-15 (HCSB)

¹³ On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate by the river, where we thought there was a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women gathered there.

¹⁴ A woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who

worshiped God, was listening. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was spoken by Paul.

¹⁵ After she and her household were baptized, she urged us, “If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Acts 16:29-34 (HCSB)

²⁹ Then the jailer called for lights, rushed in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.

³⁰ Then he escorted them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹ So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

³² Then they spoke the message of the Lord to him along with everyone in his house.

³³ He took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds. Right away he and all his family were baptized.

³⁴ He brought them up into his house, set a meal before them, and rejoiced because he had believed God with his entire household.

John 10:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:10 (MSG)

¹⁰ A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.

3. In the middle of God’s will there is conflict with the world, leading to persecution.

Acts 16:16-24 (HCSB)

¹⁶ Once, as we were on our way to prayer, a slave girl met us who had a spirit of prediction and made a large profit for her owners by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ As she followed Paul and us she cried out, “These men are the slaves of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.”

¹⁸ And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly aggravated, and turning to the spirit, said, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out right away.

¹⁹ When her owners saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities.

²⁰ And bringing them before the chief magistrates, they said, “These men are seriously disturbing our city. They are Jews,

²¹ and are promoting customs that are not legal for us as Romans to adopt or practice.”

²² Then the mob joined in the attack against them, and the chief magistrates stripped off

their clothes and ordered them to be beaten with rods.

²³ After they had inflicted many blows on them, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to keep them securely guarded.

²⁴ Receiving such an order, he put them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks.

John 16:33 (ESV)

³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

2 Timothy 3:12 (HCSB)

¹² In fact, all those who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Philippians 1:29 (ESV)

²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,

4. In the middle of God's will there is joy and deliverance.

Acts 16:25-28 (HCSB)

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the jail were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's chains came loose.

²⁷ When the jailer woke up and saw the doors of the prison open, he drew his sword and was going to kill himself, since he thought the prisoners had escaped.

²⁸ But Paul called out in a loud voice, "Don't harm yourself, because all of us are here!"

(note that the joy came before the deliverance)

Acts 16:35-40 (HCSB)

³⁵ When daylight came, the chief magistrates sent the police to say, "Release those men!"

³⁶ The jailer reported these words to Paul: "The magistrates have sent orders for you to be released. So come out now and go in peace."

³⁷ But Paul said to them, "They beat us in public without a trial, although we are Roman citizens, and threw us in jail. And now are they going to smuggle us out secretly? Certainly not! On the contrary, let them come themselves and escort us out!"

³⁸ Then the police reported these words to the magistrates. And they were afraid when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens.

³⁹ So they came and apologized to them, and escorting them out, they urged them to leave town.

⁴⁰ After leaving the jail, they came to Lydia's house where they saw and encouraged the brothers, and departed.

Psalm 40:17 (ESV)

¹⁷As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!

Isaiah 55:12 (ESV)

¹²"For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Invitation: The dawn is coming when those who have followed Christ in this world will go out in joy and be led forth in peace! Lift up your head, your deliverance draws nigh!