

**Spiritual Companions
including spiritual teams**

Acts16:8 So passing by Mysia, they (Paul, Silas and Timothy) came down to Troas.

Acts16:9 And **a vision appeared to Paul in the night**. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Acts16:10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we (Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke) sought to go to Macedonia, **assuredly gathering** that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Paul represents a brother in the Lord with a relatively high level of God’s life. He saw a vision from the Lord but did not make a decision right away. Rather he fellowshiped with the brother Silas and two brothers Timothy and Luke who were relatively young in the Lord. Finally, they together concluded and moved together in one accord, open to being adjusted by the Lord.

Concerning any specific direction of our walk in our daily living, we certainly need to have the leading of the Lord, but fellowship with companions and team members is a good protection to ourselves and to the church. The attitude to experiment together and to be adjusted together is healthy. Since our life level is limited, even if we do sense the leading of the Lord, we may often not completely understand. (Isaiah 55:9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”).

Acts 16:10 Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we (Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke) sought to go to Macedonia, **assuredly gathering (Greek 4822)** that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Eph. 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together **(Greek 4822)** by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Col. 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together **(Greek 4822)** in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,

Col. 2:19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together **(Greek 4822)** through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

Acts 16:6.7 reveals that Paul , Silas and Timothy were very sensitive to the leading of the spirit, and indicating that they constantly exercised their spirit. In addition, Paul was a relative mature brother and received the vision from the Lord alone, but he did not make a decision on his own immediately, but instead fellowshiped with other brothers Silas, Timothy who was young (about 22 years old) and Luke (it seemed to have just joined Paul's team) . Finally, the Bible uses Greek words (Greek 4822) to indicate that they made a decision based on the organic union in the Lord. This biblical example can serve as a testimonial sample of our spiritual companions, spiritual teams or saints practicing fellowship.

Acts 20:3 and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he (Paul) was about to sail (from Greece) to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

Acts 20:4 And **Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia— also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.**

Acts 20:5 These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas.

When Paul served the churches, he was able to raise up as pillars many brothers who loved the Lord. In the services of the church life, being able to raise up pillars (strive for a 3-D structure and avoid a planar approach, i.e. one person serves many people) is a great blessing to the church. When we serve, it should be our exercise because we do have limitations in respect to our time and other aspects.

2nd Tim. 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, **and the time of my departure has come.**

2nd Tim. 4:21 Do your best to come before winter. **Eubulus** sends greetings to you, as do **Pudens and Linus and Claudia** and all the brothers.

Paul still raised up a new team even before he was going to martyr for the Lord.

Acts 3:1 Now **Peter and John** were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

Acts 3:2 And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple.

Acts 3:3 Seeing **Peter and John** about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.

Acts 3:4 And **Peter** directed his gaze at him, as did **John**, and said, "**Look at us.**"

Acts 3:5 And he fixed his attention on **them**, expecting to receive something from **them**.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

Acts 3:7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

Acts 3:8 And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple **with them, walking and leaping and praising God.**

Acts 3:9 **And all the people saw him walking and praising God,**

Acts 3:10 and recognized him as the one who sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, asking for alms. And they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Acts 3:11 While **he clung to Peter and John**, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's.

Acts Chapter 3 pointed out that Peter and John were an example of spiritual companions, praying together, serving together to reach people. The result is that people whom they serve are willing to live with them in the church life and praise God.

Acts 9:26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.

Acts 9:27 **But Barnabas took him and brought *him* to the apostles.** And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Acts 9:30 When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.

Acts 11:24 For he (**Barnabas**) was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

Acts 11:25 Then **Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.**

Acts 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Acts 11:30 This **they also did**, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, **the Holy Spirit said**, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Barnabas represents a brother who is many years in the Lord. He helped brother Saul (Paul) who was in difficulty, thereby becoming close to Saul. Thus he was willing to seek Paul to be his companion to serve the church.

The church and the Holy Spirit both testified to such a companionship.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the **church at Antioch** prophets and teachers, **Barnabas**, **Simeon** who was called Niger, **Lucius** of Cyrene, **Manaen** a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and **Saul**.

Acts 13:2 While **they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said**, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Acts 13:3 Then **after fasting and praying** they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen and Saul (Paul) (a spiritual team) in the church of Antioch prayed in one accord (fasting), that brought the leading of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2) and the obedience of the church (Acts 13:3). It brought in the journey of Barnabas and Saul (the apostle Paul for the first time) to preach the gospel and establish the testimonies of the churches.

Dan.2:17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to **Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions,**

Dan.2:18 **that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven** concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon.

Dan.2:19 **Then the secret was revealed to Daniel** in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Daniel encountered difficulty and asked his companions to pray for him and themselves. God answered such a prayer offered in one accord.

Esther 2:9 Now the young woman (Esther) pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then **seven choice maidservants were provided for her** from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best *place* in the house of the women.

Esther 2:10 Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal *it*.

Esther 4:15 Then Esther told *them* to reply to Mordecai:

Esther 4:16 “Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. **My maids and I will fast likewise.** And so I will go to the king, which *is* against the law; and if I perish, I perish!”

Esther represents a sister who has moved to a new place and has become a sister without a companion temporarily. Then she preached the gospel and raised up sisters (seven maidservants) to be her companions.

Neh. 8:1 And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel.

Neh. 8:2 So **Ezra** the priest brought the Law before the assembly, **both men and women and all who could understand what they heard**, on the first day of the seventh month.

Neh. 8:3 And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of **the men and the women and those who could understand**. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.

Neh. 8:4 And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood **Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah** on his right hand, and **Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam** on his left hand.

Neh. 8:5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood.

Neh. 8:6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

Neh. 8:7 Also **Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites**, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places.

Neh. 8:8 They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that **the people understood the reading**.

Neh. 8:2,3,7,8 mentioned that the people understood (relatively) the reading of the law , because of the service team mentioned in Neh. 8:4,8.

Num.11:28 So **Joshua** the son of Nun, **Moses' assistant, one of his choice men**, answered and said, "Moses my lord, forbid them!"

Ex. 17:9 **And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek.** Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

Ex. 17:10 So **Joshua did as Moses said to him**, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

Ex. 17:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "**Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua**, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

Num. 11:29 **Then Moses said to him**, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the LORD's people were prophets *and* that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"

Ex. 24:13 So **Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.**

Ex. 32:17 And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "*There is a noise of war in the camp.*"

Ex. 32:18 But he said: "*It is not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, But the sound of singing I hear.*"

Num. 27:18 And the **LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him;**

Deut. 3:28 But command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.'

Deut . 34:9 Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

These verses show how Moses tried to perfect Joshua (to me, Joshua is Moses' spiritual companion and son). The Lord also endorsed this.

Ruth 1:14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

Ruth 1:15 And Naomi said, “Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.”

Ruth 1:16 But Ruth said: “Entreat me not to leave you, *Or to turn back from following after you*; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people *shall be* my people, And your God, my God.

Ruth 1:17 Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If *anything but* death parts you and me.”

Ruth 1:18 When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, Naomi stopped speaking to her.

Naomi represents a sister who has lived many years in the Lord. She took care of and shepherded young Ruth. Ruth then determined to follow this intimate and mature sister, in the process finally gaining Christ (represented by Boaz).

The more matured saints must bring the young saints to Christ, to gain Christ and to build up the church. The younger ones need to follow the relatively matured saints who are our pattern, but the purpose is still to gain Christ and to build up the church.

Matt.18:15 “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault **between you and him alone**. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

Matt. 18:16 But if he will not hear, **take with you one or two more**, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’

Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, **tell *it* to the church**. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

If there is difficulty and weakness, fellowship with a saint (brother to brother; sister to sister). If the fellowship does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, then invite one or two saints, with whom you are intimate, for fellowship. If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, then fellowship with the relatively matured saints in the church.

The relatively matured saints are not perfect, but it is more likely that they can protect the church and us.