

Wednesday

Read: Acts 16:13 *Paul and the disciples go out the gate.*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Why were Lydia and the others praying outside the city gates?*
2. *Men and women did not to worship together at that time. Why do you think the disciples chose to disobey that social rule?*

Prayer Focus: Holy Spirit, I need your fellowship today and every day. I need guidance to see what path I need to take to to follow you into connection with others, no matter what. Thank you for being with me always.

Thursday

Read: Acts 16:14 *Lydia hears the gospel.*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Few people were allowed to wear purple cloth in those days. What does this say about Lydia?*
2. *Lydia listened with all her heart. Have you had an experience like that in worship or prayer?*

Prayer Focus: Beloved, you broke down barriers of race, gender, and society's rules so that you could find your servant Lydia and pour your truth into her heart. Let it be the same for me, in giving and in receiving your love.

Friday

Read: Acts 16:15 *Lydia is changed.*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Lydia immediately offers hospitality to outsiders. What do you think it meant to those travelers?*
2. *How can we as a church find a renewal that might allow us to be as open-hearted and welcoming as Lydia?*

Prayer Focus: Living God, you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son and to care for our companions, not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love and life. Surprise us again with all that you can do in and through us to change the world.

An Amazing Detour

Paul has a vision that a man from Macedonia needs his help. When he arrives, he finds not a man but a group of women who listen to his teaching. Lydia open her heart to receive the words about Jesus and becomes a follower of Christ. She and her household are baptized and a new spark is ignited in Macedonia.

God has always worked to change the world one life at a time. Lydia has a choice of whether to listen and follow when she hears God's Word for the first time. The faithfulness of one person's life changed can shake the foundation of entire communities.

Message Notes:

Small Group Format

Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *Have you ever dreamed a dream and had it come true? What did you feel when it happened?*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Scripture

- Have someone read: **Acts 16:9-15** Discuss observations about the text.
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?* (This is a weekly question - it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

June 2, 2019

Surprise!



Monday

Read: Acts 16:9 *Paul's vision*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Have you ever had a vision from God? How did you respond to it?*
2. *Paul had not been planning to go to Macedonia. How do you think he felt when his vision asked him to go there?*

Prayer Focus:

Gracious God, you sent Paul a vision that led him and the disciples out of their way, on a mission to share your word and to offer comfort to a stranger. Let me hear your call today, God. Show me the ones who are asking for help and those who have no way to ask.

Tuesday

Read: Acts 16:10-12 *The journey to Macedonia*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *How do you think the disciples felt when they got all that way to Macedonia and nothing happened for several days?*
2. *Paul and the disciples believed God had called them to come and share the gospel in Macedonia. What call is on your heart today?*

Prayer Focus:

Jesus, you know how I am. I make plans and I don't like to change them. I grow impatient when I have to wait to see what comes next. I'm not completely sure I can put my whole trust into your care, or that I can share your news with others. Hear my doubts and fears, Jesus, and show me how to be at peace in doing your will.