

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE (Read the passages and review the sermon outline. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group)

- If you haven't already, read Acts 16:9-15.
- Read the main points from the sermon outline.
- Describe how the Holy Spirit was at work in Paul and Lydia's hearts.
- How is Lydia described in the passage? Where are the hints as to what kind of person she was in her community?
- What could it mean that Lydia is described as a worshipper of God (v. 14)?
- Why is it significant that Acts 16:14 says that the Lord opened Lydia's heart?

CONNECT WITH GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD (select one question for discussion)

- When did your expectations of God's mission in the world NOT match up with what he was really doing at that time?
- How does Paul's vision of a man in Macedonia and his real encounter with Lydia point to God's expanding mission in the world?
- Where are there opportunities for you (individually, as a family, or as a small group) to practice the radical hospitality of Lydia?

PRAYER

Just like last week, spend some time before you pray to share in one or two words how the Holy Spirit is using the stories of the early church in Acts to transform you. Pray for openness to the Holy Spirit's invitations. Pray for each other with humility as you continue to learn what God's Spirit is up to in the world in ways that may be uncomfortable or unfamiliar. (Sometimes it's meaningful to pray the same prayer again and again. You are invited to continually return to these topics of prayer all week!)

MESSAGE OUTLINE

May 22, 2022

*Empowering the Church
Open Doors*

Pastor Jamie Nelson



Acts 16:9–15 (NIV)

During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

¹¹ From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

1. Open Minds

After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. (v. 10)

2. Open Hearts

She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. (v. 14)

3. Open Doors

"If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us. (v. 15)

NOTES:

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS—May 22, 2022 *Mosaic: Empowering the Church—Open Doors*

CONNECT WITH GOD (choose one of these practices that best suits your group or use another practice from a previous week)

Read and Reflect: Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines.
—Henri Nouwen

Reflect:

In writing or in prayerful contemplation, consider...

- What does this quote by Henri Nouwen stir within me?
- How is the Holy Spirit nudging me towards thinking more deeply in regards to the practice of hospitality?

Breath Prayer: Breath Prayer is an ancient practice that invites us to slow down and awaken ourselves—even our breath—to the presence of God. It is an invitation to remember that God is closer to us than even our own breath! This week you are invited to use the phrase: Come, Holy Spirit. As you focus on breathing in and out, allow the words to flow out from inward breath to outward breath. Spend 3-5 minutes.

- **Inhale:** Come
- **Exhale:** Holy Spirit

Continue on for a few minutes at a slowed pace, making space for a growing awareness of God's Holy Spirit.

Lectio Divina: Use the guide from the week of May 8 to engage for at least 7 minutes in the ancient spiritual practice of Lectio Divina.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Journaling: Spend 5-7 minutes re-reading Acts 11:1-18 and Acts 16:9-15. Journal about the connections, questions, and differences between these two stories of calling and conversion in Acts.

Share together: After 7 minutes, share some of your reflections and specifically consider these questions:

- What is most impactful for you as you consider the two passages above?
- How has the Holy Spirit moved in your own life and opened your mind, heart, and even your doors?
- In what ways have you seen the Holy Spirit open the hearts of one another?

(Small Group Questions continued on the back panel)