

POWER HOUR

2/16/2025

Lesson Text:
Acts 16:6-15

Background Scripture:
Acts 15:36-16:5

Devotional Reading:
Acts 16:25-34, 40; Philippians 1:1-11

“LYDIA’S HOSPITALITY”

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: 15 *She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. “If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my home.” And she urged us until we agreed. Acts 16:15 NLT*

Time: A.D. 50-51

Place: Troas; Philippi

Acts 16:6-15 NLT

6 Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. 7 Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there. 8 So instead, they went on through Mysia to the seaport of Troas. 9 That night Paul had a vision: A man from Macedonia in northern Greece was standing there, pleading with him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us!” 10 So we decided to leave for Macedonia at once, having concluded that God was calling us to preach the Good News there. 11 We boarded a boat at Troas and sailed straight across to the island of Samothrace, and the next day we landed at Neapolis. 12 From there we reached Philippi, a major city of that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. And we stayed there several days. 13 On the Sabbath we went a little way outside the city to a riverbank, where we thought people would be meeting for prayer, and we sat down to speak with some women who had gathered there. 14 One of them was Lydia from Thyatira, a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying. 15 She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. “If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my home.” And she urged us until we agreed.

INTRODUCTION

Saul trusted in Christ around A.D. 32. At first the Jerusalem saints did not believe Saul's conversion was genuine (Acts 9:26-30). After Barnabas vouched for him, Saul stayed in Jerusalem for a while. When the Jews plotted to kill him, Saul went back to his hometown of Tarsus. As the church began growing in Antioch, Barnabas journeyed to Tarsus to find Saul, since he would be useful in that work (Acts 11:25-26). Along with others, Saul busied himself with teaching the Word of God in Antioch (Acts 13:1-3). While he was engaged in that ministry, the Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Saul to mission work. Barnabas and Saul thus departed on their first missionary journey around A.D. 45. From Acts 13:9 on, Saul is known as Paul. In about A.D. 49, Paul and Barnabas decided to return to some previously evangelized cities. A dispute between them, however, led to a parting. Luke traced the movement of Paul and Silas, a prophet from Jerusalem (Acts 15:22, 32).

1. God sometimes closes doors to believers who seek to serve Him (Acts 16:6-7).

Luke, the author of Acts, said that the Holy Spirit kept Paul and his companions from ministering in Asia. He also said that the Spirit closed the door to Bithynia. God may close a door of service so that His servant can reach another spiritually needy area.

Since Jesus first spoke to him on the Damascus road, Paul continued to get marching orders from the Lord through the indwelling Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit indwells and guides believers today.

2. When God closes a door of service, He always opens another (Acts 16:8-10).

The doors to Asia were closed so that Paul's mission team could begin a needed ministry in Macedonia. If a door to one Christian service closes unexpectedly, you can be sure that God has another service opportunity for you elsewhere. Paul may have prayed something like this: "Precious Lord, show me Your will now that You have closed the way to Asia."

As we are faithful in asking God for directions for service, we can count on Him to provide them. God provided a vision of a man of Macedonia begging for Paul's team to "come over ... and help" (vs. 9). However God provides our directions to serve Him, we need to obey Him. One door closed by God only means a better place of service awaits His servant. We must trust His leading Spirit.

3. Proclaim the gospel faithfully wherever God sends you (Acts 16:11-13).

Paul led his mission team to Philippi in Macedonia. There he proclaimed the gospel outside the city gates to a group of women gathered at the riverside. Wherever God sent Paul, he was faithful to proclaim the gospel. Normally he began in a Jewish synagogue, but evidently, Philippi lacked one; so Paul improvised.

Perhaps you work with several unsaved people. Maybe you have some unsaved members in your extended family. Possibly you go to school with unsaved classmates. You need to be able to proclaim the gospel to any unsaved person. When God brings a saved person and an unsaved person together, He expects a gospel witness to happen at some point in your relationship.

4. Know that God draws unsaved people to Himself (Acts 16:14).

We are informed that the Lord opened Lydia's heart to respond to Paul's message. Lydia, like many unbelievers who hear the gospel, experienced the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

When unsaved people repent and turn to Christ, it is because the Holy Spirit has convicted them of sin and made their hearts tender to the gospel.

5. New believers should be baptized and show hospitality (Acts 16:15).

Lydia and her household were baptized as a public testimony to everyone that they were Christians. Baptism (an outward proclamation) should follow and advertise salvation (an inward reality).

Lydia provided housing to Paul and his team. Christians need to provide hospitality to visiting missionaries. This is an opportunity to assist a missionary and enable your family to get better acquainted with him and the prayer needs on his field of mission service.

POINTS TO PONDER

Even a good and sensible plan may not be God's plan (Acts 16:6-7).

If we are listening, God will direct us to the right way at the right time (vss. 8-9).

Immediate obedience is always the best response to God (vs. 10).

Doing God's will is not always easy; it often requires much time and effort (vss. 11-12).

Reaching people for Christ usually requires both our presence and our proclamation (vs. 13).

Be ready; you never know when God is going to open a person's heart to the gospel

(vss. 14-15).

CONCLUSION

Paul and Silas were eager to continue their missionary journey, but the Holy Spirit overruled their proposed itinerary. In God's own time, He made it clear that He wanted them to go to Macedonia, where He had prepared Lydia to receive the word in Philippi. Our God is sovereign. The Holy Spirit prepares hearts to receive Christ. He directs His servants where He wants them to go and when He wants them to go there. Praise goes to God, who always knows best!

QUESTION(S)

1. What did Paul suggest to Barnabas after the Jerusalem Council?
2. What led to Paul taking Silas instead of Barnabas on his second missionary journey?
3. Why did the Spirit prevent Paul and Silas from evangelizing certain areas?
4. Where was Troas? What vision did Paul have there?
5. Who made the journey from Troas to Macedonia?
6. Why was Philippi important?
7. Why did Paul go to the riverside on the Sabbath?
8. Where was Lydia from? What was her business?
9. Why did Lydia respond to the gospel message? What did she do after trusting in Christ
10. How did Lydia help the missionaries after her conversion?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is "*Priscilla, Aquilla and Apollos*"

Lesson Text: *Acts 18:1-4, 18-21, 24-28*

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