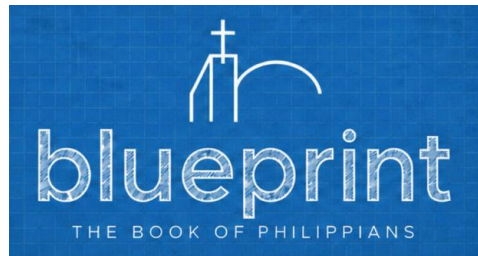




GOING DEEPER

Discussion Questions and more from Sunday's message, before we begin, here are the verses for this week's study! Open your bible to the book of Acts 16:6-10; 11-40; Philippians 1:1-4.

How much time have you spent this past week reflecting on Jesus and the hope of the gospel? How has reflecting on Him been of help to you? Because that is how we grow in how we think about our relationship to God and how we bring Him Glory each day, in each conversation, interaction, our work, our family. **In everything.** The gospel and the love of Christ should indwell us, and we should be burdened to share that good news with others in these last days. ***Have you shared the good news with anyone this week? Have you showed the love of Jesus to anyone this week?***



God's direction will not make sense until His greater purpose becomes clear.

Can you think of a time when God seemed to close a door in your life, but later you realized He was leading you toward something better?

1. Follow His Leading

Acts 16:6–10 *The Holy Spirit sometimes guides by saying "No."*

Vs 6,7 "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. 7 And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. "

Billy spoke about a GPS Recalculating

When we miss a turn, the GPS doesn't abandon the destination

It recalculates the route... the Holy Spirit often does the same.

Closed doors are not the end of God's plan

Paul wasn't pursuing sin; he was pursuing ministry.

God closed two good opportunities to accomplish something better.

Sometimes discernment is learning that "good" is not always "God's."

God sends us to people, not merely a place.

Where have you seen God 'recalculate' your path like a GPS?

"It's a fact of earthly life that when God opens the windows of heaven to bless us, the devil opens the doors of hell to blast us. When God begins moving, the devil fires up all his artillery." — Adrian Rogers

To know God's will does not mean we must hear his audible voice. He leads in different ways, when you are seeking God's will, (1) make sure your plan is in harmony with God's word, (2) Ask mature Christians for advice, (3) Check your own motives to see if you are seeking to do what you want or what you think God wants, and (4) pray for God to open and close doors He desires. Life Application Study Bible

Vs 9,10 "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them."

The Macedonian vision wasn't about geography—it was about souls.

Lydia, the jailer, and countless others were already in God's plan before Paul ever arrived.

Trust God's closed doors as much as His open ones.

“Paul waited for a pure sense of God’s direction and then acted on it immediately. The Spirit showed Paul where God was at work and where He was not at work. Paul followed. Are you ready to hear God say, “not here, there.”? Henry Blackaby

Distrust isn't just political..... it's biblical... it's cultural.

Edelman Trust Barometer 2025: Surveyed 33,000 people across 28 countries

61% had a moderate or high sense of grievance—We assume our grievance and mistrust society comes from politics.

We go straight to politics... **Reds and Blue:** Kennedy/Monroe - Nixon/Watergate - Bill/Monica

It is biblical straight from Genesis... The original sin of mistrust. We are pointing at the wrong source!

Mix in today's culture... Laziness and Entitlement

Mistrust is the most powerful political or even military tool.

NOTE: at 16:10 This is the first time in Acts where Luke (the narrator) includes himself in the story (vv.10-17) This implies that Luke has joined Paul on the journey. It means that Luke, Paul, Silas and Timothy were with Paul. -Logos Faithful Study Bible

2. Trust His Working

Acts 16:11–40

Vs 11-15 “So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the[d] district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.”

Things are going great for Paul... right? ... It goes downhill from there...

God's greatest victories often wear the disguise of setbacks.

Our original Blueprints

Everything seems to unravel. Lydia believes

Vs 17 Demon possessed/future telling slave girl. "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved."

"She kept crying out, saying - Crying out is the verb 'krazo' is not a whisper but a loud cry so all could have heard her and in the imperfect tense indicates she was crying out over and over. You can picture the chaotic scene and imagine Paul's blood pressure beginning to slowly rise with each one of her hoarse cries that sounded like the cries of a raven! Listen to the irritating cry of these ravens and imagine this following you everywhere you walked!" www.preceptaustin.org

Her owners would have them thrown in prison!

Vs 22 Stripped naked and publicly beaten with rods.

Not just jail... put in stocks. (*Leave our demons alone*)

Vs 25 Midnight worship... AN EARTHQUAKE... Jailer converted.

"It is wonderful that in such pain, with lacerated backs and aching limbs, Paul and Silas at about midnight were praying and singing hymns to God. Not groans but songs came from their mouths. Instead of cursing men, they blessed God. No wonder the other prisoners were listening to them." John Stott

Phillipi is a DUMPSTERFIRE!

What changes so quickly in the jailer's life after he believes, and what does that teach us about the immediate fruit of the gospel?

Never judge God's progress by today's circumstances. (*Never know what's around the corner*)

God was building a church while Paul thought he was surviving a prison sentence.

Heaven was accomplishing far more than Paul could see.

The first church in Philippi couldn't have been more diverse.

A wealthy merchant - former slave - Roman jailer.

Only the gospel could unite people who otherwise would never share a table together.

"Faith is acting like God is telling the truth." Tony Evans

3. Remember His Faithfulness

Philippians 1:1–4 "1 Paul and Timothy, servants[a] of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers[b] and deacons:[c]

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

When Paul looked back on the believers in Philippi, he remembered them with gratitude and joy. What would it look like for us to remember God's work in people more than the difficulties surrounding them?

Looking at an Old Photograph

A photograph never changes... the way we see it often does.

Time gives us perspective.

Paul wasn't focused on his house arrest in Rome

He wasn't focused on the possibility of execution.

His memories weren't demon possessed women - beatings - being put in Stocks

Paul looked back at Philippi and no longer saw a prison... he saw a church.

If Paul could look back at Philippi and see a church instead of a prison, what might God be asking you to see differently in your life right now?

LIVE IT OUT

Bible Study should ALWAYS lead to taking action with what you learned. Think of it as Vitamin A. "Application" into your day, week and interactions.

If God's direction is about people and not just places, who might He be leading us to love, serve, encourage, or share the gospel with this week—in our church, our families, our workplaces, and our community?

In our church: Where do we need to trust God's leading and serve people more faithfully?

In our families: How can we respond with patience and faith when God's plan does not make sense?

In our workplaces: When a meeting gets tense, a coworker is difficult, or a project suddenly changes direction, we can stop seeing it only as frustration and start asking, **"Lord, who are You putting in front of me right now?"** Maybe the assignment is not just to finish the task, but to show patience, speak truth graciously, encourage someone under pressure, or be a steady witness when everyone else is reacting.

In our community: Who might be our "Macedonian call"—someone saying, "Come help us"?

Where is God asking you to stop seeing an interruption, inconvenience, or setback—and start seeing a person He wants you to reach?"

Remember:

"We are to run the race with endurance, not in our own strength, but by fixing our gaze on Jesus. He is not only the goal of our faith—He is the source and sustainer of it." R.C. Sproul

"The gospel is not only about changing WHERE you will live for eternity, it's also about changing HOW you will live today." Shane Pruitt
And that is a heart change. So that we glorify God in all we do.

Having Jesus as Savior will cost you nothing. Having Jesus as Savior will cost you everything. How so?

Who do you say God is? You cannot "come after" Jesus unless you come to Him.

Two roads stand before us in this world today. There is the way of the divine things of our Lord, which is the way of Christ. And there is the way of human things of the world. There is a way to save your life, and you will lose it there. And there is a way to lose your life for the sake of the Kingdom, and there you will find it.

How do we follow Jesus' ways? First of all, we turn from our sin and entrust our lives to Him as our Savior and Lord. Then, we seek His will in His Word each day and put it into practice by the power of the Holy Spirit within us. We learn to deny our selfish desires and give ourselves completely to following Jesus.

This choice we have — to seek first the kingdom of God — is the fundamental choice everyone makes when they first repent and turn to Jesus Christ. Yet every day after that, our Christian life will either reinforce that decision or deny it.

Remember the gospel is personal. Your changed life shows that to others around you based on what happened at the cross. You are at a crossroads if you have not accepted Christ. Which road are you traveling on right now? Are you on God's side?



Are you in a Growth Group at First Baptist? In this isolated world, Growth Groups help people connect in a healthy way. God has created us for a deep longing for community. We grow when we are living out our faith in a small group with others and we do this by loving, caring for, and encouraging each other. If you have any questions about our Growth Groups, contact the Church Office for more information.