

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 9/29 thru 10/5
Acts 16:1-5



WHATS THE STORY?

As Paul and Silas begin their missionary journey, they meet Timothy, a young man of both Jewish and Greek heritage, who they circumcise and bring along with them to spread the message of Jesus.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does sacrificing for others look like?
- In what ways can we meet people where they are?

Discuss: Where did Paul meet Timothy?

Why would Timothy be willing to take on circumcision?

What is Paul's philosophy towards showing and explaining the Gospel of Christ?

A Deeper Look

After Paul and Barnabas went their separate ways, Paul continued his second missionary journey through Syria and Cilicia. He then revisited the towns of Derbe and Lystra in Asia Minor, 700 miles or so east of Italy.

It was here that he met a Christian disciple named Timothy. Luke tells us that Timothy was born to a Jewish mother and a Greek father, and was uncircumcised as Jewish men would be.

We are told that Paul had Timothy circumcised (an odd and painful thing considering Timothy had been alive more than 8 days at this point!) The Jewish people in the region who knew Timothy's parents would have an immediate guard up due to Timothy's Greek heritage, but they might let that guard down once they realized what Timothy was willing to do to meet them where they were. Although Paul later writes a very angry letter to the Galatians about trying to force circumcision on Gentile Christians, Paul's philosophy for spreading the gospel to each and every culture led to some unorthodox actions. Paul wrote in one of his letter to the Corinthian church, "For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings."

The question inspired by Timothy's action ought to be, how far would we be willing to go to further the Gospel of Christ, and bring salvation to others?