

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 10/20 thru 10/27
Acts 16:11-40



WHATS THE STORY?

Paul and his companions make their way to Philippi, where they have several fateful encounters as they spread the gospel message in Greece.

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

- Why would someone be eager and excited when they hear the gospel?
- What does it look like to show mercy to others?
- How does hospitality show the love of God?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: How did Lydia, the woman with the divining spirit, and the Jailer respond to what they heard?

Do you think anyone has overheard you talking about Jesus?

A Deeper Look

Paul, Silas, and Timothy continue their travels Northwest. The chapter opened with them in Derbe and Lystra, and after Paul's vision of a man in Macedonia they landed in Troas. Here they set sail to Samothrace (an island in the Aegean Sea) and then to the other side of the sea landing in Neapolis. They traveled a bit further to Philippi where they set up camp for "some days" (v12). In total, the journey from Troas to Philippi took was around 200 miles.

On the Sabbath they went to a known place of prayer by a river. They spoke to a group of women and one of them named Lydia was listening intently. Luke tells us that it was the Lord who opened her heart to the teachings of Paul. She brought her household to be baptized and insisted that they come and stay at her house. Luke implies that they agreed, and they stayed at Lydia's house as they continued to teach the gospel at this river prayer location (v15-16). They were approached by a woman who was said to have a spirit of divination. She followed the trio around screaming, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." (v17) Although it is unclear whether this woman intended to mock the believers or was simply getting on Paul's nerves, Paul was "annoyed" (v18). Paul cast her divination spirit out and her "owners" (v19) got angry as their revenue was threatened. They drummed up chargers against the "Jews" (v20) and riled up the crowds enough to have them badly beaten, stripped, thrown in a cell, and shackled. Paul and Silas sung hymns and prayed all night long until a sudden earthquake shook the cells and even the shackles open. The prison guard, seeing the open cells and knowing what punishment he was going to face for failing his duties, pulled out his sword to impale himself. Paul shouted for him to stop, as they were still in their cells. The jailer ran in and fell at their feet asking them how he too can experience the salvation they were singing about for the last few hours. They told him, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." (v31) he helped them clean their wounds and brought his family to be baptized immediately. The Jailer then fed them and they all rejoiced in becoming a believer in God.

The next day the officials sent word to the jailer to let them go, but Paul did not want to go silently as it is illegal to beat a Roman citizen without first giving them due process. Paul and Silas made the officials squirm for a bit before leaving town, stopping to encourage Lydia and her household first.