

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 10/6 thru 10/12
Acts 16:6-10



WHATS THE STORY?

As Paul and Silas travel around Asia Minor, they are continually steered in other directions by the Spirit. One night, Paul receives a vision of a Macedonian man asking for help, and Paul and his companions leave for Macedonia to preach the gospel.

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

- When has the Holy Spirit steered you toward or away from something?
- What might it look like to discern God's will when things are unclear?

Discuss: Why did Paul receive a vision?

What was the Holy Spirit's role in this passage?

Why do you think Paul trusted the vision?

A Deeper Look

Paul and Silas continue traveling through Asia Minor, although their plans are continually thwarted by the Holy Spirit. Luke uses very interesting language here: he says that the Spirit kept them from Asia, and that it wouldn't allow them to go to Bithynia. This raises some understandable questions about how this might come about: how exactly is the Holy Spirit preventing these things? Is it delivering visions, messages, or prophecies to Paul and his friends, or is there something more physical preventing these travels? Regardless, Paul and his companions follow the lead of the Spirit, somewhat without a clear direction.

But that clear direction does come: Paul is given a vision of a man from Macedonia, the name for the area that is now the northern portions of Greece. Immediately, Paul and his companions set out for Macedonia, where the Spirit is calling them to spread the gospel.

We might imagine that Paul and his friends felt frustrated and aimless in their ministry before receiving this vision. But Paul's actions here also show that he is willing to wait as the Spirit and do the sometimes hard task of having the patience to discern God's will. Paul and his companions are never inactive, but they are following the Spirit's lead, and through that, are spreading the gospel where God needs them to go.