



Life Group Sermon Study Notes

“Let’s Talk: What Is God Asking Of You?”

Sr. Ps. James Lowe – March 8, 2020

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What’s your favorite season of the year?
- What’s something of great value to you that you lost or gave away?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Acts 16:11-15 ESV

11 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 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.

The passage gives us details of Paul’s unplanned time in Macedonia. Paul wanted to revisit cities where he had previously shared the gospel, but the Holy Spirit stopped him from doing so. God gave him a vision of a man wanting help in Macedonia. He concluded that he was to visit Macedonia. Paul going to Macedonia was no small matter, he was embarking on new territory. During his first stop in the city of Philippi, he taught in a place of prayer instead of a synagogue, on top of that it was to a group of women. These two facts indicate the Jewish population in Philippi was small – noteworthy occurrence on Paul’s missionary journey.

In other words, the advancement of the gospel had gone to new heights in the Gentile world. This is further indicated by the details of Lydia responding to God through the words of Paul. Lydia was a woman of great wealth and from Thyatira, a city Paul previously was prevented from visiting by the Holy Spirit. Lydia became a key financial supporter of the early church. The beauty of this connection is shown by Lydia inviting Paul to her house. Paul being a Jew, agreeing to stay in Lydia's home spoke volumes to God affirming and increasing the number of non-Jews into the family of God.

This passage teaches us that even when we are fulfilling our calling, we shouldn't expect things to go how we plan. Paul was obedient to the Spirit even when it went against a solid plan. God often asks us to change our career paths, relationships, living situations, etc. This can happen even when we can't see anything wrong with the path that we are on. When God asks us to take a different route, we can trust that it will lead to new opportunities and connections that result in the advancement of the Gospel to people that we previously had no access to.

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to your life.

- Share a time when you rejected change in your life from God.
- What are practical steps you can take to be ready to share the gospel with people from a different culture than yours?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as other requests you may have.

- Thank God for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Ask God for knowledge and wisdom to understand his ways.
- Ask God for the heart to reach people with the Gospel.