

A. SERMON SLIDES

The Gospel and Two Ladies

Acts 16:6-19 (ESV)

And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. 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." 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. So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 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. 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. 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. 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.

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.

B. GROUP DISCUSSION

This week I want to suggest a "new" way to read and study the Bible in a group setting. If you are looking for a way to listen and learn together without relying on the past week's sermon for guidance, this may be very helpful.

It's called the Swedish Method. There's nothing especially Swedish about reading the Bible this way. It was named the Swedish Method because Ada Lum first encountered the approach in a Swedish student group. Whether you're reading alone, or with

another person one-on-one, or in a small group, this method gives you 4 things to look for in every passage.

So begin by praying for guidance and read Acts 16:1-19.

Now take 10 minutes in silence for everyone to answer these 4 questions on their own. (You may want someone to "keep" the clock!)

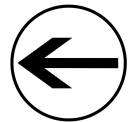
After the time is up go around the group in 4 rounds giving everyone a opportunity to speak. Each question is represented by a symbol:



What stands out to you, or "shines" from the passage? A light bulb should be something that "shines" from the passage – something new or fresh. What stuck out to you this time through? Every time we read the Bible, God will be reminding us of things we've forgotten, and showing us things we haven't seen before.



Did these verses raise any questions as you read? You might stumble over a word or verse, or a connection to another part of the Bible, or a particular theological point. Does something seem to contradict some other text? Does anything strike you as odd?



An arrow indicates a personal application for our lives. Identify and commit to something you sense the Spirit is leading you to do in obedience to this text. Make it specific enough that you can do it this week, and make it personal enough that you yourself can do it (and not someone else).



Where do we see Jesus Christ in these verses? Jesus did say the whole Bible is about him. In Luke 24:44 Jesus says to His disciples, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

What in this passage helped you see more of Jesus and his cross, or what moved you to love him more?

4 simple questions. Everyone can share. If this is something that helps your group to flourish, maybe this is the method you should employ every week?