

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (July 7, 2024)

For Personal or Group Study

God is not only the God of second chances; He is the God of *another* chance. This is good news because most of us mess up the second chance fairly quickly. The Bible is full of people who received second chances, and even third and fourth chances: Peter, Jonah, Mark, Samson, David, and others. All trophies of God's grace.

This Sunday we will learn that Paul didn't want Mark to go with he and Barnabas on the second missionary journey because, back in Acts 13, Mark had left one of their previous mission trips early in order to go back home. We discover here that Barnabas stood up for John Mark and defended him to the point that he and Paul got into an argument and split up. So, Barnabas, the "encourager, took Mark with him and continued spreading the Gospel. He gave Mark a second chance.

We will also learn about Lydia. Lydia was a worshiper of God but, like Cornelius in Acts 10, had not yet heard the gospel. The Holy Spirit rerouted Paul and friends and also ensured that Lydia would be in the right place at the right time to encounter Paul and hear the good news of Jesus. And, as Lydia heard the gospel, God opened her heart so that she received the life-giving message. Lydia, although a native of Asia Minor, is the first person recorded to have been saved in Europe. The Holy Spirit continues working through Paul and Barnabas and Lydia. And continues to work, in and through us, today.

A Second Chance and an Opened Heart

Sermon Passage: Acts 15:36-41; 16:11-15 (ESV)

Acts 15:36-41 ³⁶ And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are." ³⁷ Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches."

Acts 16:11-15 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^[a] 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.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. Acts 15:36-41: Think about what we are told about the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas. Which one would you have sided with?
2. Acts 16:11-15: What best describes Lydia? Persuasive; hospitable; spiritual; impulsive; trusting; friendly, industrious; other:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

3. Acts 15:36-41: What was an outcome (benefit) of the split up between Barnabas and Paul?
4. Acts 16:11-15: What does it mean to you that the Lord "opened her heart to pay attention...?"

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

6. Acts 15:36-41: When have you given up your "rights" in order to better represent Christ to others?
7. Acts 15:36-41: Have you ever lost a friendship because of a religious dispute?
8. Acts 16:11-15: What first opened your heart to the Lord? Influence of Godly parents; a preacher's message; a Sunday school teacher; reading the Bible; the love of a friend; other.

Notes: _____

How can this group pray for you? Spend time in silence, praying (even if just for a moment or two). Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Be honest. If you don't know how or what to pray admit that and ask God to help you pray.