

ACTS 16 — THREE CONVERTS IN PHILIPPI

[Building a Diverse but Powerful Church]

Acts 15

36 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord [during their first missionary journey] and see how they are doing.”



Acts 16

4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.

5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.**

7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, **but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.**

8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night **Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”**

10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.**

Lydia's Conversion



11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. 12 From there we traveled to **Philippi**, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. 14 One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named **Lydia**, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. 15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Slave Girl's Conversion



16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by **a female slave who had a spirit** by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.

17 She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” 18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.

19 When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. 20 They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

Jailer's Conversion



22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and **the jailer** was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul shouted, “Don't harm yourself! We are all here!”

29 The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

31 They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. 33 At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. 34 The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

How Does God Guide Us?

Four Distinct Ways

	Moral Guidance	Wisdom Guidance	Sovereign Guidance	Special Guidance
Sphere:	in moral conduct	in nonmoral decisions	in all things	in unique situations
Nature:	God <i>directly</i> guides believers	God <i>mediately</i> guides believers	God <i>secretly</i> guides believers	God has <i>supernaturally</i> guided believers
Means:	by revealed commands and principles	by acquired wisdom	by sovereign control over events	by divine voice, angel, dream, or miracle
Governing Principle:	according to His moral will found in the Bible	according to prayer, counsel, circumstances or common sense	according to His sovereign will	according to special revelation
Personal Role:	ACTIVE: you must study Bible	ACTIVE: you must seek sources	PASSIVE: God does it	PASSIVE: God gives it
	<p>2 Timothy 3:16-17 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.</p> <p>~ God will never lead us to do anything contrary to Scripture</p>	<p>1. When we pray - through strong impressions - a strong desire wells up</p> <p>These promptings should be "tested" by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it loving? • Is it in line with Bible? • Does it bring peace? <p>2. Counsel of other Christians - Proverbs 12:15; 15:22</p> <p>3. Circumstances - Sometimes God closes doors (Acts 16:7) - Sometimes God opens doors (1 Cor 16:9)</p> <p>4. Common Sense - 2 Timothy 2:7 - "Reflect"</p>	<p>~ We can say "No" to every means of God's guidance in our lives except this one. Our sphere of freedom does not exist in this realm. There are some things that God will do according to His divine plan, and THAT IS the way it will be.</p> <p>~ Biblical Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God was going to deliver the Hebrew people from Egyptian slavery through Moses or Aaron or whoever • God used the Babylonians to punish and exile disobedient Israel • Jesus was going to die on the cross • Jesus will come again someday 	<p>~ Divine voice: 1 Samuel 3:4-14</p> <p>~ Angel: Acts 12:7; Matt. 2:19</p> <p>~ Dream: Matt. 1:20; 2:12-13, 22</p> <p>~ Prophecy: Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11</p>

Our primary calling is not to "Do Something" but to "Be Someone."