

Main Street Church - Life Group Guide

Series: **God's Plan A :: Part 14** – (Acts 16)

Understanding God's Will

July 31, 2016



Connect

Share 1 fun/interesting fact about yourself, that the Group doesn't know about you already.

Sunday Message Feedback

1. * What impacted you from Sunday's message by Pastor Eryn?

: What challenged or encouraged you, and why?

: What can you apply to your faith & life this week? How?

2. Read [Acts 16](#)

Paul's 2nd Missionary Journey.

*What stands out to you from the following passage? (key words, phrases, names, teaching...)

*If you could get clear/specific guidance from 'God's Will' on one issue or decision in your life...

What would it be? _____.

3. Sacrifice to Serve – *Timothy got circumcised to serve & impact the Jewish people of his day...*

What is one example of something you've had to give up, or an area you've had to sacrifice in... to better serve or impact others?

4. Closed Doors & Open Doors (Read [Acts 16:6-10](#))

Sometimes God stops our plans even when they seem good to us, and that's a good thing!

*What role and weight does the Holy Spirit carry in this story?

*Who is one Christian that you've looked up to or learned from spiritually (living or dead)?

Did you learn anything from their journey of discovering/discerning God's Will?

*How would you respond to the following question & statement?

If our desire is to follow God shouldn't we be just as OK with closed doors as we are with OPEN doors? God's purpose is in the Process, so Don't overlook the Journey!

*What is one example of how God has directed/re-directed you with roadblocks or closed doors?

*If God had said YES to every prayer or plan that you proposed, what might be something that you would have missed out on? (a relationship, experience, challenge, area of growth...)

5. Changed Lives in Philippi

*Which of the three life-change stories connects with you the most?

- a. Lydia the Cloth Merchant
- b. The Slave Girl
- c. The Prison Guard

*What part of their story/transformation impacts or interests you the most?

6. Faithful & Available in Every Opportunity

Read [John 16:33](#), [Matthew 28:18-20](#), [Philippians 2:5-11](#)

*How should these promises and commands inspire us to live?

*What obstacles or challenges push against this? (from within us and from the outside world)

7. Acts 16 addresses the challenge of understanding & engaging God’s Agenda vs always engaging or demanding our our ‘Rights’.

*What are some ways that ‘our Rights’ may, at times, interfere with God’s agenda?

8. GOD’S Will Is...

***Which of the following 5 points connects with you or challenges you the most? Why?**

a. Not centered on us – & *our individual comfort & happiness...*

It’s centered on the Agenda of Jesus!

b. Not always as clear as we think or hope.

c. Not always an easy or popular path.

d. Is more about who we are becoming than where we are going!

e. Can be summarized into one word: OBEDIENCE! Obedience leads to opportunities!

ACTion Steps: Which Action Step(s) would you like to engage?

a. Learn to Talk to God & Listen to God in Prayer... ([Hearing God Workshop](#) – Fall 2016)

b. Believe & Be Baptized (“What must I do to be Saved?” “Tell me about [Baptism...](#)”)

c. Read the Book of Acts (&/or Read [Chasing the Dragon](#) by Jackie Pullinger)

d. Praise God & Pray in the midst of my current circumstances...

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Prayer

*Allow 2min for each aspect of Prayer (8min Total)

Praise : *Speak out words of praise & thanks for Who God Is & What He has Done...*

Repent : *Confess & Repent of any attitudes & actions...and receive His forgiveness*

Ask : *Ask specifically for your Needs and the Needs of Others*

Yield : *Surrender, Listen, Trust & Obey/Act*

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BONUS Resources

[*Paul's Missionary Journeys - MAP](#)

[*Facing the Canon: Interview with Jackie Pullinger](#)

*RECAP: Acts 16

Paul's second missionary journey began with a visit to Derbe and Lystra (v. 1).

There Paul met Timothy and brought him along to help in the work of the gospel (v. 2-3). In their travels they shared the decisions reached at the Council in Jerusalem (v. 4-5, see also Acts 15). The Holy Spirit's hand was active in Paul's journeys. The Holy Spirit stopped Paul from going to Asia. When this happened, Paul was led to preach the gospel in Phrygia and Galatia (v. 6). Then the Holy Spirit stopped Paul from entering Bithynia. That night Paul had a vision where he was prompted to go to Macedonia (v. 8-10). Sometimes God prevents our plans from happening because He has something even better in mind for us. One of the Macedonian cities Paul visited was Philippi (v. 12). There a woman named Lydia, along with her household, gave her hear to the Lord and was baptized (v. 13-15). Acts 16 concludes with a well-known story. Paul and Silas were slandered and thrown into prison after healing a demon-possessed girl (v. 16-24). While in jail, Paul and Silas were praying and worshipping God (v. 25). Suddenly, an earthquake broke all of the prisoners' chains and opened the gates of the jail (v. 26)! Paul and Silas could have saved themselves and made a quick escape. Instead, they stayed and shared the message of Jesus' salvation with the guard (v. 27-32). That night the jailer and his household believed in Jesus (v. 34). The next morning Paul and Silas were released (v. 35-36). Here we learn that Paul was a Roman citizen (v. 37-38), a status that gave him certain legal rights and privileges not experienced by non-citizens. This piece of information will continue to come into play in the book of Acts, directly influencing the course of Paul's journeys.