

When coming to this study we ask that you pray first. Take the time to ask God to speak through his scripture. If you don't get to all of the questions but have spent time with God your task is accomplished.

Then before reading the questions read the word. You can use some of the notations below to track your reactions and thoughts as you go:

Inspire: write a (!) beside what stands out positively so far and write a note about why

Inquire: write a (?) beside what doesn't make sense. Ask why it's there. OR by what raises a question for you.

Irk: write a (#!?) beside what rubs you the wrong way or creates dissonance.

Require: write a () beside something that demands change within you

Underline or highlight phrases that stick out.

After you're done going through the passage. Take a few moments to review your notes.

Write one sentence off the cuff. Based on your first impression, what are you thinking? How may God be speaking?

Let these prompts below continue to guide your dialogue with God and lead you into deeper reflection on His word.

Philippians introduction

Acts 16: 6 - 40 (this is the story of Paul planting the church in Philippi. We start here because it is crucial to see Paul's interactions with the church and how the church was formed).

Acts 16: 6-10

- Where did Paul want to go?
- What didn't allow Paul to go in that direction?

- When the holy spirit spoke to Paul what did he do?
- How sensitive are we to the Holy Spirit?

Paul does not start the church in Philippi if he is not listening to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

How do you or can you make space to listen to the Holy Spirit in your life?

- This could be through, prayer, scripture, community, worship, or church.

How comfortable are you with letting God direct your life instead of you?

- Are there certain things you are more comfortable with Him controlling than others?

Have you heard God speak? How have you responded?

Acts 16:11- 15

Paul often started in synagogues when preaching in new cities. There wasn't one in Philippi. Yet, God called him to this place and provides a way.

How did Paul begin his ministry there?

Who opens Lydia's heart?

We can be in place to present the Gospel, however, it is God through the Holy Spirit that does the internal work.

Do you find it difficult to share the gospel with people? What encouragement can you find in this passage regarding personal evangelism?

How can we learn from Paul's willingness to go and faithfulness to proclaim?

Acts 16: 16- 40

Paul let his temper get the best of him. He and Silas end up stripped, flogged, beaten with rods, and imprisoned. What is their response?

When life doesn't go your way what is your response?

What can we learn from Paul's trust that Jesus was going to work this out for God's glory and his good?

When the chains fall off what is Paul's response?

What would you do?

What is the result of Paul staying in jail?

Being a Roman citizen gave Paul privileges that other apostles did not have. He had the right to a fair trial. Paul's citizenship helped give him access to places where he proclaimed the good news of Jesus.

Where has the Lord placed you to proclaim the name of Jesus? What privileges and access can you leverage for Jesus?

This is the start of the church in Philippi

Paul listens

The Lord moves in Lydia's heart

Paul and Silas are miraculously freed from prison

They stay to save the jailer and he accepts Jesus as Savior.

This story sets the scene for the letter to the Philippians.

This week we'll only cover 2 verses in the book of Philippians.

Philippians 1:1-2

The whole narrative of Paul planting acts shows how he wanted to serve Jesus above all else. He chose where Jesus led instead of where he wanted. The introduction to the Philippian church (a people Paul dearly loves, we'll see that as we continue) says "servants of Christ."

How has Paul shown service to the Philippians and to Jesus?

How have you served Jesus? How are you serving Jesus? How could you serve?

Have you asked Jesus where he is leading you?

-even if you have, take some time to ask again. If you haven't asked Jesus where he may be leading you, take some time to ask.

It could be to be in a relationship with Him as Lord and Savior. It could be to care for a group of friends or a family member. It could be to serve here at Effort Baptist. The possibilities are as endless as God is big.