

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide  
SB 05.16.2021

TIMOTHY AND LYDIA— Act 16:1-15

## Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Paul's second visit to Lystra was probably five years after his 1st visit there, where he was Stoned. Five Years later it must have been very encouraging for Paul to see there was a Church continuing in that area. The important part of any ministry is the remaining fruit. It is not just how many people you get excited, but five years later are they still going with the Lord? Maybe the Best thing that happened from the first tour was the addition of Timothy to replace John Mark as Paul's "protégé" his assistant. Timothy probably became a believer from Paul's 1st visit to Lystra. Paul calls him "my beloved son" (1 Cor. 4:17). Paul was thinking of the Future when he began to Disciple Timothy. It is so important to invest in Young people, for they will be carrying on when we are carried off! Ha! Timothy was Paul's favorite companion, perhaps the son Paul never had but always wanted. Although Timothy had the freedom not to be circumcised, Paul had him circumcised so that they could better minister to the Jews. This seems to contradict the Jerusalem decision?! But that was it is not necessary to be circumcised in order to be saved. Freedom means you Can choose to be circumcised. Timothy would be working with Jews and Gentiles in the Church, and it was essential that he Not offend them. It is a Wise spiritual leader who knows how and when to apply to apply principles of the Word of God – when to Stand Firm, when to Yield. Timothy travelled w/Paul and was often his special ambassador for the "trouble spots" of the ministry. He became a Pastor in Ephesus. Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion:

1. What struck you or stood out to you from this week's sermon in the book of Acts?
2. Do you find it easier to discuss spiritual things with people you know or with strangers? Why do you think this is?
3. Of the resources we have—time, talent, and treasure—which do you most often employ for sharing the gospel? Which do you least often employ? Why do you gravitate toward one over the others?

According to Acts 13–15, Paul's first missionary journey had been a success. Many people received Christ's gift of salvation, and churches started in several places throughout the area where he and Barnabas traveled. In Acts 16, he and Barnabas had parted ways, and he was soon joined by Silas and Timothy.

## Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 16:1-5

Timothy was a second-generation Christian—his mother was a believer, but his father was a Gentile. This made Timothy not only a seasoned believer, but also someone who had a connection to both the Jewish and Gentile people they would come in contact with. Timothy was also spoken highly of by fellow Christians.

1. What do we learn about Timothy in 16:1-2? Why do these characteristics make him the perfect missionary companion for Paul?
2. What did Christians think of Timothy? What can young people learn – 16:2?

## Visitation/Restoration in 2021

3. What did Paul have done to Timothy and why – 16:3? (Think: How does this agree with Acts 15? Cf. 1 Cor 9:19-23.)
4. What information did they provide as they traveled – 16:4? (Think: In what sense were these “decrees”?)
5. What effect did their work have on the churches – 16:5?

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 16:6-10

1. How do you think Paul might have felt after twice being prevented from carrying out his intentions (vv. 6-7)?
2. Have you ever been frustrated by the Holy Spirit’s leading because it seemed to contradict your plans?

Twice the Holy Spirit prevented Paul from taking the gospel to the regions of western Asia and along the Black Sea. Instead, He led Paul to the town of Troas. Paul knew God had some purpose for bringing him to Troas, but he had no idea what it was. Then, in the middle of the night Paul had a vision of a Macedonian man calling for him to come help them. From that vision Paul was directed to a new ministry in Macedonia (16:6-10).

3. What does Paul and his companions’ response to the Macedonian man’s request indicate about their basic ministry purpose?

Paul and his fellow missionaries’ quick response to the Holy Spirit’s leading reveals they felt compelled to share the gospel wherever and whenever God called them to do so. The vision occurred one night; they departed the next day and traveled to Philippi. Paul was able to locate a place of prayer beside a river outside the city gate where a group of women met on the Sabbath. One of them was named Lydia.

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 16:11-15

1. What qualities and characteristics do you notice about Lydia? What does verse 14 reveal about our role in sharing the gospel with others? How does this truth impact your feelings about evangelism?
2. Why do you think Lydia invited Paul and the missionaries to stay at her home? How might she have felt if they had refused her offer?

The wording of verse 14 is important for our understanding of Christian witnessing. We are not responsible for the faith of others. We are responsible only for giving a faithful witness to the gospel. Lydia’s hospitality was proof of her new faith. She opened her home and shared everything she had in the spirit of the earliest church (Acts 4:32). Her home became the gathering place for Christians (16:40).

#### Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

**Pastor Ray shared “When the Lord closed the door on Paul going to Asia Minor, notice Paul didn’t give up on the ministry. He was not allowing closed doors to discourage or stop him. If Paul had allowed this Closed Door to discourage him, the Great Call he was about to receive would have never happened! Paul receives a Vision of a Man who represents all of Europe begging Paul to come to the European Continent. Sometimes God helps give us Divine Revelation by giving us what I call Visual Aids. “Here, let Me show you” There are times when the Lord for His own reason wants His direction in our lives to be very Clear. My own experience has been, when I can see it on the inside, God will bring it to pass on the outside, when my vision is given and directed by the Holy Spirit. Lydia became the door into Macedonia.**

## ***Visitation/Restoration in 2021***

1. Why do opportunities to share the gospel sometimes go unrecognized? Why are opportunities sometimes rejected?
2. How are you going to be more aware of these opportunities?
3. Who is one person God is calling you to reach out to this week?
4. Make an "I will statement" from this lesson. For Example: After hearing this message, "I will seek to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit in sharing the gospel with people around me."

PRAYER - Pray that you will take advantage of opportunities to witness to the people God places in their lives.

*"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left." Is.30:21*