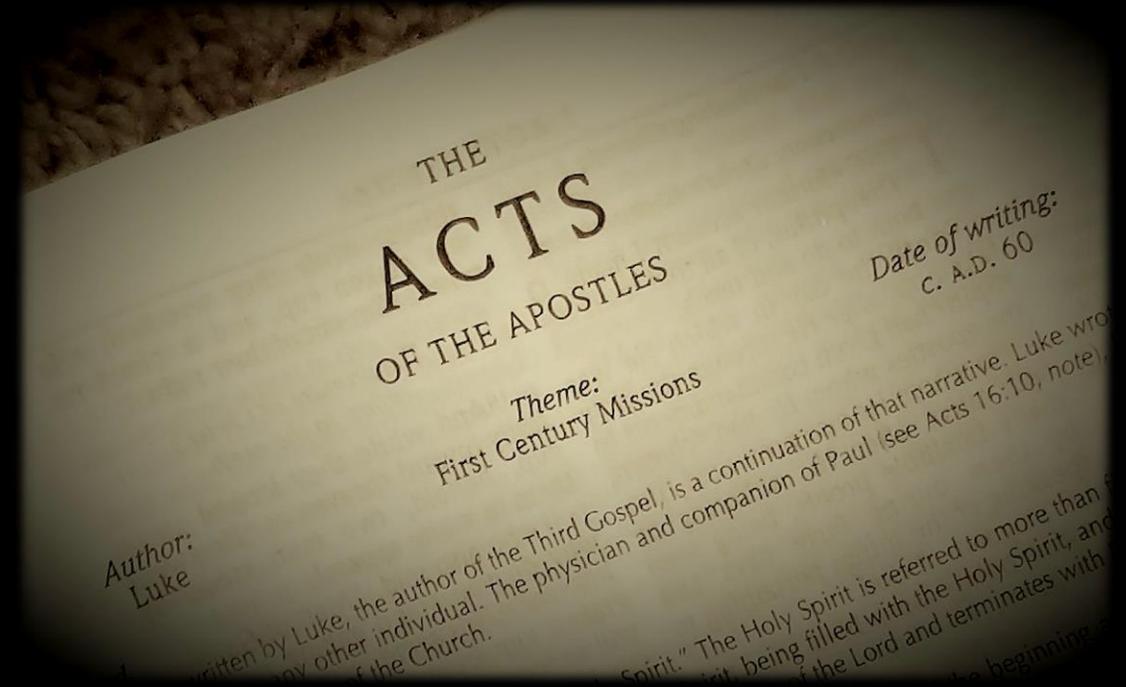


Verse by Verse

Acts 16



Previously in *Acts*

Previously in Acts

- At the end of the last chapter, Paul set out with Silas on another missionary journey.
- His previous coworker Barnabas went to the island of Cyprus with John Mark.
- Paul and Silas stayed on the mainland going through the areas of Syria and Cilicia.

Acts 16 Introduction

Acts 16 Introduction

- In today's chapter, our missionaries make it back to the towns of **Derbe** and **Lystra**.
- These are places in the Roman province of **Galatia** that were evangelized on the first missionary journey.
- They will then proceed farther, crossing into what we now call **Europe** – for ministry in **Macedonia**.

Acts 16 Key Verses

Acts 16 Key Verses

- Acts 16:30-31 (ESV)

³⁰ Then [the jailer] brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

Acts 16 Outline

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1. Timothy Joins the Team 16:1-5
2. The Macedonian Call 16:6-10
3. Lydia Is Converted 16:11-15
4. Paul and Silas Arrested 16:16-24
5. The Jailer Converted 16:25-40

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

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- **16:1** Derbe and Lystra In Acts 14 the order was reversed – Lystra and Derbe.
- This time around Paul is approaching them from the opposite direction.
- Luke is very attentive to little details.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- Timothy was apparently converted on the previous trip with Paul and Barnabas.
- His father was a Greek The wording indicates he was a pagan and may have passed away by this time.
- His mother, however, was Jewish and a believer and the same seems to be true of his grandmother.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- 2 Timothy 1:5 (ESV)

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- **16:3** Some people find the circumcision of Timothy sort of troubling – as if Paul is wavering here.
- After all, hadn't Paul just won an important battle regarding circumcision and keeping the law?
- The question is a little bit complicated.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

According to traditional Jewish law (halacha), Jewishness is passed down through the mother. So, if your mother was Jewish, you are too.

– from MyJewishLearning.com

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

4B. For the purposes of this Law, "Jew" means a person who was born of a Jewish mother or has become converted to Judaism and who is not a member of another religion.

– <http://archive.jewishagency.org/first-steps/program/5131>

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- **16:3** Timothy's Jewish mother and grandmother, would make him **Jewish** by almost any measure.
- If people knew his Greek and pagan father, his uncircumcised status could become a distraction.
- In other words, it would be easier to argue that Gentiles do not have to keep the law if you as a Jew seem to uphold it for yourself.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 (ESV)

¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law ...

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 (ESV)

... that I might win those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

1. Timothy Joins the Team Acts 16:1-5

- Paul makes an important distinction between:
 1. Sacrificing **the truth of the gospel** – which we must never do, and –
 2. Sacrificing **our rights for the sake of the gospel** – in order to make our ministry more effective.

2. The Macedonian Call Acts 16:6-10

2. The Macedonian Call Acts 16:6-10

- **We are not sure** how the Holy Spirit communicated to the team that certain doors were closed.
- **We do know** that they went to **Macedonia** – which meant crossing over to what we now call **Europe**.

2. The Macedonian Call Acts 16:6-10

- The guidance of the Holy Spirit is more important than our individual plans.
- He closes and opens doors for us.
- He may do so in various ways – perhaps through circumstances, a *check* in our spirit, or godly counsel.

2. The Macedonian Call Acts 16:6-10

- Notice also that Luke's "they" turns to "we" in this passage.
- It seems that Luke joined the team in Troas and went with them as they crossed to Macedonia.
- In 16:40 as the team leaves it is again "they," indicating that Luke stayed on in Philippi.

3. Lydia Is Converted

Acts 16:11-15

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15



- Map from <https://www.biblefunforkids.com/2012/12/lydia-seller-of-purple-cloth.html>

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15

- **16:13** The Jewish population in Philippi was evidently not very large.
- Tradition states that it takes **10 (circumcised) Jewish men to form a synagogue** – called a *minyan*.
- This is still the practice among **Orthodox Jews**.
- Here we have only women and it is not even likely that they are all Jewish.

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15

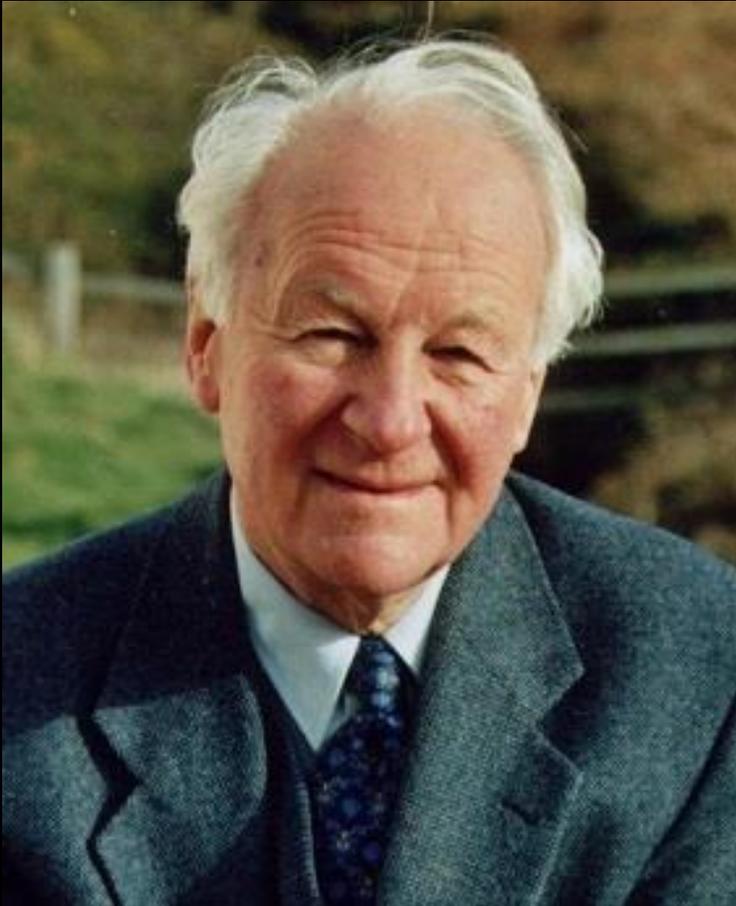
- **16:14** Lydia, for example, is called “a worshiper of God,” – a term used for Gentile believers.
- While Paul might have normally gone to synagogues first, he also knew how to find opportunities.
- Ministry is often best accomplished not by means of our Plan A – but through Plan B – or C, D, E or Y or Z.

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15

- **16:14** The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.
- Paul spoke, Lydia paid attention, and yet the Lord opened her heart.
- That is simply how God normally works.

3. Lydia Is Converted

Acts 16:11-15



Paul's preaching was not effective in itself; the Lord worked through it. And the Lord's work was not itself direct; he chose to work through Paul's preaching.

*– John Stott (1921 – 2011),
All Souls Church, London*

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15

- Without the Lord being behind the work, nothing worthwhile is ever accomplished.
- John 15:5 (ESV)

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

3. Lydia Is Converted Acts 16:11-15

- **16:15** “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.
- Paul and the team stayed at Lydia’s house.
- This highlights the importance, historically, of Christian hospitality and ministry in homes.
- More on that later.

4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

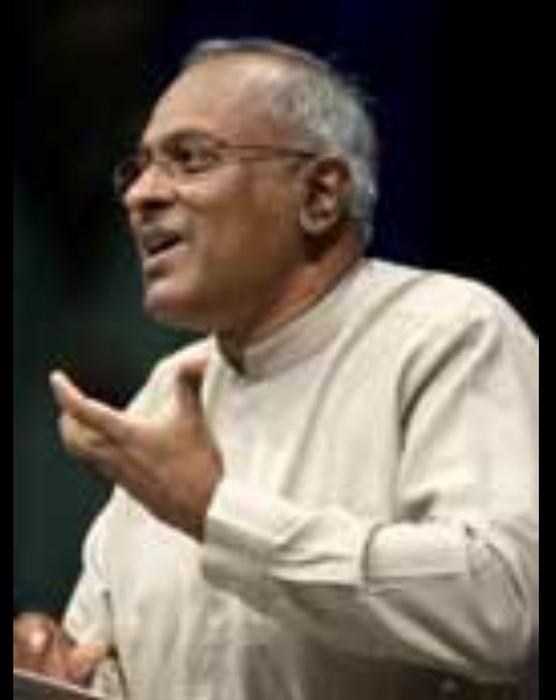
4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

- **16:17** “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.”
- The interesting thing is that the girl with the spirit of divination is telling the truth.
- The devil knows how to use the truth to enmesh people in a larger web of lies.

4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

Truth can be uttered by people through demonic power. But it must not be tolerated, for it further immerses people in demonic deception and bondage.

*– Ajith Fernando,
Youth for Christ, Sri Lanka*



4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

- **16:17** What if Paul would have simply let the girl speak and gone on with his ministry?
- The gospel might become linked in the minds of local people with the work of unclean spirits – demons.

4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

If the gospel were linked with the work of demons:

- Maybe one is just as good as the other?
- Maybe they are both ultimately after the same thing?
- Maybe it doesn't matter what you believe or how you live or where your power comes from?
- As long as you are sincere, what's the difference?

4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

- **16:19** Tragically, the girl's owners didn't care about her well-being as much as about their **hope of gain**.
- **16:20-23** These accusations are not quite true and the response is not quite legal.

4. Paul and Silas Arrested Acts 16:16-24

- **16:24** Philippi was a colony of Rome where many veterans of the Roman military chose to live.
- It was easy to play off of the local pro-Roman, anti-Jewish sentiment, so the situation gets bad quickly.
- The end result is that Paul and Silas end up in prison.

5. The Jailer Converted Acts 16:25-40

5. The Jailer Converted Acts 16:25-40

- **16:25** Earthquakes are common in that part of the world, but it still looks like God did something special.
- **16:27** **was about to kill himself** Probably thinking his Roman bosses would have done the same to him.

5. The Jailer Converted Acts 16:25-40

- **16:30-31** Our key verses are one of the most concise NT statements of the gospel that we have.
- **16:32-33** Notice that Paul and Silas spoke the word to the household – the jailer did not believe *for them*.
- It seems consistent with the text to say the baptisms were on the basis of faith.
- By contrast, some use this story to support infant baptism, which seems like a bigger stretch.

5. The Jailer Converted Acts 16:25-40

- **16:34** Again, notice the importance of hospitality and ministry happening in homes.
- This is something that we want to get better at as we look forward to changing locations to rented space.
- Stay tuned for some planning, training and organizational steps pertaining to small groups.

5. The Jailer Converted Acts 16:25-40

- **16:35-39** Finally, Paul and Silas use their Roman citizenship to strike a little fear into the magistrates.
- This also builds a little respect for the gospel.
- **16:40** More ministry at Lydia's house.
- It really is a great New Testament idea.

Acts 16 What We Just Read

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Acts 16 Key Points

Acts 16 Key Points

1. There are times that we need to sacrifice personal rights in order to enhance our ministry.
2. This is not at all the same as compromising the gospel message.
3. The guidance of the Holy Spirit is more important than our individual plans. He closes and opens doors for us.
4. God is behind the effectiveness of our ministry.

Acts 16 Key Points

5. Still, the gospel has to be proclaimed and people must knowingly receive its message.
6. Demons know how to tell the truth for false purposes, therefore we must be discerning as to the source and purpose of a given message.
7. The new testament shows us many examples of effective ministry in homes. This can still be an effective method in our day.

Acts 16 A Prayer

Acts 16 A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- We are grateful for the blessing it is to see how you worked in and through the early church. Help us to see how the many example we have here can apply to us and our own opportunities for ministry.
- Help us to be willing to sacrifice our rights for your sake and the sake of your kingdom work.

Acts 16 A Prayer

- Help us to be open to the leading of your Spirit, taking advantage of the opportunities that you place before us rather than insisting on our own way.
- Teach us to see you at work in all areas of our lives and ministries, working through our efforts and making them effective.
- And teach us to be discerning, so that we can see when the truth is being used for false purposes.

Acts 16 A Prayer

- Finally, as the early church carried out all kinds of effective ministry in homes, please prepare us as a church to be effective in the same way.
- Teach us to practice and receive hospitality in such a way as to further your Spirit-led, Spirit-filled work.
- In Christ,
- Amen

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