

# FALL QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2015

## THEME: ACTS – EXPOSING GOD’S CHURCH COMMUNITY IN ACTION!

UNIT ONE – “The Gains of their Actions”

UNIT TWO – “The Pains of their Actions”

UNIT THREE – “The Fame of their Actions”

## “THE EVANGELIZATION OF EUROPE VIA THE MACEDONIAN CALL” (The Salvation of Lydia and Her Household)

Sunday School Lesson No. XI - November 15, 2015

Rev. Frank A. Davis, III - Pastor-Teacher



Lesson Text: Acts 16:1-15

Required Reading: Acts 16:1-40

Memory Texts:

Acts 16:10, “And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.”

Acts 16:15, “And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.”

**Reliable Resources:** Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Libronix Electronic Library; Precepts for Living (UMI), Word Search 9 and 10 Electronic Library; MacArthur Study Bible; Thirty Amazing People in the Bible by Dr. David Jeremiah; The Book of Acts by E. C. Gillentine; The Book of Acts in 24 Lessons by E. L. Bynum; George Brooks Preaching Commentary

### INTRODUCTION

This week’s lesson shows us Paul’s zeal and sensitivity to the Lord’s Holy Spirit, in the preaching and ministering of the gospel, as he seeks to revisit previously established churches. But, by the act of the Holy Spirit, he is forbidden to continue on the established route, and was led by the Spirit through a vision, in an entirely different direction. Thus we pick up the lesson and meet a businesswoman named Lydia. We will see how God saved her and her family and began the movement of the gospel throughout Europe, that literally led to the eventual salvation that you and I enjoy right here in America.

### Anticipated Power Points:

- **Revisiting Former Churches.** Acts 16:1-5
- **Restricted by the Holy Spirit.** Acts 16:6-8
- **Requesting a Ministerial Visitation.** Acts 16:9-10
- **Reordering of the Mission.** Acts 16:11-12
- **Reaching Out to the Available.** Acts 16:13-14
- **Rewarded with New Converts.** Acts 16:15

### LESSON OUTLINE

#### I. Revisiting Former Churches. Acts 16:1-5

Chapter 15 ends by expressing the heartbreak of success. As Paul and Barnabas prepared to revisit earlier planted churches in Asia Minor (much of modern day Turkey), they had a sharp dispute over taking John Mark, who had departed early in their first mission trip (Acts 13:13), with them. This led to a division of this faithful team, but God still got the glory.

Barnabas, taking Mark in one direction, and Paul adding Silas, a prophet from Jerusalem, and revisiting the former churches as he had planned. Now with the loss of Mark, Paul added a young man named Timothy, who would later prove to be very valuable to his ministry.

His reputation was impeccable, his mother being Jewish but his father a Greek. Paul, understanding the mission *“to the Jew first”* (Rom. 1:16) and then to the Gentile, circumcised Timothy because of his Jewish background, as it was expected of the Jews. Now, after this was done, Paul and the team went about delivering the findings of the Jerusalem Council that Gentiles were not expected to be circumcised. (Read Acts 15:22-29). Paul’s desire was to become *“all things to all men... to win some.”* According to verse 5, the council’s news encouraged the faith and increased the growth of the Gentile-based churches. Remember Paul’s writings to the Ephesian church in Ephesians 2:8-10.

## **II. Restricted by the Holy Spirit. Acts 16:6-8**

Now as the team sought to further the spread of the gospel, they first moved in an eastern direction towards Asia, then in a northern direction towards Bithynia, and in both cases were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to evangelize. Now I could try to give some theory as to why, but simply put, it was not God’s will at the time.

## **III. Requesting a Ministerial Visitation. Acts 16:9-10**

By way of a vision, God showed Paul a man from Macedonia, begging him to come and help them. Paul and the mission team felt led by the Spirit to embark on this now westward journey and take the gospel to Europe (Acts 1:8). Paul’s ministry had received at least six recorded visions (9:3-6; 16:9-10; 18:9-10; 22:17-18; 23:11; 27:23-24). Thank God for the call of Macedonia! It saved our souls in America!

## **IV. Reordering of the Mission. Acts 16:11-12**

Beloved, a great lesson is learned here, and that is that we should be ready at all times to obey the will of God. In Luke 22:42 Jesus said, *“...nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”* And Paul and the team followed in the Master’s footsteps. Also, back in verse 10, the pronoun *“we”* is inserted, which includes Luke on the team. Having Luke on the team added the assistance of a physician, scholar, and perhaps even a benefactor to assist in the mission financially.

Above all beloved, the Gospel has made a serious transformation. It had gone into Europe when it left Troas, into Neapolis, which is a seaport city of Philippi. It is interesting that God led them to a major city of Macedonia in which was the Egnatian Way, the primary Roman highway to which many traveled from one area to another in Europe. Praise God for his vision.

## **V. Reaching Out to the Available. Acts 16:13-14**

As Paul and the team arrived in Europe, they sought out a synagogue where undoubtedly he would find that man in the vision. But there was no synagogue because there were not at least ten Jewish men in the Roman colony, as Jews were not highly favored. But on the Sabbath day, he and his team found some women praying by a river, like Cornelius in Chapter 10, having a form of religion that was monotheistic, but lacking the full knowledge of the true God. Paul and his team ministered unto them the gospel, and they, beginning with a Gentile businesswoman named Lydia of Thyatira, were receptive to the message and subsequently became saved, along with others in her household. Beloved, how gracious was the Lord to a woman’s prayer and Bible study. He sent them His best Man!

## **VI. Rewarded with New Converts. Acts 16:15**

Upon reading the rest of this chapter, you will truly appreciate Lydia, who demonstrates her faithfulness by inviting the evangelistic team to reside in her house (Matthew 25:40). And, it appears that the movement of the gospel throughout Europe had its beginnings and headquarters in the house of Lydia.

## **CLOSING**

Beloved, the gospel we received today in America basically came from the missionaries of Europe, and they received it from the preaching and obedience of the Apostle Paul and the wonderful hospitality of a businesswoman named Lydia. Beloved, when history is written in the future, what will it say about you and me? Acts 1:8, *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost id come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*

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**TV Telecast: WHNO TV-Channel 20, Sunday, 6:30 a.m.**

**Looking Ahead:                      November 22, 2015                      Acts 17:1-4, 10-12, 22-25, 28**

**The Sunday School Lesson is taught each Wednesday at noon at Bibleway. All are welcome!**

