

MACEDONIAN CALL

Acts 16:6-11

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Paul and Timothy

Key-locations: Lystra and Troas

Key-repetitions:

- God prevented: the Holy Spirit prevented the team from preaching in Asia (Ac 16:6); the Spirit would not let them enter Bithynia (Ac 16:7).
- Traveled: Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled from town to town (Ac 16:4); they traveled to the border of Mysia (Ac 16:7); they passed by Mysia and went to the city of Troas (Ac 16:8); they traveled to Philippi (Ac 16:11-12).

Key-attitudes:

- Paul's confusion when the Spirit didn't let him preach in Asia or Bithynia.
- Team's conviction that the Holy Spirit was leading them to Macedonia.

Initial-situation:

Acts, chapter thirteen, begins the history of the Holy Spirit using Barnabas and Saul to take the Good News of Jesus to distant countries outside of Israel. When they left Antioch of Syria on the first missionary journey, Barnabas was the leader. During the journey, Saul started using his Roman name Paul. Paul became the primary spokesperson.

Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch of Syria.

Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement over John Mark and separated. Paul chose Silas to accompany him on his second missionary journey.

Paul and Silas arrived in Lystra, the town where Paul had been stoned on his first missionary trip. Timothy joined the team.

Initial-problem:

The Holy Spirit prevented Paul and his companions from speaking God's word in the province of Asia.

Final-situation:

They traveled from Troas to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city in that part of Macedonia.

BIBLE STORY

Paul, Silas, and Timothy traveled from town to town. The Holy Spirit prevented Paul and his companions from speaking God's word in the province of Asia. They traveled to

the border of the province of Mysia. They tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus wouldn't let them. So they passed by Mysia and went to the city of Troas where Luke, the medical doctor, accompanied Paul. (*Luke, the author of Acts, begins to use the pronoun "we," including himself as one of Paul's companions.*)

During the night, Paul had a vision that a man from Macedonia stood and begged him, "Come over to Macedonia to help us." The vision convinced the group that God called them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. Paul and his companions immediately got ready to leave for Macedonia (Ac 16:6-10).

They traveled from Troas to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city in that part of Macedonia (Ac 16:11).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Notice the change from "they" to "we" in Acts 16:10. What does this tell us?
2. What doors did God close to Paul?
3. How were those closed doors pivotal in Paul's ministry?
4. How have you experienced a closed door becoming a pivot point for changing your life?
5. How did Paul know that God wanted him to go to Macedonia?
6. Where do you see God creating an open door for you?
7. What do you plan to do with your open door opportunity?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **A time of confusion may become a pivot point for a new direction.** The Holy Spirit prevented Paul and his companions from preaching in the province of Asia. The Spirit would not allow them to enter Bithynia (Ac 16:6-7). Paul had a vision that convinced the group that God called them to preach the gospel to the people of Macedonia. Paul and his companions immediately got ready to leave for Macedonia (16:6-10).
2. **Christian leaders should find God's direction as to where and how they should serve him.** Paul and his companions were sent to Macedonia by God. They did not go to Asia or Bithynia as they had planned. When they discovered God wanted them to go to Macedonia, they immediately left for Macedonia (Ac 16:6-10). (Compare Jesus' instruction to his disciples in Matthew 10:5, 6.)

3. **When Christians are confronted with a closed door, they should intentionally seek an open door.** The Holy Spirit prevented Paul and his companions from preaching in the province of Asia. They traveled to the border of Mysia. They tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus wouldn't let them. So they passed by Mysia and went to the city of Troas (Ac 16:6-8). The team didn't become inactive when a door closed; they actively sought an open door.
4. **Christians should depend on the Holy Spirit to guide them as to whom, where, and when to evangelize.** The Holy Spirit guided Barnabas and Saul (Paul) to leave Antioch to go on a missionary journey (Ac 13:1-4); the Spirit prevented Paul from going to Asia and Bithynia, but guided him to go to Macedonia (Ac 16:6-7).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. **Twitter Prayers** (short, concise prayers):
Invite listeners to pray about the story in "twitter" length prayers. Tell God:
 - How they feel about the story.
 - Pray for fellow believers who are experiencing closed doors. Pray that closed doors may become open doors to new opportunities.
2. **Interactive Sharing:**
Invite listeners to share an experience where their closed doors became an opportunity to walk through an open door.