

## **DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | Jan 3 - 7, 2022**

### *Philippians 1 and Acts 16*

#### **DAY ONE | UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY**

Read Acts 16:11-40 which tells the story of Paul beginning the church at Philippi.

- What details does Luke (the author of Acts) communicate about the city of Philippi? What does he want readers to know about...
  - The city itself - Acts 16:11-12
  - The people of the city and their point of contention with Paul - Acts 16:21
  - The way Paul should have been treated in this city - Acts 16:37-39

*Roman control over Philippi presented Paul with both challenges (opponents appealed to Roman law when confronting him) and benefits (he was legally protected by citizenship). Pray today in*

*Supplication: Ask God to help you to witness faithfully within our Canadian context which presents us with both challenges and benefits!*

#### **DAY TWO | UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY**

Read Acts 16:11-40 again. Today as you read, focus on the people whom Luke mentions.

- Lydia in Acts 16:13-15. What is her occupation? How is she converted? What is the immediate evidence of her conversion?
- The slave girl in Acts 16:16-19. What is her occupation? What happens to her occupation?
- The magistrates in Acts 16:16-23, 35-39. How do they originally treat Paul and his team? How and Why does their attitude change the next day?
- The jailer in Acts 16:25-34. Why does he become a believer? What is the immediate evidence of his conversion?

*Pray today in Reflection and Confession. Does your life provide evidence that you are a follower of Jesus?*

### **DAY THREE | CONNECT TO HIS STORY**

In Philippi, we encounter Lydia who is a “worshipper of God” (Phil 16:14). She is not a Jew, and yet she is attracted to the Jewish God and worships him at a place of prayer alongside other Jews. Throughout scripture, we find that God allows any “outsider” who wishes to worship him to become an “insider”. Today we’ll skim through a few Old Testament texts which demonstrate this truth.

- Read Exodus 13:37-38. Who escaped from Egypt alongside the people of Israel?
- Read Joshua 2:1-14 and Joshua 6:22-25. Who acknowledges God in this text, and how is this person treated because of her faith?
- Read Numbers 15:13-16, 27-31. What do you notice about God’s law regarding sacrifices of thanksgiving (food offerings) and sacrifices for atonement (to pay for their sins)?

*Pray today in Thanksgiving for God’s character! Thank him for always putting out a welcome mat for “outsiders” to worship him!*

### **DAY FOUR | CONNECT TO HIS STORY**

Yesterday we read that, in the Old Testament, “outsiders” (non Jews) were invited to join the people of Israel in worshipping God. Today we’ll look at some New Testament examples.

- Read Acts 10. Who worships God in this text, and how are these people treated because of their faith?
  - According to Acts 10:34, ethnicity doesn’t matter to God. What character trait does he look for?
- Read Acts 15:1-11. What is Peter’s argument in this text? Who can be saved, and how are they saved?

*Pray today in Thanksgiving! If you are a Christian, thank God for saving you through grace, by faith!*

### **DAY FIVE | APPLY TO OUR STORY**

Read Acts 16 and focus on the attitude and actions of the apostle Paul. What is important to him in the following verses? What seems to be his ultimate goal and priority?

- Acts 16:1-3. Why does he ask Timothy to be circumcised?
- Acts 16:6-10. How does Paul make his travel plans?
- Acts 16:16-18. Whose authority does he call upon as he ministers?
- Acts 16:25-34. How does Paul react in the midst of suffering and hard times?
  - How do these reflections on the life and ministry of Paul challenge or convict you today? Is this scripture passage challenging you to change your attitudes or actions as you enter 2022?

*Pray today in Supplication, asking the Holy Spirit to keep working in you, so that your attitudes and actions more closely resemble those of Jesus (and Paul!).*