

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION - 7/21-22/15  
HOW JESUS CHANGES PEOPLE: ACTS 16:6-18



## SCRIPTURE

### ACTS 16:6-18

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. 7 And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. 8 So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” 10 And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

11 So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, 12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. 14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” 18 And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

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## BIG IDEA

In Acts 16, we see two radically different people changed by Jesus. Lydia, who is a moral, well-to-do owner of her own business, is changed as Paul sits down and talks to her about Jesus. The Lord opened her heart and she began to see how beautiful Jesus is. However, the slave girl, who is demon-possessed and used by her masters, is changed not by rational argument but by a power encounter. Paul speaks to the demon in the name (on the authority) of Jesus Christ and the girl is freed! Lydia needed someone to sit down and talk; the slave girl needed someone to stand up and shout. Both got exactly what they needed in order to be changed by Jesus. The truth is, though, you'll never be stricken with Jesus' beauty like Lydia, or freed by Jesus' power like the slave girl until you look to what Jesus did on the cross. Jesus is exceedingly beautiful because He was willing to become ugly to redeem us. Jesus is overpoweringly strong because He gave up His power on the cross, but still came out as the victor in His resurrection. He is as beautiful as a sunset and as strong as a thunderstorm. He is the Lion and the Lamb.

## DISCUSSION

1. Can you think of any two of your friends who are radically different yet both have been changed by Jesus? If so, tell us about them?
2. Was there anything from the sermon, big idea, or Acts 16:6-18 that **stood out** to you, **challenged** you, or **confused** you?
3. What did Lydia do after she was saved by Jesus? What does this show us about the Christian life?
4. What do you feel, at least at times, enslaved by? (eg. substance(s), unhealthy desires, pride, fear, greed, apathy, selfishness, doubt, unbelief, etc.) How should what happened to this slave girl, in Acts 16, give you hope in Jesus?
5. What do you find beautiful about Jesus? What do you find powerful about Him?