



*This guide is provided to help facilitate a clear understanding of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truths to our lives individually and corporately. As such we encourage you to spend at least half your time pondering and discussing questions that are application focused. While the guide has been bulked up, we still need to prepare by praying through the passage, reviewing the guide on our own, and thinking about how our group might answer questions.*

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## Overview of Series

Telos: A 5-Year Vision, is a 6 week series where look into God's word to see how the gospel changes individual lives, churches and cities. Our vision (emphasised every week) is "For Asia to be renewed by people, churches and cities transformed by the gospel".

This guide serves as a supplement to the sermon series, so that we imprint RHC's vision into the hearts of everyone who is part of this church, and we all see our role in God's vision. To use this series well, make sure you focus on the application questions in the second half of the guide. In the "Apply Practically" section at the end, a Prayer Card from this week is used to help your CG consider how God is calling them to be part of his plan for his people.

## Background, Context, and Structure (Acts 16:6-40)

The book of Acts records the formation of the early church, and the fulfilment of God's covenant to bless all the nations through Abraham's offspring. That is, through Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 16 reflects this fulfillment of God's covenant. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit, Paul and company make their way to Macedonia, bearing witness to the birthing of the church of Philippi.

## Christ in Acts 16:6-40

Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus is ever present with his people (Matt 28:20), leading and guiding his people to be his witnesses, to preach the gospel to all peoples, in all contexts and through all circumstances. Partaking in his mission, purpose, suffering and ultimately, glory.

## Big Idea of the Text and specific themes

To trust and obey in God, taking comfort in knowing that He is calling us to be a part of His redemptive plan to bless all the nations. Themes include:

1. God's heart for the lost (of whatever social class) and His desire to bless the nations
2. The Holy Spirit leading and guiding in specific ways
3. Suffering and risks for the gospel

4. The result and impact of the gospel in “turning the world upside down” (Acts 17:6), not as an end goal but as a key byproduct

## Goal of this Study

To witness God’s redemptive plan to bless the nations, seeing how a city and its people of all standings, can be turned “upside down” through the transformational power of the gospel.

### **Read Acts 16: 6-40**

**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 he 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.

**19** But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. **20** And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. **21** They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” **22** The crowd joined in attacking them, and the

magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.**23** And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely. **24** Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

**25** About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, **26** and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened. **27** When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." **29** And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. **30** Then he 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." **32** And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. **33** And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family. **34** Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced along with his entire household that he had believed in God.

**35** But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." **36** And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace." **37** But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out." **38** The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. **39** So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. **40** So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

## Icebreaker

1. What are some of the dreams you had as a child growing up? How have these since changed or taken shape as you've gotten older, and what do you feel has influenced these changes?

2. Where do you see God's heart for the lost in this passage?

3a. Who were the different individuals that were impacted by the gospel? (How would you describe their social standing?)

3b. How did Paul approach each of these people? and how did the gospel transform their situations?

3c. How did the gospel transform the city of Philippi?

4a. What challenges and opposition did Paul and Silas face in their obedience to the Holy Spirit (v.16-40)?

4b. In the midst of these challenges, how did they respond? Why do you think they were able to respond in such a manner? (v.25-40)

5a. Which character (Lydia, the slave girl, or the jailer) do you most closely identify with?

5b. What are some barriers that hinder you from sharing the gospel with people from different backgrounds?

5c. How can you overcome the barriers that hinder you from sharing the gospel with people of different backgrounds?

6a. How does the opposition Paul faced shed light on what it means to follow Jesus?

6b. How does Paul's experience in Philippi challenge your perspective on what it means to be "led" by the Holy Spirit?

7. How does it encourage you to know that God invites us to be a part of *His redemptive plan*?

8. How does this text highlight the importance of prayer and listening to God? (v.6-10, v.16-18, v.25-34)

9. How might God be guiding you, by the Spirit, to serve and follow Him. How do God's plans conflict with your own plans, dreams and desires in life?

10. What immediate opportunities are there for us as individuals and as a CG, to bring about gospel impact here in Singapore?

## Apply Practically

Use Prayer Card "Day 5" (Thursday's prayer card).

Consider Acts 16:15.

**Ponder:** The Lord opened Lydia's heart. Lydia's response was that she opened her home. Hospitality is often a sign of Jesus working. With an open heart and an open home Jesus can open other hearts too. His own home is open to the needy. Our homes can be too.

**Consider:** How is God challenging you to be hospitable? Is there anyone you think you should invite around for a meal? Is God asking you to open your home to facilitate a CG, or to inconvenience yourself for the sake of the gospel?

Pray for one another in areas that you feel God is guiding you to serve in, and conflicts that may exist, asking for faith, wisdom and discernment.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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