

# Group Discussion Guide for Week of 10/25/2021

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text to accompany the themes of the Sunday Sermon; *Acts 16:1-15 (NIV)*

Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. <sup>2</sup>The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. <sup>3</sup>Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. <sup>4</sup>As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. <sup>5</sup>So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers. <sup>6</sup>Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. <sup>7</sup>When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. <sup>8</sup>So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. <sup>9</sup>During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <sup>10</sup>After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. <sup>11</sup>From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. <sup>12</sup>From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. <sup>13</sup>On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. <sup>14</sup>One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. <sup>15</sup>When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

## General Question Bank

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)  
**Know** (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)  
**Together** (What is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?)

## Discussion/Topic Starter (Ice Breaker)

- Have you ever had a moment where God either spoke to you or made Himself very clear to you? Would you be willing to share with the group?

## Acts 16:1-15

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

\*\*\*Another way to ask: "Choose one verse or phrase from the passage that stands out to you. This could be something you're intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that puzzles you, something that resonates with you, or just something you want to examine further." Now share it with the group

- O: Whenever Paul got to a new town, he went to the Jewish synagogue first. For this journey, Paul determined that meant Timothy should be circumcised (v. 3). Does this action contradict the decision of the Council? (Acts 15:23-29, i.e. the decision they're on their way to deliver to many churches!) Why or why not?
- I: Often, as in this situation, different cultural contexts call for different ministry approaches. Can you think of an example?
- O: Where do you see the Holy Spirit's hand of guidance explicitly mentioned? What might that guidance look like practically?
- O: What complications arise as Paul, Silas, and Timothy travel through Phrygia and Galatia? (vs. 6-10)
- I: Read of Paul's experience in vs. 9-10. In our own lives, whether we experience a prophetic vision or a growing internal conviction, what principles do we use to discern the Lord's voice in our decision-making?
- I: In v. 10, the voice of the narrative shifts for a time to "we/us" language. Why might this be?
- I: In Philippi, rather than a synagogue, they find a prayer gathering by a river, where Lydia and her whole family's life is transformed (vs. 14-15). How has the Lord opened your heart in a similar way?
- A: Where might the Holy Spirit be calling you to invest your time (or blocking you from investing)? How might we practice "active listening" with the Holy Spirit? (e.g. Scripture meditation, silent centering prayer, praying through our days)
- A: What is one step (left foot, right foot...) you can take this week in obedience to the Holy Spirit?

-How WILL you respond this week? What one question do you want us to ask of you next week in regard to this?

## Recommended Follow-up:

**Pray:** Pray together, and really focus in on that we are meeting with God, He's in the room, and He wants us to KNOW Him. Pray together, spend some time being silent.

**Respond:** Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's devotional guide.

## **An explanation on how Riverside structures these discussion guides\*:**

Riverside defines a disciple of Jesus as a **“Know, Be, Do”** person. And since Jesus told us to “make disciples” we use the “Know, Be, Do” framework in our discussion guides. We believe the process for this transformation happens in community, hence the **“Together”** part of the Riverside mission as well.

Riverside leadership regularly asks questions around these areas:

- “What do we need to **know** about God?”
- “Who do we need to **be**?”
- “What do we need to **do**?”
- **“Together**, what is our communal identity/response according to the passage/Holy Spirit?”

Here is what we mean by “Know, Be, Do” (based on [Colossians 1:9-10](#), see below)

**Know** – *“to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives..., growing in the knowledge of God.”* Not just knowing about Jesus, but knowing Him personally, intimately, and deeply. This is also about knowing the scriptures, knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit, even knowing yourself.

**Be** – *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way.”* Becoming more like Jesus (sanctification). This is about our character and our heart and our motivations, our passions and convictions change the more we get to Know Jesus (and others).

**Do** – *“bearing fruit in every good work, ...”* Knowing Jesus and Becoming like Jesus practically will change our actions. As we grow in these areas we will naturally DO the things that Jesus did while in the flesh on earth (living and loving like Jesus). Some broad categories around DO are evangelism and justice and service.

Notice *“bearing fruit in every good work”* then yields more *“growing in the knowledge of God.”* In other words, while “Know, Be, Do” are three distinct words, they are deeply interconnected.

As a side note, the next chapter states: *<sup>6</sup> So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. <sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)*

To aid in this process Riverside also has a **daily devotional guide available each week**.

### **Colossians 1:9-10, NIV**

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,...*

---

\* As discussed in Riverside’s HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guide was created in consultation with [Acts, N. T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides](#); [Acts, Life Change Series](#); [Acts: Seeing the Spirit at Work, John Stott Bible Studies](#), [Book of Acts, Life Lessons with Max Lucado](#).