

THE CONVERSION

Wednesday Night Bible Study | Acts 16:11–27

Theme: God opens hearts, transforms lives, and remains present even in hardship.

Goal: Recognize different responses to the gospel and consider how faith changes our actions.

Opening prayer and introduction (5 minutes)

Ask: What comes to mind when you hear the word “conversion”? Conversion is more than changing an opinion; it involves responding to God in faith and beginning a changed life.

Read the passage aloud (10 minutes)

Read Acts 16:11–27 from your preferred Bible translation. Invite three readers: verses 11–15, 16–18, and 19–27.

1. Lydia: An open heart (Acts 16:11–15)

In Philippi, Paul meets women gathered for prayer. Lydia listens, and the Lord opens her heart to respond to Paul's message. She and her household are baptized, and she offers hospitality.

Discuss: What is the relationship between hearing the message, God opening the heart, and Lydia's response? What does her hospitality show?

2. A young woman: Deliverance and conflict (Acts 16:16–21)

A slave girl with a spirit of divination follows Paul's group. Paul commands the spirit to leave in Jesus Christ's name. Her owners, angered by the loss of income, bring Paul and Silas before authorities.

Discuss: How can someone's freedom threaten others' interests? Why is it important to value a person above profit?

3. Paul and Silas: Faith under pressure (Acts 16:22–27)

After being beaten and imprisoned, Paul and Silas pray and sing hymns at midnight. An earthquake opens the prison doors and loosens chains. The jailer wakes, sees the doors open, and fears the prisoners have escaped.

Discuss: What does worship in prison reveal about their faith? What can we learn without assuming that every hardship ends in immediate rescue?

Important passage boundary

Acts 16:11–27 ends with the jailer drawing his sword. His question about salvation and the account of his household's response appear in **Acts 16:28–34**. Read those verses as an optional follow-up, not as part of today's assigned text.

LEADER'S DISCUSSION GUIDE

Suggested 50-minute lesson plan

Welcome and prayer: 5 min | Scripture reading: 10 min | Three scenes: 20 min | Handout discussion: 10 min
| Closing prayer: 5 min

Key observations

Lydia: God opens her heart; she responds with baptism and hospitality (vv. 14–15).

The slave girl: Deliverance occurs, but the text does not tell us whether she becomes a disciple (vv. 16–18).

Paul and Silas: Faithfulness does not spare them from unjust treatment; they pray and sing anyway (vv. 22–25).

The jailer: His full conversion account comes after verse 27 (vv. 28–34).

Guided questions with teaching prompts

1. Who takes the initiative in Lydia's response? *Prompt:* The Lord opens her heart (v. 14).
2. What changed for the slave girl? *Prompt:* The spirit departed; avoid claiming the text says more than it does.
3. Why were Paul and Silas arrested? *Prompt:* Their ministry disrupted the owners' income, followed by public accusations.
4. What were the other prisoners doing at midnight? *Prompt:* Listening to Paul and Silas (v. 25).
5. How does this passage challenge our witness? *Prompt:* We can pray, show hospitality, protect dignity, and remain faithful in trials.

Life application

Invite participants to choose one action for the week: listen attentively to God's Word; extend hospitality; stand up for someone treated unjustly; or practice prayer and praise during difficulty.

Closing prayer

Lord, open our hearts to Your Word. Teach us to see people with compassion, to follow You with courage, and to worship You in every season. In Jesus' name, amen.

PARTICIPANT HANDOUT • PAGE 1

The Conversion | Acts 16:11–27

Name: _____ Date: _____

A. Read and observe

1. Where did Paul and his companions meet Lydia? (vv. 13–14)

2. What did the Lord open, and how did Lydia respond? (vv. 14–15)

3. Why were the slave girl's owners angry? (vv. 18–19)

4. What were Paul and Silas doing at midnight? (v. 25)

5. What happened to the prison doors and chains? (v. 26)

B. Think deeper

6. What is one difference between outward circumstances and inward faith in this passage?

7. Which person or scene challenges you most, and why?

PARTICIPANT HANDOUT • PAGE 2

The Conversion | Personal reflection and application

C. Match the person with the description

A. Lydia B. Slave girl C. Paul and Silas D. Jailer

- _____ Prayed and sang hymns in prison.
- _____ Offered hospitality after responding to the message.
- _____ Was freed from a spirit of divination.
- _____ Awoke and saw the prison doors open.

D. Group conversation

1. What can a church do to demonstrate the kind of hospitality Lydia showed?

2. How can believers defend people whose dignity is overlooked?

3. What practical habits help you pray and praise during difficult times?

E. My response this week

One truth I learned:

One action I will take:

Someone I will encourage or pray for:

Memory verse suggestion: Acts 16:25. Read and memorize it from your own Bible.

HANDOUT ANSWER KEY • LEADER COPY

Page 1: 1. Outside the city gate by the river, at a place of prayer (v. 13). 2. The Lord opened Lydia's heart; she paid attention to Paul's message, was baptized with her household, and offered hospitality (vv. 14–15). 3. Their hope of profit was gone (v. 19). 4. Praying and singing hymns to God (v. 25). 5. Doors opened and everyone's bonds were unfastened (v. 26). 6–7. Answers vary; look for thoughtful connections to the text.

Page 2 matching: C, A, B, D. Discussion and reflection answers will vary.

Facilitator note

The title “The Conversion” invites discussion of transformed lives. Be precise: the passage explicitly describes Lydia's response; the slave girl's deliverance is not explicitly called conversion; and the jailer's response to the gospel is narrated in verses 28–34, beyond the assigned reading.