



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: God's Power Sets People Free
Speaker: Danielle Strickland - Guest speaker and Author
Scriptures: Acts 16:1-15

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

16 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. 2 The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. 3 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. 4 As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Paul's Vision of the Man of Macedonia

6 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. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. 8 So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. 9 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 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.

Lydia's Conversion in Philippi

11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. 12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district[a] of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

13 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. 14 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. 15 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.

Sermon Summary:

Acts 16 recounts the gospel's advance into Europe and demonstrates God's power to free people from oppression and exploitation. The Good News of Jesus brought deliverance to those trapped by injustice then, and it still transforms lives today. This Sunday, we'll continue our series through the book of Acts with a message from guest speaker and author, Danielle Strickland. Join us as we explore this remarkable story and consider how God continues to call us to proclaim the Good News of freedom and hope.

Sermon Questions:

1. Pastor Danielle Strickland shared that the book of Acts is a life giving, mind blowing jaw dropping revelation of the Holy Spirit and that her mind is still being blown. Share one way you have been encouraged or surprised by what you have learned or experienced in your life of faith recently.
2. During the Transfiguration in Luke 9, Jesus and Moses started to talk about the Exodus to come. Acts is another Exodus story where God is moved toward the liberation of all people and not just Israel. What do you think about the concept of Acts being a new exodus and how do you see God's heart for liberation?

3. How can Paul keep passing by an enslaved and exploited girl while in his way to preach the gospel? Why do you think it took him 3 days to move to address the injustice?

We all have times where we have overlooked someone in need because we think they are not the best use of our time or resources. However, disruption is an invitation. God is inviting us to pay attention to the ways we are being invited to join him in his work of liberation and freedom for the oppressed.

4. Pastor Danielle gave three key points from Acts 16:
 - The gospel is proclaimed by demonstration not just proclamation
 - The gospel will always challenge anything that kills, steals and destroys life in its fullness
 - The sign of our success is not our own understanding or acceptance but deliverance for the oppressed

What most challenged you from these key points or the sermon overall? What invitation do you sense God extending to you through it?