

**Date:** April 7, 2019

**Text:** Acts 16:6-15

**Title:** Closed Doors, Open Doors

**Big Idea:** God calls us to be attentive to his divine moving and faithfully obedient wherever he has us.

### **Faithful & Attentive**

This is a narrative of God's clear hand of guidance in bringing about *his* kingdom and will.

Read verses 6-8, which tell us about how the Holy Spirit thwarted the plans of Paul and his team. The text doesn't tell us *how*, but it does tell us *who* and *why*.

**Who:** The Holy Spirit = The Spirit of Jesus (see Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6; Philippians 1:19; 1 Peter 1:11).

How does the Spirit of Jesus bring glory to Jesus? (See especially John 14:16 & 26; 15:26; 16:7-11 & 13-14).

**Why?** Why did the Holy Spirit not let them preach in Asia or go to Bithynia? Read verses 9-10. Paul and his team were faithful and attentive: they stop when God says "no," and move when God says "go."

How do you respond when God says "no" to your plans? Do you respond with frustration or with attentiveness?

An integral part of our discipleship is learning to walk with God in that tension between making plans and being attentive to God's leading—which in the end looks like faithful obedience.

### **A Divine Encounter**

Read verses 11-14. The whole trip seems to funnel down to this moment. What does that say about God and the seeming "coincidental" interactions we have with people? Read Psalm 139:1-18 and discuss how God tenderly knows and cares for us in every divinely appointed moment of our lives.

Have members of your group share of times of "divine appointment" in their own lives.

God sets up the meetings. What are we responsible for?

### **What does it mean to be faithful?**

Read verse 15. How was Lydia faithful in her own little way—that looked much different than the faithfulness of Paul and his team?

How is God asking *you* to be faithful?