



CURRENT

session page

God is a Sneaky Sneak

Acts 16:9-15 | Session 17.21

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

Tell the group: Recently, leaders of four European countries traveled to Kyiv in the hope that their presence would pressure Russia, who invaded Ukraine over three years ago, to agree to a 30 day ceasefire. While they were not immediately successful in forcing a pause in hostilities, they demonstrated their commitment to work together to end the needless suffering of all people impacted by the war.

Share this [short video from the prime minister of the United Kingdom](#) and ask:

- How do you feel about this video and why?
- What are the potential benefits and risks of working together with others when you face challenges?
- Which positive or negative lessons can you learn from sources outside the church about partnering with others?
- When have you been "nudged" into doing something, despite your reluctance at the time?
- To what degree is faith about working with others and being "nudged?"

Content

Read Acts 16:9-15, then watch the Bible Background Video and ask:

- What most stands out about the movement of the Spirit in this passage?
- How did Paul seem to respond to God's direction?
- What do you think of the possibility that the Spirit gave Paul a vision of a man needing help because she knew that Paul would not respond to a call to partner with those who were available in Philippi?
- Why was Lydia's whole house baptized, instead of just her?
- What do you think prompted Lydia to offer, and Paul to accept, her offer of a place from which to base his operations in that place?
- How might you describe Lydia's ministry in modern-day terms and why?

Closure

Share "We Didn't Start the Fire" and ask:

- Which parts of this song most get your attention and why?
- What unfortunate parts of history could be different if people worked together?
- At what points do you discern the Spirit calling you into partnership?
- What role, if any, is there for deception or failing to tell the whole truth in our relationships?
- To what degree is it essential for a partner in ministry to share all the same beliefs and commitments?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of partnering with people who are very dissimilar to you?
- With whom does your congregation need to consider partnering, and how might that be brought about?

Close with a prayer like this: *O God, we thank you that you have created us to be in relationship with one another and with you, and we pray that you, through the Spirit will, give us wisdom for the ways that we can partner with you and others to participate in the work of bringing forth your new day here and now. Amen.*

Writer: Brian Harrington