

Week 2: When God Opens a Heart

Overview: As we explore the story of Lydia in Acts 16, we see God's transformational work begin with one open heart. The Lord opened Lydia's heart to respond to the Gospel, and that moment of grace didn't stop with her, it overflowed into her household. Her faith led to obedience, hospitality, and a ripple effect of salvation. In the same way, when we open our hearts to Christ, His work in us can impact our families, friends, and communities for eternity.

Key Scripture: Acts 16:11-15

Content

Key takeaway: As we open our hearts to the Gospel of Jesus, God will use that in a way that not only transforms our lives but also the lives of those around us. Never underestimate what God can do with an open and receptive heart!

Key Points:

- It's Christ that opens the heart!
 - Lydia's heart was opened by the Lord, not by her own effort.
 - Salvation starts with God and the free gift he graciously offers.
- An open heart leads to transformation.
 - Lydia's faith produces immediate action: she was baptized and opened her home
 - A changed heart always leads to a changed life
 - True faith is never passive, it will always move towards obedience
 - Grace produces generosity and hospitality
- An open heart opens doors for others
 - Lydia's household believed and was baptized because her heart was opened.
 - As God works in you, he will often work through you.
 - God uses ordinary obedience to accomplish extraordinary impact.

Gospel Application: Lydia's story reminds us that salvation is God's work from the beginning! Just like Christ opened the heart of Lydia, Christ too has opened our hearts as believers through his death and resurrection. (Romans 5:8) The same power that opened Lydia's heart is at work in us today!

Key Question: Has your heart been opened to the Gospel, and who might God want to reach through you?

Application

Activity suggestions:

- Prayer Wall / Prayer activity: have each student write down a name (or a few names) of a peer that has not yet said yes to a life with Christ. Have the students either post these names on a prayer wall for the semester, OR have them pass the paper to another student, and commit to pray for the names on their paper for the rest of the week / semester.

Community group questions:

- God created a ripple effect through Lydia's transformed heart. Encourage your group members to reflect on the reason they are at Chapel Students. What ripple effect of transformation took place to get them there? (examples: parents that are believers, friends that invited them, etc.)
- What does an active faith look like in comparison to a passive faith?
- Where do you need to open your heart to God's transforming love?
- Spend time reflecting on tonight's key question: has your heart been opened to the Gospel, and who might God want to reach through you?