

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY
MAY 21, 2025

Introduction

Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be.

Lydia and her household are baptized by Paul

The Message Devotional Bible: Featuring Notes and Reflections from Eugene H. Peterson

The Dimensions of God's World (16: 6-10) God's world is always larger than our own worlds. And God's vision to Paul shows us how large. The vision shows a person calling for help. One of the most common errors of the church and its leaders as they grow is to quit helping and begin exploiting. Paul could have used the eminence and power that he was beginning to acquire to solidify his position and enjoy the fruit of his labors. The vision interrupted that and said, "Come over . . . and help us!" (Acts 16: 9). Without the vision, the world becomes small and selfish. With the vision, the world becomes large and generous. Without the vision, the church reduces itself to repetitious programs and rituals. Without the vision, the church looks at people as customers who help pay the bills and put on the programs. So we need to look hard and long at the Macedonian vision: "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" This vision enlarges our capacity to enter into the dimensions of God's world."

Acts 16:9-15- NRSV

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

¹¹ We therefore set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. ¹³ On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 16:9-15 - The Message

⁹⁻¹⁰ That night Paul had a dream: A Macedonian stood on the far shore and called across the sea, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" The dream gave Paul his map. We went to work at once getting things ready to cross over to Macedonia. All the pieces had come together. We knew now for sure that God had called us to preach the good news to the Europeans.

¹¹⁻¹² Putting out from the harbor at Troas, we made a straight run for Samothrace. The next day we tied up at New City and walked from there to Philippi, the main city in that part of Macedonia and, even more importantly, a Roman colony. We lingered there several days.

¹³⁻¹⁴ On the Sabbath, we left the city and went down along the river where we had heard there was to be a prayer meeting. We took our place with the women who had gathered there and talked with them. One woman, Lydia, was from Thyatira and a dealer in expensive textiles, known to be a God-fearing woman. As she listened with intensity to what was being said, the Master gave her a trusting heart—and she believed!

¹⁵ After she was baptized, along with everyone in her household, she said in a surge of hospitality, "If you're confident that I'm in this with you and believe in the Master truly, come home with me and be my guests." We hesitated, but she wouldn't take no for an answer.

Acts 16:9-15 – First Nations Version

9During the night Small Man (Paul) had a vision in which he saw a man from Land of Tall People (Macedonia) standing in front of him. The man was begging him and saying, "Come over to our land and help us!" 10When the vision was done, right away we tried to go into the Land of Tall People (Macedonia), trusting that Creator had chosen us to tell them the good story. 11So we set off by water straight from Cut Through (Troas) to Sign of Rags (Samothrace). The next day we came to New Village (Neapolis), 12and from there we went on to Village of Horses (Philippi), the chief village of Land of Tall People (Macedonia) under the rule of the People of Iron (Romans). There we remained for a number of days.

WELCOMED BY A WOMAN OF FAITH

13Then on the Day of Resting we went outside of the village gate to a nearby river to find a place to send our voices to the Great Spirit. We sat down on the riverbank and spoke to some women who had gathered there. 14One of the women there, named Bitter Fruit (Lydia), from High Rock House (Thyatira), was a trader in purple cloths and had great respect for Creator. As Small Man (Paul) spoke, she listened closely to the message, and Creator opened her heart. 15She and her family then participated in the purification ceremony. If you consider me to be one who trusts in our Honored Chief," she said to us firmly, "then you must come and stay at my house." And she would not take no for an answer.