



Faith and Love C.O.G.I.C
Sunday School

Lesson 11 November 16, 2025
FROM DERBE TO PHILIPPI

SUNDAY SCHOOL CORE VALUES



SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. **Psalm 133:1**

School/Class: But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. **Hebrews 13:16**

Superintendent/Teacher: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16**

School/Class: Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. **Psalm 119:105**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:4**

School/Class: He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. **Proverbs 22:9**

Superintendent/Teacher: Therefore he says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.” **Ephesians 4:8**

School/Class: As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:10**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

Superintendent/Teacher: For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12**

School/Class: For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. **Romans 12:4**

Superintendent/Teacher: By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:35**

School/Class: For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. **Gal. 5:13**

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESPONSIVE READING

ALL:

But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18

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- Bible Basis: Acts 16:1-5, 8-15
- Bible Truth: Paul's obedience to God and his respect for the elders and apostles gave opportunities for the Gospel to spread to many regions.
- Memory Verse: VERSE: "And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:10).
- Lesson Aim: By the end of the lesson, we will: RECALL how Paul added Timothy to his missionary team and their labors in spreading the Gospel from Derbe to Philippi; REFLECT on those characteristics needed for members of a successful evangelism team; and SPREAD the Gospel in every aspect of our lives.
- Background Scriptures: [Acts 16:1-15](#) & [Matthew 8:18-22](#). Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

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Acts 16:1-5, 8-15 KJV

- 1** Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:
- 2** Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.
- 3** Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.
- 4** And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.
- 5** And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.
- 8** And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas.

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FROM DERBE TO PHILIPPI



Acts 16:1-5, 8-15 KJV

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis;

12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Derbe. Paul is known to have visited Derbe on his first and second missionary journeys. It is likely he passed through during his third missionary journey as well ([Acts 18:23](#)). Derbe was a small town located near the modern city of Kerti Huyuk, Turkey. This was 20 miles from Lystra, in the southern tip of the Galatia province. The people were poorly educated and had little contact with Roman society. Their language and culture likely reflected Greek influence. Gaius, mentioned in [Acts 20:4](#) as a fellow minister of Paul's, was originally from Derbe.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Philippi. Philippi was located near the head of the Aegean Sea, in the Roman province of Macedonia. Many Roman soldiers were known to have settled in Philippi due to the many battles that had been waged nearby over the years. During the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 BC-AD 14), it was made a Roman colony, ruled by military officers who reported directly to Rome. It was considered important because of its location on the major commercial highway extending east and west. Only ruins exist on the site of ancient Philippi today.

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON:

AIM: We will learn that sometimes things that start out small, turn out much larger than expected, and impact the lives of others in surprising ways.

INTRODUCTION

Differing Cultures

After Paul's first missionary journey ([Acts 13-14](#)), a debate began raging in the churches at Antioch, Cilicia, and Syria regarding the nature of Christian salvation and how new Gentile believers were to fit into the new Christian church. Regarding salvation, some argued that faith in Christ wasn't enough to be saved, but Jewish Christians must also strictly follow Mosaic Law in order to consider themselves saved ([Acts 15:1](#)). Additionally, they insisted that Gentile believers must also be circumcised in keeping with the law of Moses.

INTRODUCTION

Differing Cultures

A meeting was held in Jerusalem to resolve the issue. The Jerusalem council ([Acts 15:1-35](#)) determined that both Jewish and Gentile believers are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone. Gentile believers were not expected to adhere to Jewish customs. However, they outlined a few directives that would help Gentiles avoid offending fellow Jewish believers. For example, Gentiles didn't have to follow the same dietary laws as Jews, but were directed to abstain from eating "meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled" (v. 29, KJV).

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: We will learn that Lydia listened to Paul's preaching and then was baptized along with her other family members.

I. PAUL RECRUITS TIMOTHY

Acts 16:1-5

When Paul and Silas met Timothy at Lystra, Timothy had already garnered a good reputation among the believers in Lystra and Iconium. This ecclesial witness of Timothy's suitability as a teacher was why Paul chose him to join them. His father was Greek and his mother was Jewish. It was Greek tradition for a child to follow after his father's religion. However, Jewish tradition held that a child was considered Jewish if his mother was Jewish. Paul knew that in the eyes of the Jewish people they would be ministering to, Timothy would be seen as a Jew and would therefore need to be circumcised to avoid offense. This was not in contradiction with the church's earlier ruling that Gentile converts need not be circumcised for salvation ([Acts 15:10-11, 19](#)).

I. PAUL RECRUITS TIMOTHY

Acts 16:1-5

Paul's ministry journeys were meant to help establish and maintain new churches as well as communicate the decisions and positions made by the leaders in Jerusalem. This was an important part of cultivating the unity of the early church. The believers' faith and confidence in the Gospel was increased.

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FROM DERBE TO PHILIPPI



I. PAUL RECRUITS TIMOTHY

Acts 16:1-5

16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

On their second missionary journey, Paul and Silas traveled north around the eastern end of the Mediterranean and then westward toward the cities of Derbe and Lystra. On this second journey, the order of the cities listed in the Galatian territory is reversed from the first journey. On their first visit to the Galatian territory, Paul and Barnabas traveled from the west rather than the east. On this second journey, Paul revisits the cities that had been evangelized during his first journey two or three years earlier. When Paul and Barnabas began their ministry in Lystra, the people believed they were Greek gods ([14:11-13](#)). Their short ministry in the Galatian cities ended with Paul's being stoned and left for dead outside the walls of Lystra.

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However, one of the fruits of that short, violent time was a young man named Timothy.

Timothy and his mother may have been among the group of disciples that surrounded the apparently lifeless body of the apostle outside the walls of Lystra after Jews from the cities of Iconium and Antioch had stoned Paul ([vv. 19-20](#)). The young man certainly would have been among those Paul confirmed on his second visit to the city, exhorting them "to continue in the faith" ([v. 22](#)).

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Timothy's mother was a Jewess (Gk. ioudaias, eu-DIE-ahs), which is the feminine form of the word for Jew, and also a Christian. The fact that she had married a Greek and had not circumcised her son leads one to question whether she was a practicing Jew before her conversion. Such mixed marriages, though practiced little and disliked by the stricter Jews in Palestine, probably occurred frequently among the Jews of the dispersion, and in such instances if the father was Greek, sons were unlikely to be circumcised because Judaism was still passed down through the father during the first century AD. Even at a young age, Timothy was well reported of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. The phrase "well reported of" (Gk. martureo, mar-too-REH-oh) comes from the Greek word for "witness," which in the passive voice means to be witnessed about and is usually used in a positive context.

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During the years Paul was away, Timothy had grown in faith, so Paul decided to take the young man under his wing. He asked Timothy to join him and Silas on their journey. Timothy was the first Gentile who became a missionary after his conversion. Later, Titus would join Paul, but he would not be circumcised because he was a true Gentile ([Galatians 2:3](#)). Mosaic Law commanded that at eight days old, all Hebrew boys were to undergo the rite of circumcision. After God reconfirmed His promise to Abraham for the third and last time, He said of Abraham's descendants, "Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant" ([Genesis 17:14](#)). This meant the uncircumcised Israelite male was not covered by the covenant promise given to Abraham. The rite of circumcision symbolized submission to God and faith in His promise.

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Circumcision was not carried over into the church as a requirement for Gentiles. Still, many Jewish Christians tried to impose circumcision and the Mosaic Law on new Gentile believers ([Acts 15:1](#)). But the Jerusalem council rejected the requirement ([15:1-29](#)). In mixed marriages, Jewish mothers were not permitted to circumcise their sons against the Gentile father's wishes. Paul had Timothy circumcised because of his parentage. Paul's methodology was to preach the Gospel to the Jew first, then the Gentile. But such a course would have been impossible had Timothy as a Jew not been circumcised; his own people would have rejected him and dismissed the Gospel message.

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The new threesome continued their ministry in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, other cities in Lycaonia, and in Phrygia and Galatia. They advised the churches in these cities and taught rules of Christian conduct, such as those concerning the Gentiles' abstinence from blood, things strangled, fornication, and from things offered to idols ([Acts 15:20-29](#)). As a result of these apostolic visits, the churches were established (Gk. stereoo, steh-reh-OH-oh) or strengthened and the number of believers increased (Gk. perisseuo, peh-rees-SOO-oh) or multiplied daily. The word for "increased" or "abound" is also the word for a flower coming to full bloom. Luke makes it clear that the Jerusalem council's decree was for the church's well-being.

II. A DIVINE CHANGE OF PLANS

Acts 16:8-12

Troas was an important Greek port, located near ancient Troy, that sat between the landmasses of Europe and Asia Minor. During their time at Troas, Paul has a vision of a man from Macedonia calling out to him for help. Paul and his group immediately take this vision to mean that they must alter their course and travel to Macedonia. This act of obedience to God's will is historically pivotal in that it eventually results in the Gospel being spread further west into Europe. If Paul and his group had not been sensitive to how God was trying to lead them, they might have missed this important change in their plans. This also underlines why it was important that they chose their ministry partners carefully. These decisions regarding how God was leading them forward were ultimately made as a group.

II. A DIVINE CHANGE OF PLANS

Acts 16:8-12

It is important to note that in verse 10, the language changes to "we" rather than "they," which is used earlier in the chapter. This indicates that Luke, the author of Acts, was actually present during this leg of Paul's ministry travels.

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II. A DIVINE CHANGE OF PLANS

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Still traveling over rugged terrain and past unevangelized regions, the apostles passed by another city devoid of ministry and hospitality on the way to their appointed destination. God, through the Holy Spirit, was their travel agent, and the apostles relied solely on God's timing to fulfill His will. Arriving at Mysia, they attempted to enter, but the Holy Ghost prevented them from doing so. Now twice denied access to a people in need of the Gospel message, the apostles no doubt questioned whether they were going in the right direction. Even while waiting for God to open doors, these disciples did not assume a passive posture.

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Instead, they participated with active pursuit of God's will-ever going until He said "Stop!" A wide door stood open for them when they came to Troas. The city of Troas was located near the Hellespont, an economically vibrant intersection of race, class, culture, and language. Imagine the cacophony of sounds, smells, philosophies, theologies, dress, and demeanor on display at Troas. It was in this place of diversity that the Holy Spirit released the disciples to minister.

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The Greek noun *horama* (HO-rah-mah), or "vision," is a sight divinely granted, sometimes while sleeping ([Acts 9:10, 12, 18:9](#)). It is likely that Paul was asleep when this vision appeared, yet he was fully aware of God's purpose and presence in this vision. The Holy Ghost forbade (v. 6) and prevented (v. 7) the disciples' movement previously; here the Spirit manifests Himself in a form and function believable to them. The Greek verb *parakaleo* (pa-ra-ka-LEH-oh), or "prayed," connotes the image of one begging for consolation, instruction, or teaching. This man from Macedonia showed up in Paul's dream pleading with passion and urgency for the apostles to come to this Roman province to help with some urgent cause that had not been met by all of Rome's prestige, privilege, or military prowess.

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After Paul communicated the vision to his companions, they immediately responded to this Word from the Lord. Here, companionship in ministry is illuminated as Luke records this first-person plural account that "we endeavoured" (Gk. zeteo, dzay-TEH-oh), or made a concerted effort, to get to Macedonia. Included in this group were at least Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke. This inclusive reference establishes a paradigm of Christian companionship and community that becomes a predominant theme in the rest of Paul's letters to the church. This time, unlike the holy hindrances in verses 6 and 7, their collaborative effort to carry the Gospel to the next place of ministry was allowed. Note also that consensus was taken to test whether this vision was from the Lord. Although God spoke through visions, not every vision was unquestionably believed. Upon determining that this was the Holy Spirit's leading ("assuredly gathering"), the apostles acted together with urgency to respond to the vision.

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As the disciples were loosing (Gk. anago, ah-NAH-go) or launching on a boat out from Troas, even the wind was in their favor, providing a straight, smooth course in two days through two ports to their stated destination-Philippi. This Macedonian city was a Roman colony. The inhabitants of such colonies were protected and privileged as full-fledged Roman citizens. Some of the privileges of being a Roman colony were voting rights, preferential legislation, and immunity from taxation.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Paul's Missionary Journey

The beginning of Acts 16 describes the outset of Paul's second missionary journey. He is visiting churches, like Lystra and Derbe, which were visited on his first mission. This is likely why Paul takes their opinion about Timothy to heart. These are old friends. Paul's second missionary journey would ultimately last three years and cover almost three thousand miles.

III. LYDIA'S HEART IS OPENED

Acts 16:13-15

According to Jewish law, ten males were needed for public worship. If there was no established synagogue, worshipers were to gather in an open area, near a body of water. Apparently, Philippi had no synagogue, since Paul and his men went to a nearby riverbank to find people who would be praying. The nearest body of water was likely a tributary to the Gangites (modern Angitis), which was 1.25 miles from Philippi.

III. LYDIA'S HEART IS OPENED

Acts 16:13-15

As Paul and his men talked to a gathering of women, they caught the ear of Lydia, a merchant from Thyatira. Thyatira was known for its merchants of dyed cloth, particularly purple material. It has been suggested that purple dyes were created from shellfish or the roots of plants. Lydia "worshipped God" (v. 14), which indicates that she was a Gentile who worshiped Yahweh, but was not saved and not part of the Christian church.

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**III. LYDIA'S HEART IS
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Acts 16:13-15

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

"Sabbath" (Gk. sabbaton, SAB-ba-ton) is the seventh day of each week, a sacred day when the Israelites were required to abstain from all work. On the Sabbath, it was customary to gather for worship, prayer, and Scripture reading. Although the apostles could have taken a day off from the work of preaching the Gospel, they were compelled to leave the accommodations in Philippi and journey a mile or two west of the city to a prayer meeting down by the Gangites River. Here, the disciples find women praying to God in a place outside the city where there was no synagogue. No doubt following the leading of the Holy Spirit, the apostles did not bypass or dismiss this gathering of women worshiping God on the Sabbath. Modeling Jesus' radical paradigm

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For a synagogue to be established in a city, ten Jewish men had to convene and lead it. With no synagogue in Philippi at this time, the apostles sought out a prayer gathering whose reputation trumped Jewish ritual. This prayer meeting had the structure and leadership of a worship service, including the reading of Jewish prayers and praying to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the absence of ten male heads of household to found a synagogue, the women were found faithfully worshipping God in spirit and in truth ([John 4:23-24](#)). Through the apostles, the Holy Spirit of God brought forth the first evangelistic converts in Europe. He did this in this holy place, set up and sanctified by women. It is while attending to the divine act of worship that a certain woman and a gathering of women became the first European converts to our Christian faith. Women's work and women's worship should be heralded in biblical and local church history as integral, not incidental, to the Good News.

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III. LYDIA'S HEART IS OPENED

Acts 16:13-15

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Lydia was a woman of Thyatira, the city of commerce, and a seller of purple cloth often used for official Roman garments. She was the first European convert of Paul and his hostess during his first stay at Philippi. Lydia was a businesswoman who was wealthy and well-respected, and who "worshipped" (Gk. *sebomai*, SEH-bo-my) God. The relationship she had with God was awe and reverential fear. While leading this prayer gathering, Lydia welcomed the opportunity to hear the apostles preach and teach, and to learn more about the God she worshipped and Christ, His Son. Lydia's enthusiastic and attentive listening was fertile ground for God to open her heart to understand and accept the Gospel.

Lesson 11 November 16, 2025
FROM DERBE TO PHILIPPI



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The "heart" (Gk. kardia, kar-DEE-ah) represents the soul or mind as the resident place of one's thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, understanding, intelligence, will, character, and intentions. Lydia's "open heart surgery" was appreciably more than an emotional response to well-crafted rhetoric; as she listened, Lydia engaged her thoughts, affections, and understanding about God to believe in Christ Jesus. While Lydia had been seeking God, God was in the background working His way into her heart and into the city of Philippi.

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Lydia's response to accepting the Gospel of Christ Jesus was to be baptized (Gk. baptizo, baptEED-zo), meaning to immerse or submerge in water. Since they were already gathered at the riverside, it was convenient to baptize Lydia and her household immediately following their conversion.

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Lydia was not the only person present at the prayer meeting listening to Paul and his companions preach and teach. Her whole household (meaning both family members and servants) heard the Good News, believed, and were baptized. After becoming a baptized member of the church, Lydia extended hospitality to her newfound family - the apostles and by extension the church. She was so emphatic to extend hospitality to these brothers in Christ that she "constrained" (Gk. parabiazomai, pa-ra-bee-AHD-zo-my), or made a persuasive appeal, for them to stay at her home while in Philippi. Central to this plea for them to accept her hospitality was Lydia's assertion that the apostles found her "faithful" (Gk. pistos, PIS-toce), meaning trustworthy and reliable. This word also has the connotation of belonging to the faith community.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Lydia's Grateful Heart

At the Lord's prompting, Lydia's heart was opened, and she understood and accepted Paul's message. After she and her household accept salvation and are baptized, Lydia offers to house Paul's entourage at her home. Her home is mentioned again later in [Acts 16:40](#) as a meeting place where believers gathered to hear from Paul and Silas.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: We will discover that believers should be sensitive to God's plan for their lives and open to change.

BIBLE APPLICATION

Adaptability, agility, flexibility, versatility – these are all words commonly used to describe the ideal business in today's ever-changing global economy. The ability to change course quickly based on new information is a skill that companies are always trying to cultivate or acquire.

This same ability is important in our daily personal and spiritual lives. A healthy, growing relationship with Christ involves being able to adjust to what He is doing in and through us. When we yield ourselves to His plans and purposes, we can be sure that we're where God wants us.

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: We can participate in the expansion of the Kingdom of God as we actively and willingly do God's will.

STUDENT RESPONSES

It can be hard to give up control of our plans for our lives. This can especially be hard after we've begun moving down a path that we believe God has led us down. Review your current goals and plans. Ask God to reveal any areas where you've allowed your personal ideas and ambitions to crowd out what God may be leading you to do instead.

Prayer

Bless You, O Lord,

For providing us with so many opportunities to know You and to love
You. Give us the wisdom to choose You God and to walk in Your
faithfulness.

In the Name of Jesus, we pray.

Amen.

Next Sunday
November 23, 2025
Lesson 12
Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens
Acts 17:1-4, 10-12, 22-25, 28