

SENT Sermon Study Guide

Sent to Macedonia - Acts 16

Scripture Reading: Acts 16:6-10



Sermon Notes:

A vision for action comes about because of a need in our context

Martin Luther King – a need for political justice fueled by a biblical vision

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character."

Justice Murray Sinclair – a need for reconciliation of settler-indigenous relations

"It is my hope that the TRC's calls to action will help bring about a new era for Canada — for Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. We owe it to each other to build a Canada based on our shared future"

Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren – a need for gospel life transformation

"We exist to multiply Christ-centred churches to see Canada transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ."

The Spirit speaks when we are already on the way

- Paul is actively engaged in his mission – Spirit gives direction

We want to hear from God before we start moving - but God is always speaking to us

- If you are not following Christ, he says "you are my child – come home"
- If you are stuck – you already know my will – you are my witnesses – go!

Sometimes the Spirit directs by closing doors

- v6-8 – Paul kept from region of Asia - not allowed to enter Bithynia

What are some of the doors that have been closed to us

- personally – work, relationships, paths we thought we might pursue
- congregationally – purchase of the property – refocus on next door ministry

Paul's Vision in the night

- come over and help us – a need and longing – prompted by Spirit
- goes to Philippi – Roman colony – tied directly to Rome, center of empire
- Athens, Corinth – leading centers of Greek culture, philosophy, religion
- Spirit is taking Paul to the centers of influence/power

What is the vision in the night for us?

- for you? – where is the need around you – bring healing, hope, life
- for us? - the nations have come to our door- hundreds of newcomers here!
 - young leaders – thriving young adults/university community?

Questions to think and pray about for our church:

- Where has the Spirit already been at work around us in our context?
- What vision is the Spirit of God showing to us for what's next at FGMB?

Discussion Questions:

1. If we imagine our life of faith to be like a long journey, how would you describe where you are in that journey right now? (haven't started, still packing, flying down the road) How would you describe where our church is at in our congregational faith journey together?
2. Since we know that God is continually revealing himself to his people and that the Spirit is speaking to us through various means, what do think God has been trying to say to you lately? In what ways has God been saying this to you? How well would you say that you have been listening?
3. Paul, Silas and Timothy were trying to go preach in the cities of the province of Asia (modern day Turkey) but the Spirit would not let them and sent them elsewhere instead. What are some of the doors that have been closed on your path that you now recognize were God's hand on your life? Why do you think God didn't let you go down some of those other paths?
4. In Paul's vision, a man from Macedonia "pleads" with him to come and help. It is clear that there is a deep longing for God and the salvation found in Christ that is being expressed in this dream. Paul and his companions set out "immediately" to respond to this need. What is a clear and deep need that you are aware of already, or are beginning to understand in your own context?
5. As you think about our church context, what are the deep needs that you are aware of in our community? What are some of the ways that our church might be well equipped to meet those needs?

Taking Action:

In the coming week, take time to ask God to reveal to you a need in the life of someone close to you that you are equipped to minister to. Take time each day to ask God for guidance as our church enters into a time of discerning the path forward in our ministry together.