

**Acts 16:9-15**

**When Macedonia calls, do you answer, put them on hold, or hang up?**

New Revised Standard Version	New International Version	The Voice
<p><sup>9</sup>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.” <sup>10</sup>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.</p>	<p><sup>9</sup>During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” <sup>10</sup>After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.</p>	<p><sup>9</sup>That night Paul had a vision in which a Macedonian man was pleading with him.  <b>Macedonian Man:</b> Come over to Macedonia! Come help us!  <sup>10</sup>This vision convinced us all that God was calling us to bring the good news to that region.</p>
<p><sup>11</sup>We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, <sup>12</sup>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.</p>	<p><sup>11</sup>From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis. <sup>12</sup>From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.</p>	<p><sup>11</sup>We set sail from the port city of Troas, first stopping in Samothrace, then the next day in Neapolis, <sup>12</sup>finally arriving in Philippi, a Roman colony and one of Macedonia’s leading cities. We stayed in Philippi for several days.</p>
<p><sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>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.</p>	<p><sup>13</sup>On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. <sup>14</sup>One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. <sup>15</sup>When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.</p>	<p><sup>13</sup>On the Sabbath day, we went outside the city walls to the nearby river, assuming that <i>some Jewish</i> people might be gathering for prayer. We found a group of women there, so we sat down and spoke to them. <sup>14</sup>One of them, Lydia, was <i>a business woman</i> originally from Thyatira. She made a living <i>buying and selling</i> fine purple fabric. She was a true worshiper of God and listened to Paul <i>with special interest</i>. The Lord opened her heart to take in the message with enthusiasm. <sup>15</sup>She and her whole household were ceremonially washed through baptism.  <b>Lydia:</b> If you believe I’m truly faithful to the Lord, please, you must come and stay at my home.  We couldn’t turn down her invitation.</p>

## Acts 16:9-15

### Background

The map at the right shows the route of Paul's second missionary journey.

The story kicks off in Acts 15 where the Council of Jerusalem has decided that Gentiles do not need to be circumcised to follow Christ. After this, Paul suggests to Barnabas that they should visit the churches established during the first missionary journey through Cyprus, Lycia, and Galatia. Paul and Barnabas have a "sharp disagreement" about who should accompany them. They end up going their separate ways. Barnabas takes John Mark heads to Cyprus while Paul takes Silas and heads through Syria to Antioch.

Paul meets Timothy in Lystra. Timothy's mother is a Jewish believer and his father is Greek. Paul has Timothy circumcised which will permit him to enter the synagogues along their journey. The group went through Galatia and Phygia because they were "forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia." When they attempted to enter Bithynia [on the Black Sea, including the peninsula east of the Bosphorus Strait separating Asia from Europe], "the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. They went to Troas where the story picks up with Paul's vision.

When Macedonia calls, do you answer, put them on hold, or hang up?



1. Verses 9-10: Who is the "we" in the passage? Considering the background information, where does the group want to go? What keeps them from going there? Why might they want to go there instead of where they end up (Macedonia)?
2. If you were in the group and wanted to get to place you were repeatedly kept from going, how might you be feeling by the time you got to Troas?
3. Joel 2:28 says, "I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." Acts 16:9 says, "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.'" What do you think was the nature of Paul's vision during the night?
4. What does the group decide to do when they hear of Paul's vision? Consider your answers to questions 1 and 2 above: why do they make this decision?
5. Where did they go? Why did they choose that place? How long did they stay there? Do you think the people in the city and surrounding area knew who they were?
6. Where did they go and on what day? Why? Who did they meet at that place? Given the location and the gender of the people they sat down with, what might be the regular activity that takes place at that location? Do you think the people who were gathered were of one religion? If not, might the regular activity of that location have been taking place when the Paul and his group arrived? Do you think the activity Paul and his group were hoping to find taking place?

**Acts 16:9-15****When Macedonia calls, do you answer, put them on hold, or hang up?**

7. Who is singled out in the story? What do we know about her? What might we conclude about her personality based on her occupation and where she is from?
8. Lydia is described as “a worshipper of God.” The interlinear describes her as “revering the God” using the Greek *theos*. In the polytheism of the Greeks, this denoted a god or deity. The word was used by Jews and Christians to refer to “the one true God” when used with the definite article *ton*. With that background, what might we conclude about Lydia’s religious beliefs?
9. Stylistically, how do you think Paul is interacting with the women (preaching, teaching, chatting, something else)? What is Lydia’s emotional reaction to his words? What action does she and her household take? Considering the setting and what we know of who was gathered, who might “her household” include?
10. What does she invite the group to do? Do you find anything unusual about how she invites them? Why might she feel compelled to use this type of language for her invitation? How does the group respond?
11. Meriam Webster’s provides a definition of “Macedonian cry” and notes it is a variant of “Macedonian call.” How would you define these phrases?
12. Conjecture for a moment, thinking about what Paul and his group were trying to do before they ended up in Troas. Why did God have to send Paul a Macedonian call in his vision? Would it be fair to say that Paul was so focused on his own vision of going to Asia that he might have missed God’s vision for Europe? Why or why not? Have you ever been in Paul’s shoes? Have you ever been in the shoes of Paul’s followers?
13. I titled this study, “When Macedonia calls, do you answer, put them on hold, or hang up?” What is *your* answer?