

1. Opening Prayer

2. Vision & Audition: God shows God's will by vision and expresses it by Words (Num. 12:6).

a. Types of Vision

1. The way of God's speech (Amos. 1:1, Isa. 1:1-2)
2. Presence of God or His messenger (Eze. 8:3-4, Acts 12:9, Rev. 1:1)
3. Dreamlike (Gen. 20:6, 31:11, 31:24, Matt. 1:20)
4. At Night (Job 4:12-15, 2 Sam. 7:4, 17, Dan. 2:19, Zech. 1:8)
5. False Vision (Ezek. 13:7, 1 King 22:1-28, Jer. 14:14, 23:16, 27, 32)

b. Features of Vision of God

1. Fear and Trembling (Gen. 28:16-17, Dan. 8:17, Job 7:14)
2. Clarity (Gen. 37:8-10, Judg. 7:13-14)
3. Necessity of Interpretation (Gen. 40:5-19, 41:1-36, Dan. 2, Acts 10:16-17)
4. Awakening (Isa. 6:1-5)
5. Rapture (Acts 10:10, 22:17-30)
6. Becoming like dead (Dan. 10:8, Matt. 28:4)
7. Revival or Decline (Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17 / Lam. 2:9, Ezek. 7:26)

c. Roles of Vision

1. Guidance/Instruction (Gen. 46:2-5, Acts 16:9-10)
2. Encouragement (Acts 18:9-10)
3. Calling (Acts 26:19-20)
4. Promise (Gen. 28:13-15)
5. Lesson (Job 4:17-21)
6. Prophecy (Dan. 7:15-28)



3. Historical Background: Philippi

As a Roman colony, Philippi was intended to be a miniature version of Rome. However, the Roman character of the city did not erase the previously existing Greek Hellenistic culture. Population of the city at the time of Paul would be around 10,000-15,000. The vast majority of that population would have consisted of slaves, service providers, and peasant farmers. Most of them would have lived either at or below subsistence level. With the grant of land to retired soldiers nearly 80 years before Paul set foot in Philippi, military veterans and their families would have comprised an important minority within the population. They would have been especially influential among the elite within Philippi.

Religiously, Philippi was a typical first-century city in that there were a large number of gods worshiped. One particular area that deserves mention is the possible presence of the imperial cult, in which the emperor was worshiped as a god. There is no doubt that the ideology of Caesar's claim to be Lord and Savior who brings salvation and peace to the world would have been widely known throughout the Roman Empire and particularly in the Roman colony of Philippi.

4. Read Acts 15:36-16:40

5. Questions

- a. How do we deal with conflicts within our faith community?
(Col. 4:10 and 2 Tim. 4:11)
- b. Why do you think Paul had Timothy circumcised?
- c. What does the story of Lydia and Paul tell us?
- d. Why do you think idols were popular everywhere Paul went? In what ways do people worship idols today?
- e. What do you think made Paul feel troubled in verse 18?
- f. Today in most places religious tolerance is valued and all religions are to be respected. To say anyone is wrong or right is to be “narrow-minded.” How do you think Paul would respond to this statement?
- g. Reviewing 16:22-25, tell us how a Christian can choose joy in the midst of unpleasant circumstances.
- h. What is one quality from the life of Paul that you would love to emulate?
- i. How come do you think Paul could be released the next day?
- j. Why do you think Paul didn’t mention his citizenship till he was released?

6. Closing Prayer