

# Forward Framework: A Weekly Devotional

## Introduction Activity (for Groups):

Each person has a post-it note on their mask with the name of a well known famous person. Then each person will need to ask the group questions to help them to figure out who the famous person is on their mask

## God Encounters:

Journal, Think about, or discuss with your group how you have encountered God in your life this week.

Real Talk: This is a time to be authentic, with yourself and others. Share how you're doing with God personally and pray for one another.

## Worship Song:

Click in this area for a hyperlink to Youtube or search for:

I Surrender All - Jadon Lavik

All to Jesus I surrender  
Humbly at His feet I bow  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken  
Take me Jesus, take me now



## Sermon Summary:

The author of the book of Acts, Luke, is someone we may relate to. Luke was a doctor -- someone who studied and learned and used all that knowledge to help people. He was a Gentile -- an outsider who came to believe in Jesus through the testimony of others. Something in Luke's life prompted him to write an account of the Gospel (the book of Luke) and follow that story through to the life of the early church (the book of Acts). At some point in Luke's life, he connected with the apostle Paul and travelled with Paul for quite some time.

There's an important section in Acts Chapter 16. Up to this point, Luke has been narrating to us what's been happening: they (the church) did something. He (Paul) preached the Gospel. Other people are called to serve. In Acts 16, we see the language Luke uses change from talking about other people spreading the Gospel and being called by God to Luke himself working alongside other Christians to spread the Good News. Luke doesn't make a production of it; there's no conversion story or self-referential narrative. Luke just switches his story from the objective -- about them -- to the subjective -- about us. In the shift of a few words, with no fanfare or overt acknowledgement, we see Luke become a minister of the Gospel and a participant with, rather than observer of, the early church.

Sometimes it's so easy to sit in pews, to watch a YouTube video, to check a box, that we forget we are called to activity. We observe the work of spreading the gospel and remark on its holiness and goodness, but we refrain from participating in it. Maybe we're scared or busy or we just don't know how. Whatever the reason, we know God has called us to more. The inadvertent pastor, Luke, shows us how God has called us to participation in His kingdom. As our church continues learning about the early church and leaning into Biblical community, may we lean deeply into whatever God has called us to.



Read: Acts 16: 1-10

What stands out to you?

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Discuss:

Who is the Author?

Why did Paul want to circumsize Timothy?

Who WAS Luke? What did he become?

What do you think changed for Luke?

How did you know you were part of the journey instead of just observing it? If you don't think you are part of the journey, why not?

Prayer:

Father,

Your word is a blessing to me! I love to read about the history of our world from the beginning of creation. The world where you walked was so different from my world today. However, the people have not changed. We experience joy, fear, love, frustration, persecution, birth, death...the myriad of human experiences and emotions just as those that lived before us. Your word is not just a compilation of stories to entertain us. It is a life manual to give us guidance. In Psalms 119:105 it says, "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." God, I pray that you would help me to abide by your word. Help me to pattern my life after the wisdom of the early church members. As we study the church through the book of Acts, impress upon me the verse from James 1:22 that instructs me by saying, "But don't just listen to God's word, you must do what it says." What purpose is there to read your word if we don't apply it to our lives? You created us in love and provided an instruction manual for living! How great is that?! I love you, Father!

In Jesus name,

Amen