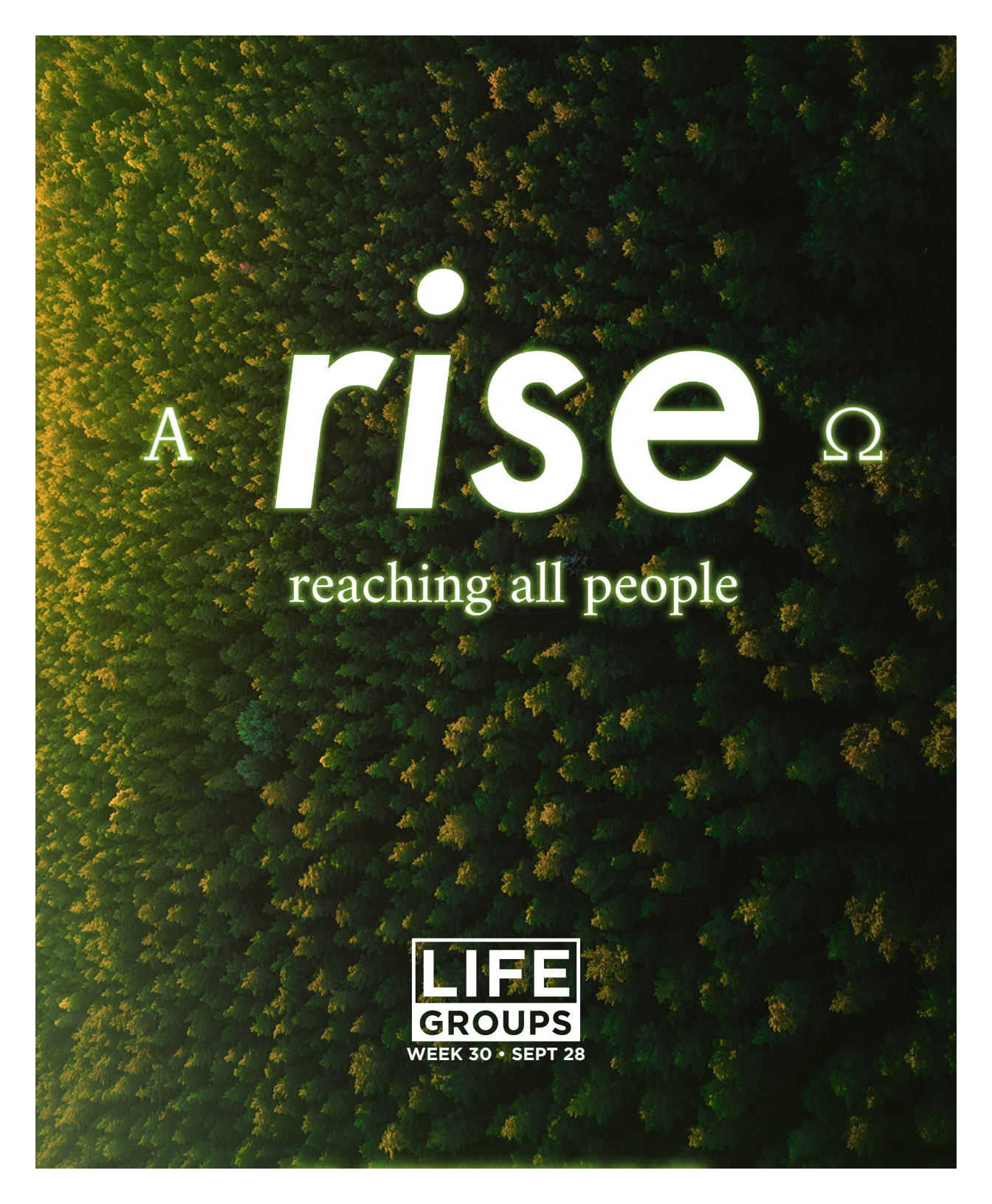




A *rise* Ω

reaching all people



WEEK 30 • SEPT 28

NORTHSHORE'S COMPELLING STATEMENT

Hope changes everything.

ICE BREAKER

Share a time when you were really hurting, but things turned out well in the end.

BACKGROUND

As we read Acts 16, we find Paul, Silas, Luke and Timothy traveling through the Mediterranean world seeking the places where the Lord wants them to preach the Gospel. The mission team has visited several of the churches that Paul founded on his first missionary journey, but the Lord kept them from proclaiming Christ in certain regions along the way. Finally, the Lord directs them to the city of Philippi through a vivid dream that was given to Paul. Lydia, a wealthy merchant becomes the first believer in Philippi, and she and her household open their home for the mission team.

What happens next greatly expands the witness of Christ in the city and provides a dramatic foundation for the new church at Philippi.

Several years later, Paul writes in Philippians 1:6 of how God began a good work among the people of Philippi. Paul is confident that the Lord will finish what He began among them through the Gospel. As we read the story of the beginning of the church at Philippi, take note of how God was at work among the people. Consider how He was at work bringing you to faith in Christ and how He is calling you to grow as His faithful disciple.

REVIEW

What was meaningful from the above context or the sermon from last Sunday?



KEY VERSES: Acts 16:30-31

Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.”

READ: Acts 16:16-40



HEAD LEVEL: *What does it say? These help us to examine what the Word tells us.*

1. Who are the main characters in this story? How does God move through them to accomplish his purposes?
2. The servant girl was possessed by a spirit through whom she could foretell the future. What actions does Paul take that express the authority of God over the forces of spiritual darkness? What price do Paul and Silas pay for upsetting the powers of darkness?



HEART LEVEL: *What does it mean? These questions help us shape our beliefs around the objective truth of God’s word.*

1. Paul and Silas express resilient faith as they sing praises to the Lord during their physical suffering. The Lord chooses to set them free through the miracle of a great earthquake. How would this event inspire faith in those who witnessed it?
2. How does Paul answer the jailer’s question about salvation? How does the Philippian jailer express his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?
3. What does it mean that his entire family was baptized that night?

DEEPER DISCOVERY

- The reader of Acts is not surprised to find Paul and Silas miraculously delivered from their confinement. It had happened before: to the apostles in 5:19-26 and to Peter in 12:5-19. What does this demonstrate about the sovereignty of God?
- Reread Acts 16:27-34. The prisoners had not escaped; and when Paul looked up in the open doorway and saw what the jailer was about to do, Paul shouted for him to stop, assuring him they were all still in the cell. The miraculous release did not lead to their escape, but to the far more significant event of the jailer’s conversion. What does it mean to you that God is not so interested in the safety of his servants, but in getting the Gospel to those who need it?

 **HANDS LEVEL:** *What does it mean to me? These questions help us commit to live out the truth in our everyday lives and commit to potential next steps.*

1. In what ways does this story inspire courageous faith?
2. To what extent do you gain confidence in the sovereignty of God through this story?
3. In what ways does this story empower you to do battle against the forces of spiritual darkness in our time?

 **MEMORY VERSE:** Acts 16:30-31
Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household."

PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please remember that these requests are confidential and need to stay within the group.)