

# Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Mike explores the difference between merely believing in God and truly following Jesus Christ. Using statistics showing that while 89% of Americans believe in God, only 66% have made a commitment to Jesus Christ, he emphasizes that genuine faith requires more than intellectual acknowledgment. The sermon focuses on Lydia from Acts 16, a successful businesswoman who was a "God fearer" before encountering Paul and experiencing true conversion to Christianity.

## Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss Your Word today, we ask that You would open our hearts just as You opened Lydia's heart. Help us to move beyond merely acknowledging Your existence to truly surrendering our lives to Jesus Christ. May our discussion today lead us to a deeper understanding of what it means to be not just God fearers but Christ followers. Guide our conversation and reveal to each of us what You want us to learn. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Ice Breaker

What's the most significant change you've made in your life in the past few years?

## Key Verses

1. Acts 16:14-15
2. James 2:19
3. Romans 10:9-10
4. Philippians 4:15

## Questions

1. What's the difference between being a "God fearer" and a "Christ follower" according to the sermon?
2. Lydia was already a successful businesswoman and worshiper of God before meeting Paul. Why wasn't this enough for salvation?
3. The sermon mentions that "the Lord opened her heart to respond." What does this tell us about how conversion happens?
4. Pastor Mike said, "We don't save anybody and we don't have to try to save anybody." How does this change our approach to sharing our faith?
5. How did Lydia's conversion affect not just her personal life but her household and community?
6. The sermon mentions that many unchurched people would come to church if invited. What holds us back from inviting others?
7. What does it mean to make the "18-inch journey from head to heart" in our faith?

8. How might our homes and hospitality, like Lydia's, be used to advance the gospel in our community?

## Life Application

This week, identify someone in your life who may be a "God fearer" but not yet a Christ follower. Commit to praying for them daily, looking for opportunities to show Christ's love through your actions, and when appropriate, invite them to church or share your testimony. Remember, as Pastor Mike said, your job isn't to convert them but to be a faithful reporter of the good news, trusting that God will open their heart just as He did with Lydia.

## Key Takeaways

1. There's a significant difference between believing in God (89% of Americans) and committing your life to Jesus Christ (66%).
2. True conversion happens when Jesus changes your heart, your home, and your entire life story.
3. Our role in evangelism is to be reporters of the good news, while God does the work of opening hearts.
4. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward cleansing, publicly declaring our decision to follow Jesus.
5. Genuine conversion means changing from one position in life (God fearer) to a new position (Christ follower).

## Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the powerful example of Lydia, whose life was completely transformed when she moved from being a God fearer to a Christ follower. We recognize that many around us may acknowledge Your existence but haven't yet surrendered their lives to You. Give us courage to share our faith and invite others to know You personally. Open hearts as only You can do. For those of us who have already been converted, deepen our commitment to You. May our homes, like Lydia's, become places where Your gospel is shared and Your people are encouraged. Transform our hearts, our homes, and our stories for Your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.