

## TO HELP YOU NAIL DOWN TRUTHS IN THE BIBLE

One of our goals at Bethlehem is for you to spend time with God daily - this **HAMMERTIME** Card can help. It is designed to help you spend 15 minutes (or more) with God, 4 days a week. Here is an example of how to use this card. Study notebooks are available in the Bethlehem lobby.

### Read the Bible verses (4 min)

- Read through one time, then re-read and underline any key points.

### Read the card/think about it/write in your notebook (6 min)

- Write down some of the main ideas from the passage.
- Write down a “key for me” that is your main point that day.

### Pray (5 min)

- Write down some of the things you are praying about that day.

### Current Series: “HOPE”      Current Message: “Women of the New Testament”

Designed to supplement Pastor Dickie Spargo’s current Sunday series.

- ◆ **Listen to this message** (or other messages in the series) again online at <http://www.bethlehembc.com/mediacenter.htm>.
- ◆ **Study Notebooks & Audio Message CD’s** available at ‘Above the Grind’ Bookstore for purchase.
- ◆ **HAMMERTIME Cards** - available Sundays at Bethlehem Church or online at [www.bethlehemtoolbox.com](http://www.bethlehemtoolbox.com).
- ◆ Contact Matt Vanderbilt, Connections Pastor, at [mvanderbilt@bethlehembc.com](mailto:mvanderbilt@bethlehembc.com) or 704-823-5050 x104 for additional information.

### Day 1: Lydia

**Read:** Acts 16:13-15, 40

Lydia was successful in the world’s eyes and known as a dealer of purple cloth. She was probably a wealthy businesswoman in a city known for its commerce. Since no husband is mentioned, she was probably a widow, yet evidently was taking care of herself and providing a good home for her family. She might have looked like she had it all together, even believing in “God”, (probably the Jewish God, Yahweh).

When Lydia spoke with Paul, she came to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. This is when hope invaded her life! Surely she influenced the rest of the people in her house for Christ. Her character was clearly seen, as she invited people to stay with her and created an encouraging atmosphere. Because Lydia’s story is included in the Biblical recount, she probably became a light for Christ, using her influence, her money and other resources to tell people about the hope that she had found in Jesus.

So what can you learn about hope from Lydia? The world may say that you are a ‘success’ because of money, social status or great personality. But when you encounter Jesus, you will realize what true hope and true success are. It will change you forever and give you purpose and hope that can never be taken away. That is what happened to Lydia!

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**Day 2:** Mary Magdalene **Read:** Luke 8:1-3; Matthew 27:55-56, 61; John 20:10-18

Mary Magdalene (meaning 'of Magdala', a fishing village) experienced hope when she found Christ as her Savior and again when she was the first person to see that He had risen from the dead. In reading today's passages, note that Mary was a faithful follower of Jesus - even being present for His death on the cross and placement in the tomb. What an incredible honor for her then, to be the person that Jesus first appeared to after rising from the dead.

Mary went through many times of persecution for following Jesus, times of disappointment and doubt when He died on the cross. But you can learn from her about how God brings hope to the hopeless and blessings to the faithful. A woman who used to be demon possessed (8:2) became a part of Jesus' inner circle - one that followed Him no matter how bad circumstances became. She was rewarded by having a personal relationship with the Son of God...and finding the hope that had previously eluded her.

**Day 3:** Priscilla **Read:** Acts 18; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19

Priscilla and her husband, Aquila, were a faithful part of the early church. Along with Paul, they were tentmakers and they traveled some with Paul on his missionary journeys. They helped train Apollos, a powerful speaker for Christ. Hosting a church in their home was very dangerous, so she would have been known for her courage, even in the midst of persecution.

Priscilla had a strong faith in the hope that Jesus brought. Through the things she did with an attitude of a servant, she was a woman that was faithfully committed to the mission of Jesus. You, too, can show the hope you have by your daily life. You might not experience the intense persecution that Priscilla did, but you have a chance each day to share with others the hope that you have found.

**Day 4:** The Crippled Woman **Read:** Luke 13:10-17

This crippled woman needed some hope! Instead, all the Pharisees would give her was judgment. She had been 'bent over' for 18 years and was desperately looking for hope. When Jesus showed love to her, all the Pharisees could see were the rules Jesus was breaking. Jesus healed her on the Sabbath and the Pharisees could not look past this day of the week to see the beauty of the miracle.

The crippled woman probably felt hopeless the day that she met Jesus. Nothing had worked in 18 years to heal her and with the rules and regulations of the Sabbath, Jesus was not supposed to help her on this day. So when Jesus spoke to her and performed a miracle, she had found hope in a time where hope seemed impossible to find. She walked away a healed woman that day!

God offers that same hope to you, even when a situation seems hopeless and God may seem distant. He wants you to know that He is close to you and that He has powerful, life-changing hope to bring your way. Like the crippled woman, accept His hope today - let it change you and be faithful to tell people what God did. Most likely He will use your story of hope to allow someone else to draw near to Him and find the same hope!

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