

Women of the Word

Lydia

Lesson 13

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review last week's lesson on Rahab. What application from the study or lecture have you made to your life?

2. Do you know who was the first convert to Christianity in Europe? Through your study this week you will find the answer. Acquaint yourself with her by reading Acts 16:14,15. Who was she?
 - a. What is your first impression of her?

3. Begin your homework with a prayer expressing your desire and commitment to learn and grow through your study this week. Write your prayer here.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...

Romans 15:4

SECOND DAY: Read Acts 16:1-13

1. Observe the background to Lydia's story by reading Acts 16:1-13. Don't miss the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit revealed through these verses. Follow Paul as he journeys toward his encounter with Lydia by recording his progress through each of the following references:

- a. Acts 16:1-5
- b. Acts 16:6-10
- c. Acts 16:11-13

Advanced Students: Research the history and culture of the Macedonian city of Philippi. Write a brief report of your findings.

2. Read Acts 16:10. After Paul had seen the vision, where did they decide to go?

a. Why? Write your answer in all caps.

(1.) Define the word gospel.

3. Remember that this was the first Christian missionary outreach to Europe. It was Paul's custom to try to reach the Jews by preaching at their local synagogue. After being in Philippi several days (Acts 16:12b) and apparently not finding a synagogue, where did Paul and his companions go on the Sabbath? Answer from Acts 16:13a.

a. Observe the phrase in this verse where prayer was wont to be made. This means it was a legal meeting place for Jews when there was no synagogue. From Acts 16:13b describe what happened next. (It is interesting to note that the first ones to hear the gospel in Philippi were women.)

THIRD DAY: Read Acts 16:14

1. Among this group of women was a certain woman named Lydia. Read Acts 16:14. What was her occupation?

Challenge: What does it mean that she was a seller of purple?

2. Most commentators think she was a convert to Judaism originally from the city of Thyatira in western Asia Minor, known today as Turkey. Based on verse 14 what admirable qualities do you see in her life?

3. Ponder the phrase from Acts 16:14: whose heart the Lord opened. How does II Corinthians 4:6 help us understand this wondrous work of God?

a. Write a brief testimony of the Lord opening your heart to receive Jesus. Be prepared to share with your group.

4. Look at Acts 16:14 again. What did Lydia have to do in order for her heart to be opened? Selah- pause and think about this.

a. Why is it important for us to continue to attend unto the Word of God?

(1.) Share some ways you do this.

Open my eyes, Lord. I want to see Jesus. To reach out and touch Him and say that I love Him. Open my ears, Lord and help me to listen. Open my eyes Lord. I want to see Jesus.

-selected

FOURTH DAY: Read Acts 16:15

1. After believing and receiving the Lord Jesus, what did Lydia do according to Acts 16:15a?

a. Notice that as a new believer she chose to be baptized. Not only was she baptized but also her household. This may have included family as well as servants. Stop and think for a moment about the influence a woman has on her household. It may not always be evident immediately as with Lydia but it will not be wasted. How does this speak to you?

Challenge: Use the following verses to explain the importance of believers being baptized: Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38, Galatians 3:27 and Colossians 2:12.

2. Read Acts 16:15b. Look at the two strong phrases used to describe Lydia's request: she besought (begged) us and she constrained (urged, persuaded) us. How is this a further indication of what had taken place in her heart?

a. What kind of woman do you think she must have been for these godly men to be willing to stay at her house?

3. One of the ways Lydia served the Lord was by opening her home to these missionaries. It is possible the church in Philippi that began with her conversion met for worship and instruction in her home. How does Acts 16:40 support this?

a. There was already open hostility against Christians at this time, and yet Lydia was willing for them to meet in her house. What does this reveal about her commitment?

4. In what way do you think Lydia exemplified the virtues of Romans 12:117

FIFTH DAY: Read Acts 16:16-24

1. Luke records a fascinating story of a young woman in the town of Philippi. Read Acts 16:16-18 and describe what you see.

a. The spirit of divination means that she was possessed by a demon and seemingly had the power to predict the future. What she said about Paul and his companions was true but Paul knew that what she was saying was coming from a demonic source. What was Paul's reaction to this?

b. What did Paul do?

(1.) What do you learn from her deliverance about the name of Jesus Christ?

2. Read Acts 16:19-24. Instead of this miracle producing joy and thanksgiving summarize what did occur.

a. Sometimes people do not react in a positive way to good works done in Jesus' name. What should we do when this happens?

Optional: Read the account in Acts 16:25-39 and write a brief report of how the Lord added to the church.

3. Contrast the lives of the two women of Acts 16. What did God do in each of their lives?

a. How does this encourage you today?

Jesus, Your name is power,

Jesus, Your name is might.

Jesus, Your name will break every stronghold,

Jesus, Your name is life.

C. Cloninger

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. Recall what you learned about Lydia. How is her life a pattern for you?
 - a. How did Lydia prove that she valued the things of God above other things?
2. Think about the lives of the two women in our study this week. How did God show grace and mercy toward each of them?
3. Share a way you were blessed through your study.
4. What is the most valuable lesson you have learned from this week's study?

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16