

Lydia the Generous Hostess

Acts 16:11–15, 40 NIV 

Devotional Reading: James 2:14–26

Background Scripture: Acts 16:1–40

Key Text !

When Lydia and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us. —Acts 16:15

INTRODUCTION

Today's study provides a first-century example of hospitality towards a strangers. Through this example, we will see how Christian love is embodied from a woman of faith named Lydia.

Jesus teaches that when believers extend hospitality to “the least of these brothers and sisters of mine,” it is regarded as being done unto the Lord himself. (Matthew 25:34–40).

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

"Acts chapter 13; 1-2 introduces the appointment of Saul, also known as Paul, and Barnabas by the Holy Spirit to start a new journey. The church in Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas to go to the regions of Cyprus and proclaim the word of God. This is the 1st Missionary Journey.

Beyond their knowledge, God had a plan for their Lives.



STARTING POINT

ANTIOCH

in Syria

Acts 15:36–40

Paul and Barnabas part ways. Paul chooses Silas and departs from Antioch.

JOURNEY ROUTE (IN ORDER)

1 Antioch in Syria
(Acts 15:36–40)

2 Derbe
(Acts 15:41)

3 Lystra
(Acts 16:1)

4 Iconium
(Acts 16:1)

5 Philippi
(Acts 16:11–40)

6 Thessalonica
(Acts 17:1–9)

7 Berea
(Acts 17:10–15)

8 Athens
(Acts 17:16–34)

9 Corinth
(Acts 18:1–17)

10 Ephesus
(Acts 18:18–21)

★ Return to Antioch
(Acts 18:22)

PAUL'S 2ND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

(ACTS 15:36–18:22)

Paul, Silas, Timothy & Luke



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Acts 16:1-3 NIV

Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer, but whose father was a Greek.

² The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him.

³ Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.

Divine Intervention

Acts 16:6 -7 NIV

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.

7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. At Troas, Paul receives a vision calling him to Macedonia, marking a pivotal moment in the providential expansion of the gospel into Europe.

Encouraging Encounters

Lydia's Conversion in Philippi

11 From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.

12 From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia, and we stayed there several days.

ACTS 16: 13-14 NIV

Encouraging Encounters

13 On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there.

14 One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.

ACTS 16: 15 NIV

Encouraging Encounters

15 When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home.

“If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Context: Lydia

**Worshipper
Wealthy
True Believer
Hospitable
Chosen
Marked
Purposed!**

Who Was Lydia from Thyatira?

A Worshipper of God.

Worshipper was a term used for Gentiles who follow God. (Acts 13:43)

A prominent woman and Entrepreneur.

A woman with Fervent Faith!

Lydia was Chosen by God.

Instrumental in the first sharing of the Gospel in Europe.

Key Point to Remember

As far as the biblical record shows, Lydia becomes, the first convert to Christianity on European soil, and her home becomes the founding meeting place of a congregation that would later receive one of Paul's warmest letters, the letter to the Philippians.

QUESTIONS??

- 1. What do you do when a plan you have carefully prepared is interrupted or redirected, perhaps by a closed door at work, a canceled opportunity, or an unexpected need in your family or community?**
- 2. What might it cost you to respond as quickly to a clear change of path by God as Paul's team responded to the Macedonian vision?**

FAITH AND BAPTISM

Throughout the book of Acts, faith and baptism are often mentioned together.

The Samaritans who listened to Philip's preaching believed and were baptized (Acts 8:12).

The Ethiopian eunuch, after hearing Phillip preach the gospel, expressed his desire to be baptized (8:35–38).

Lydia's conversion follows the same pattern. (16:15)

The Philippian jailer and his family were baptized (16:31–33).

UNEXPECTED PROVOCATION & ATTACK

Soon after Lydia's conversion, the missionaries encounter an enslaved girl whose owners profited from a spirit that gave her the appearance of fortune-telling.

**She follows Paul for days, disrupt his preaching by shouting
These men are servants of the Most High God!**

**Paul finally casts the spirit out of her In the name of Jesus,
and her owners realize their income has ceased.
Acts 16:19-20 NIV.**

ACTS 16: 40 NIV

40 After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

- 1. What steps can we take to become more attentive to the leading of the Spirit in all things?**
- 2. What does Lydia's story teach us about making assumptions regarding who is ready to hear the gospel?**
- 3. What causes believers (new or seasoned) to forfeit opportunities to minister to others, whether in person or in a crowd?**

Solution 1: 2 Timothy 5–10, Solution 2: Romans 8:35-39

Solution 3: Romans 12:2 Solution 4: Psalm 23

BIBLIOGRAPHY & EXTERNAL RESOURCES

- 1. Lessons on Lydia (Women in Service to God).
J. Alfred Smith Sr., 2021.**
- 2. Acts: A Theological Commentary on the Bible.
Dr. Willie James Jennings**
- 3. True to Our Native Land | Dr. Brian K. Blount, Dr. Cain Hope Felder, Dr. Gay L. Byron, Dr. Emerson B. Powery.**
- 4. New Interpreter's Study Bible | Disciples Study Bible |
Online resources: Reform Judaism.org | www.sefaria.org |
thetorah.com | logos.com**

Life Application

Acts of hospitality serve as a faithful witness to the life-changing effect of the gospel. Hospitality is essentially “love in action.” When we show hospitality, we demonstrate our love for God and others.

Are the gifts and blessings that God has given me being used to the best of my ability to bless those in need?

We should Seek Godly Wisdom and Spiritual Discernment Daily.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

1. Is my heart, my home, my car or the pew I sit open available to encourage or embrace someone who is facing a difficult trial?
2. What do you think God feels when those who claim to be his children are unkind to others?
3. Imagine If God treated us the way we treat other people who are different, we do not like or have a connection with?

Closing Note:

The gospel does not remove the church from conflict. It gives the church somewhere to stand when conflict comes. Grace and Mercy.