

LYDIA

Making the Bible Come Alive

The entrepreneur

WHO WAS THIS PERSON?

- Lydia is mentioned twice in the Bible: her conversion and her baptism (Acts 16).
- Lydia was originally from Thyatira, but she lived in Philippi.
- Lydia met Paul on his second missionary journey.
- Lydia was a merchant of expensive purple cloth.
- Lydia feared God (Acts 16:14).
- Lydia had a family and a home (Acts 16).
- Lydia, although a native of Asia Minor, was the first person, according to the Bible, to be saved in Europe.



WHAT IS THIS PERSON KNOWN FOR?

- When Paul met Lydia, she was a Sabbath-keeping woman, which means she was probably Jewish.
- The account of Lydia's conversion says that she was gathered with a group of other women on the Sabbath at a place of prayer near the river outside Philippi. This is the place where Paul went expecting to find a place of prayer (Acts 16:13).
- Lydia heard the good news of Jesus Christ and God opened her heart to listen to what Paul was saying (Acts 16:14).
- After believing, Lydia and her family were baptized. After Lydia's conversion and baptism, she insisted that Paul and his friends come and stay with her if they judged her to be "a true believer in the Lord" (Acts 16:15).
- Paul and his friends did indeed judge Lydia to be a true believer, and they stayed with her during their stay in Philippi.

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?

- **God wants to save all men and women.** The true story of Lydia is an excellent example of how God works to save and cares for those who believe in Him. Lydia was like Cornelius (Acts 10). She believed and worshipped God, but she had not yet heard the gospel. God redirected Paul and his friends and made sure Lydia was in the right place at the right time to meet Paul and hear the good news about Jesus (Acts 16:14).





- **God sees the joy of someone who believes in Jesus for the first time.** We also see the joy and excitement in a new believer. Lydia showed hospitality to those who brought her the good news and insisted that Paul and his friends come to her house (Acts 16:15).
- **God wants to save everyone, even businesswomen.** Lydia ran a successful purple cloth business. This was a unique achievement for a woman in the male-dominated Roman Empire. But most importantly, God opened her heart to believe in what Paul was talking about: that Jesus Christ was the Savior. She was quickly baptized with her whole family. In the same way, we need to tell the good news to everyone, at home, at school, on the playground and yes, on vacation by the sea and in grocery stores too. God can send us to places we don't think of. By doing this, God can open the hearts of those who hear us and they can believe in Jesus too.
- **God wants us to be generous.** Yes, we are to be generous and hospitable. The Bible says, "Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay." (1 Peter 4:9). Have an open hand. Lydia did not hesitate to open her home to Paul and his companions. We tend to keep our things to ourselves, but God wants us to think of others. Paul used words to share God's love. Lydia did this after her conversion by sharing what she had, her house and her food. The Bible tells us that she even strongly encouraged them to stay in her home to bless them (Acts 16:15). Sometimes people may say no, but if we feel in our hearts that God wants to bless through us, let's insist and see God work.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.

- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Challenge yourself to find five minutes each day for a week, to quiet your spirit, finding a spot where you are not distracted, and practice just listening to God and being in tune with Him. Take your Bible to that quiet place. Use some of that time to pray, and some time to just meditate on His Word. Keep your ears and your heart open to what God is wanting to say to you. It's not a matter

if IF He wants to talk to you. He does want to speak. But, He also wants you to be ready and positioned for listening, so you can actually hear in your heart what He is saying. Then, respond in obedience with a heart that is open to what God would have you to do. God called Samuel three times. How many times is He calling you? The more you spend time in His presence, the less He will have to try calling you over and over again. Maybe you will hear His voice the very first time He calls!

