

Lydia Starts a New Church

*Acts 16:11-40,
Philippians 4:6-9*

“Look,” said Lydia to her friend Euodia. “Those two men walking toward us by the river. Are they Jews?”

“I hope so,” said Euodia. “There are so few of us here in Philippi.

We don’t even have enough people for a synagogue. We have to come down here to the river when we want to pray.”

“Hello!” said Lydia to the two men. “Welcome to Philippi. My name is Lydia. This is Euodia.”

“My name is Paul,” said the man. “And this is my friend Silas. We are looking for the Jewish people who come to the river to pray.”

“I wasn’t born Jewish,” said Lydia. “But I worship the same God. And my friends and I have come here to pray. As you can see, we are five women. A very small group. We would be pleased if you would join us for prayer.”

They sang a song first. Then they prayed. They remembered the words of some of the prophets. Soon they were talking about the stories of Abraham and Sarah, about the prophets, and about God’s covenant.

It wasn’t long before Paul and Silas told Lydia and her friends about Jesus. Paul could see that Lydia was really glad to hear about Jesus.



“That is good news,” Lydia said to Paul. “Jesus came to show us what God is like and how to live in God’s way. God’s love is for everybody. That is really good news.”

Paul and Lydia talked some more. Then she said, “Paul, could I be baptized? I really feel the spirit of Jesus is in me, and I do want to live in God’s way.”

So Paul and Lydia went into the river. Paul dipped Lydia under the water for a moment. He said a prayer to God. “I feel all clean inside,” said Lydia.

By this time it was getting late. All of them were feeling hungry.

“Would you come to my place for supper?” Lydia asked.

“Thank you,” said Paul. “But we can buy our own food. It would cost too much for you to feed us.”

“Don’t worry,” said Lydia. “I sell purple cloth to people. It’s a good business. I have enough money. So come and stay with me.”

So Paul and Silas stayed with Lydia during the whole time they were in Philippi. They went around the city and talked about Jesus.

Some of the things they said about Jesus made people angry. Paul and Silas got thrown into jail for a while. Lydia wondered if they would put her in jail too because she helped Paul and Silas. Even though she was a little afraid, Lydia was still glad to have them stay at her house.

Soon Lydia’s whole family was baptized into the church, then Euodia and her other friends. Lydia became a leader of a brand new church.

Several years later, Paul wrote a letter to the church that Lydia started. The letter to the Philippians is in our Bible.

“Jesus is always near us,” wrote Paul in his letter, “so we don’t need to ever be afraid.”

“My friends, whatever is true, whatever is right, whatever is lovely, whatever is good...think about these things. When you do, God’s peace will be with you.”