

6.23.2024

## Heroic Acts of Unsung Heroes:

# Paul & Lydia

## (Acts 16)

### *Lessons from the Life of Silas*

#### Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey – “The Back Track Tour” (Acts 15-18)

1. Jerusalem (Acts 15:22)	6. Iconium (Acts 16:1-6)	11. Amphipolis (Acts 17:1)	16. Corinth (Acts 18:1-4)
2. Antioch (Acts 15:36-41)	7. Pisidian Antioch (Acts 16:1-6)	12. Apollonia (Acts 17:1)	17. Cenchrae (Acts 18:18)
3. Tarsus (Acts 15:36-41)	8. Troas (Acts 16:6-10)	13. Thessalonica (Acts 17:2-9)	18. Ephesus (Acts 18:19-21)
4. Derbe (Acts 16:1-5)	9. Neopolis (Acts 16:11)	14. Berea (Acts 17:10-15)	19. Caesarea (Acts 18:22)
5. Lystra (Acts 16:1-5)	10. Philippi (Acts 16:16-40)	15. Athens (Acts 17:16-34)	20. Jerusalem (Acts 18:22 inferred)

## Key Events

- Church Leaders in Jerusalem address the “**circumcision conflict**” and send a team with a letter of clarification to the Gentile Churches. (Acts 15:22-29) The team includes Paul, Barnabas, and Silas.
- After being in Antioch a while, Paul and Barnabas decide to **retrace their steps** and visit the churches they helped establish. (Acts 13) But Paul and Barnabas **disagree** about taking John Mark along and decide to part company. Paul takes Silas and Barnabas takes John Mark. (Acts 15:36-41)
- The Holy Spirit **redirects** Paul's travel plans. (Acts 16:6-10)
- Paul and company arrive in the city of Philippi and **meet Lydia**. She accepts Christ and invites the travelling party into her home. (Acts 16:14-15)
- In Philippi, Paul cast out a demon from a fortune-telling slave girl. This angered her masters who had **Paul and Silas arrested and beaten** with rods. (Acts 16:16-24)
- Though beaten and imprisoned, Paul and Silas **praise God in jail**. In the middle of the night, an earthquake shook the prison and opened the doors. The Jailer is about to kill himself; but Paul speaks up, assuring him that they have not escaped. The Jailer asks, “**What must I do to be saved?**”. He and his family accept Christ and are baptized. (Acts 16:25-34)
- After being released from jail, Paul and Silas go **back to Lydia's house**, encourage the new Christ-followers; then head out to the next city, Thessalonica.

## Life Lessons from Paul and Lydia

1) Life is more fun and has more purpose when we are on a **mission from God**.

*“Then the apostles and elders together with the whole church in Jerusalem chose delegates, and they sent them to Antioch of Syria with Paul and Barnabas to report on this decision.” Acts 15:22 (NLT)*

2) Paul was willing to have his plans **interrupted and changed**.

*“Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time.” Acts 16:6 (NLT)*

3) You can worship God but **NOT** know Jesus... **worshipping God** is not enough.

*“One of them was Lydia...a merchant of expensive purple cloth, who worshiped God. As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying.” Acts 16:14 (NLT)*

*“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” John 14:6 (NKJV)*

### Spiritual Journey

1. Not sure God is real	6. Action – Repent & Believe
2. Not sure He likes me	7. CLASS 101- You Can't Do Life Alone
3. I think He's real and good	8. CLASS 201- Growing People Change
4. Jesus said what?!?	9. CLASS 301 – Saved People Serve People
5. Decision time. Commit or Not?	10. CLASS 401 – Found People Find People

4) Lydia **acted on** the information about Jesus. She didn't make excuses; she responded and committed.

*“...As she listened to us, the Lord opened her heart, and she accepted what Paul was saying.” Acts 16:14 (NLT)*

5) Lydia immediately **put her faith into action** with her gift - **hospitality**.

*“She and her household were baptized, and she asked us to be her guests. ‘If you agree that I am a true believer in the Lord,’ she said, ‘come and stay at my home.’ And she urged us until we agreed.” Acts 16:15 (NLT)*

## Keep the Conversation Going...

### Lydia

#### **READ ACTS 16:6-10**

- Paul had originally intended to preach the gospel in Asia. Why did he change that plan? A bit later, he tried to enter Bithynia. Why was his plan rerouted a second time?
- So, how did Paul finally end up headed for Macedonia?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you wanted to help/minister in one direction; but (possibly for reasons you didn't understand at the time) the Lord re-routed you in a new direction? Share that story with your group/family.

#### **READ ACTS 16:11-15**

- How amenable and obedient was Paul to the change of plans?
- Where did he first land in Macedonia? How did Paul and his team meet Lydia?
- How does Luke describe Lydia?
- How did Lydia respond to the message Paul and his companions shared with her and the women she was worshipping with?
- Describe a time when you had an opportunity to share your faith with another person. How did you do that? How did they respond?

#### **READ ACTS 16:40**

- Some time after meeting Lydia and preaching in Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned for casting a demon out of a young slave girl and disrupting the income her owners received from her fortunetelling. Where did Paul and Silas go when they were finally released? Why do you think they went there?

#### **SO WHAT**

- Something as simple as an act of hospitality may help others to personally come to know Jesus as their Lord. Who can you show hospitality to? What could you do?
- Pray, and ask Jesus to help you recognize opportunities to be hospitable in His name.