**Lydia**

***11****So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis,****12****and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the[*[*d*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ac+16&version=ESV#fen-ESV-27482d)*] district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days.****13****And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.****14****One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.****15****And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us. (Acts 16:11-15, ESV)*

Greetings to you all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Words of thanks and Happy Mother’s Day greetings)

 God, through the example of Lydia, shows that women are equally called to the work of the Lord’s salvation as men. I’m thankful to God, who has granted that I know and feel His heavenly love and care through knowing a mother and grandmother personally. Having said the above, let us turn to today’s passage. Today, we’re going to speak about the role of the woman in the work of the Gospel. Again, God, through Lydia’s example, has shown us that women are equally called to work for the Gospel as are men. Let us see how:

 The woman has an indispensable role in God’s plan of spreading the Gospel. The Apostle Paul, the Evangelist Luke and other brothers in the Lord were travelling from city to city to do the work of the Gospel. They had arrived in Philippi from Neapolis, which was a principal city of Macedonia (today’s Greece). There, many important military figures would retire. It was an economically prosperous city, with its crops and nearby silver and gold mines. The population was large, with a prominent upper class. It was there that Lydia found herself listening intently to the Apostle’s sermons.

Lydia was most likely widowed, since generally the husband’s name would be mentioned if he was living. We read that she was a worshipper of God, which meant either that she was a Jewess or someone very close to the synagogue. She was wealthy, since she dealt in purple goods, which only top government officials wore. It was recorded that she was listening, and that the Lord had opened her heart. She was listening to the Apostle’s words carefully and with an accepting heart. In other words, she was taking what was said seriously. Her mind was fixed on that (the message). God used this “woman of the house,” maybe even “mother of the house,” to spread the Good News to the other members of her family, and thus, they too were baptized with her in short order. Her first service to God was to show hospitality to God’s servants by opening her house to them, giving them a place to stay until Paul and Silas were arrested by the men of the city. Thus, Lydia played a crucial role both in helping the Apostles, as well as being the leader to facilitate the reception of salvation for her own household.

 There is much to say about women/wives: The little girl reported at home what she had learned at Sunday School concerning the creation of Adam and Eve: "The teacher told us how God made the first man and the first woman. He made the man first. But the man was very lonely with nobody to talk to him. So, God put the man to sleep. And while the man was asleep, God took out his brains, and made a woman of them."

 God created womankind to be a Divine intervention for his impossible situation. That which Adam could not create by himself, whether it was friendship, companionship for the journey of life, and help to live out life itself, he found from the hand of God from the woman. God has used women not only in Scripture as examples for us, but also as an invitation to women everywhere to be the fitting co-workers of Adam through their multifaceted gifts. In the case of Adam (the father of the house) being deceased, the work of the wife, as a unique individual and one empowered by God, is to continue her God-given mission unto the Lord.

 Lydia listened well to the Gospel. She took a step of faith by being baptized. She became a means for her family to do the same. She was found to be hospitable to the Lord’s servants – which is an example of practical service. Today we need our Lydias both to accept and to devote themselves to the Lord in faith. We need them to watch over the faith of their families, and to be faithful and diligent in their service unto God. The woman has an indispensable role in God’s plan of spreading the Gospel.

 Therefore, may the Lord bless our women today – and may He help us to advance the work of God together for His Glory. May the Lord bless you all. Amen.