

## May 12: Prayerfully Study Acts 16:11-15

"We therefore set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. On the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home.' And she prevailed upon us."

## The Impact of Lydia | First Convert in Europe

# May 12

1 | Led by the Holy Spirit to go beyond where he initially ministered, Paul goes to Philippi. How did Paul establish his mission, and how was he received? Why should we offer hospitality towards others? What are the limits (geographical, cultural, ethnic) to hospitality?

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2 | Paul was motivated to spend time in prayer (v. 13), but his plan was interrupted. What interruptions might SHPC face as we partner with The Restoration House? How might the proposed plans to add a connecting space alongside the sanctuary, updates to/ restoration of music ministry space and sanctuary chancel, new restrooms, repurposing centrally located spaces for gathering areas, and connecting all staff in one location, interfere with regular church activities.

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3 | Lydia was open to the teaching of the Lord from God's worker, Paul (see v. 14). In what area(s) of your life do you need to be more open to the Lord's teaching? Like Lydia, how can you share your home, possessions, resources, and prayers with those called to the ministries at SHPC and The Restoration House? How can you take the initiative in helping someone else this week? How have other generous believers influenced you to go beyond yourself?

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4 | Lydia is described as "a dealer in purple cloth," which probably meant that she was moderately well off (v. 14). She is also described as a worshiper of God. How do you think others describe you and your faith practices? After connecting with Paul, she and the members of her household were baptized. She is considered the first convert in Europe. When have you had a religious "high" or moving moment, and who was there? How might you be a part of something religiously significant for others at either SHPC or The Restoration House?

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5 | After being baptized, Lydia persuaded the religious leaders to stay in her home (v. 15). Tell about your baptism or the baptism of your loved ones. Baptism unites us with Christ and makes us members of God's family (the Church). What's significant about belonging to a faith community? Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Baptism initiates us into the Church, gives the promise of God's grace, assures us that God forgives our sins, and calls us to a life of Christian service and fulfillment. Which of these mean the most to you? What would your loved ones say?

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