

CHURCH SCHOOL LESSONS
JULY 19, 2020

Our Bible lesson this week introduces us to a leader in the church named Lydia. Lydia was a powerful woman in a culture that preferred male leaders. She helped lead the church. Lydia shows us how to be leaders through hospitality – by welcoming everyone.

In this week's Bible story Paul has traveled to Philippi. A few weeks ago we read from Paul's letter to the Philippians. In the passage this week Paul meets a special person.

Read this week's lesson in Acts 16:11-15.

What was the business that Lydia ran?

Why do you think Paul mentions her job?

Why do you think Lydia wanted Paul and his friends to stay with her?

I am going to write another version of our Bible story. While you are reading it, or someone is reading it to you, I want you to picture the scene. What do you see? Can you hear Paul preaching over the noise of the river? Use all of your senses. Here is the story.

Putting out from the harbor at Troas, we made a straight run for Samothrace. The next day we tied up at New City and walked from there to Philippi, the main city in that part of Macedonia and, even more importantly, a Roman colony. We lingered there for several days.

On the Sabbath, we left the city and went down along the river where we had heard there was a prayer meeting. We took our place with the women who had gathered there and talked with them. One woman, Lydia, who was from Thyatira and a dealer in expensive fabrics, was known to be a God-fearing woman. As she listened with intensity to what was being said, the Master gave her a trusting heart – and she believed!

After she was baptized, along with everyone in her household, she said in a surge of hospitality, "If you are confident that I am in this with you and believe in the Master truly, come home with me and be my guests." We hesitated, but she would not take no for an answer. (Acts 16:11-15. THE MESSAGE)

What did you sense during this story? If someone was reading it to you, did they have similar or different answers? What stood out to you hearing this version of the story?

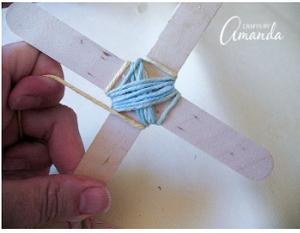
Welcoming others and providing hospitality were important to Lydia. She wanted to make sure Paul and his friends had a comfortable place to stay. She helped lead the church by hosting Paul and his friends on their trip. It is important for us to be welcoming, too.

I want you to fill in the blank in this sentence. "**People who are _____ are welcome here.**" Can you use more than one word in the blank? What are some of the words you could put in the blank?

All people are welcome here!

Lydia sold fabric and things made from fabric, which include woven fabric and yarn. We are going to practice weaving with yard by making a craft called a "God's Eye." You will need your parents' help to do this. You will need 2 craft sticks, yarn and scissors. (If you do not have these at home, call me and I can get some to you. We have lots of these at the church.)

Cross the two craft sticks in the middle to make an X. Holding the sticks together, wrap the yarn around the two sticks where they cross (both sides), and tie the yarn to bind the sticks together. Cut the yarn. Now take the end of the yarn and wrap it around a stick. Then wrap the next stick in the same way. Keep doing that going around in the same direction and wrapping each stick until you get near the end of each stick. Here are some pictures to help you.



First Step



Wrap yarn around sticks



Finished product

Hang your God's eye in your room to remind you that God is always with you.

Do you remember our memory verse? ***God didn't give us a spirit that is timid, but one that is powerful, loving and self-controlled. (2 Timothy 1:7)***

We hear a lot about men in the Bible, because men were considered more important than women when the Bible was written. We know now that it's not true. Still there are many women leaders in the Bible. Here are the descriptions of some of the women leaders in the Bible along with the scripture that tells us about them. See if you can name them all.

We were the midwives who defied Pharaoh's orders and let the Hebrew babies live...including baby Moses. (Exodus 1:16-17)

I led the Hebrew people in the desert alongside my brothers. The people turned to me for leading worship. (Exodus 15:20)

I led women everywhere by standing up for my rights and refusing to be put on display for the king when I didn't want to. (Esther 1:10-12)

I was Jesus' mother who brought him up in the Jewish faith. I trusted God in unusual circumstances. (Luke 1:35-38)

We were a pair of sisters who followed Jesus' teachings and welcomed him and his disciples in our home, each in our own way. (Luke 10:38-42)

I worked with Paul in the early church. I was probably even a deacon! (Romans 16:1)

Sometimes you have to look harder to find the women in the Bible, but they are there and were – and are – an important part of the church.

Let's close with a prayer. Thank you, God, for giving us examples of leaders like Lydia. Even though we are young, we can be leaders too. Help us to be welcoming to everyone to show them the love that God has for all people. Keep us safe this summer as we spend time with our friends and families. Amen.