

# Conversions In Acts

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## Lydia & Her Household's Conversion

(Ac 16:11-15)

### INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
  - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons based on the "Conversions In Acts."
  - a. Last week we looked at "Cornelius & His Household's Conversion."
    - i. **Ac 10:47-48** "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."<sup>1</sup>
  - b. This week we are going to be looking at "Lydia & Her Household's Conversion."
    - i. **Ac 16:11-15** "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 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."
3. We will look once again at the four questions that we have been using for our study on this series of lessons.
  - a. What led to the conversions?
  - b. What was said to the non-Christians?
  - c. What was the mentality of the new converts?
  - d. How can knowing this help us help others?

### I. What Led To The Conversions?

- A. Paul travels extensively
  1. He & Silas pick up a young disciple named Timothy in Lystra (1).
  2. They travel through the region of Phrygia & Galatia (6).
    - i. This is Paul's second missionary journey.
- B. Paul & company are turned away by the Holy Spirit
  1. They were turned away from enter Asia (6).
  2. They were turned away from entering Bithynia after arriving in Mysia (7).
- C. Paul & company travel to Troas
  1. There Paul has a vision of a man urging him to come to Macedonia to help them (8-9).

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<sup>1</sup> All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- D. Paul & company pickup Luke & travel to Macedonia
  - 1. They travel specifically to Philippi (10-11).
    - i. A leading city in Macedonia
    - ii. It was also a Roman colony.
    - iii. It is in modern day Greece.
- E. Paul & company go to the “place of prayer”
  - 1. These “were in locations where there were no synagogues. These were places of prayer outside of towns where the Jews were too poor to have synagogues, or were not permitted to have them they were generally located near the water...” (Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible* (p. 527). North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.)
- F. Paul & company find Lydia and other women
  - 1. It appears that only women were at this place of prayer.
    - i. As such this allowed Paul the opportunity to speak, as he would have been expected to do being both Jew and male.
- G. Lydia becomes a Christian
  - 1. Lydia being a worshiper of God listened to Paul.
    - i. Adam Clark points out that this terminology suggests she was a proselyte as were most likely the other women. (from Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)
    - ii. Also here name is Greek which lends itself to this conclusion.
  - 2. Lydia's heart was opened by God to pay attention to what Paul preached.
    - i. This led to her being baptized and her becoming a Christian.
- H. Thus...
  - 1. What led to the conversions...was there anything that got the conversions going...yes it Paul's preaching!!!

### II. What Was Said To The Non-Christian?

- A. Typically here is where we get into the meat of what was preached
  - 1. With Peter, Acts 2, we see a great sermon delivered.
  - 2. With Philip, Acts 8, we see two great sermon outlines given of what was preached.
- B. Here in this biblical account we only have actions to tell us what was preached
  - 1. We are told that Lydia's heart was opened to pay attention to what was said.
    - i. Now we know that God will not use His power to make anyone obey the gospel and take hold of His grace.
      - a. **II Pt 3:9** “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”
      - b. **Ps 19:7-8** “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes”
      - c. **Ps 119:104** “Through your precepts I get understanding...”

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- ii. God uses His Word to open the hearts of people.
    - a. **He 4:12** “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
  - iii. Therefore we know that Paul preached the Word of God to Lydia.
  - 2. We are told that Lydia & her household were baptized.
    - i. Now we know that there is more to one becoming Christian than just being baptized.
      - a. One has to obey all of God’s Gospel Plan of Salvation.
    - ii. Therefore we know that Paul preached to Lydia & her household God’s Plan of Salvation.
      - a. Looking back at previous lessons we know that means...
        - 1. They were taught the need for faith in Jesus.
          - i. **Ac 2:36; Ac 8:12; Ac 8:37; Ac 10:43**
        - 2. They were taught the need for repentance.
          - i. **Ac 3:19; Ac 11:18**
        - 3. They were taught the need for confession.
          - i. **Ac 8:37**
        - 4. They were taught the need for baptism.
          - i. **Ac 2:38; Ac 8:12-13; Ac 8:38; Ac 9:18; Ac 10:47-48**
- C. Thus...
- 1. What was said to the non-Christians...was there any specific doctrine mentioned...yes they were taught the Word of God concerning God’s Gospel Plan of Salvation!!!

### III. What Was The Mentality Of The New Converts?

- A. Having been converted Lydia urged Paul and company to stay with her
  - 1. Once again we see an immediate hospitality with a convert.
    - i. We noticed this with Cornelius as well.
- B. Like with Cornelius there seems to be a twofold reason for asking the men to stay
  - 1. First Lydia wanted to be hospitable.
    - i. Remember Paul and the brethren were most likely staying in an Inn of some sort so this would be much better for them.
    - ii. This is truly a Christian characteristic.
      - a. **III Jn 8** “We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.” (NIV)
      - b. **I Pt 4:9** “Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.”
  - 2. Second Lydia wanted to be taught more.
    - i. There can be little doubt knowing what we know about Lydia that she wanted to learn as much from Paul and the other brethren as she could before they left.
    - ii. Them staying with her presented a unique opportunity.

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- C. Thus...
  - 1. What was the mentality of the new converts...was there anything surprising after their conversion in their attitude or actions...sure we see Lydia eagerly want to learn more concerning God's Word and be hospitable to those preaching the gospel.

### IV. How Can Knowing This Help Us Help Others?

- A. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding there are very religious people that are not Christians but given the opportunity they will obey
  - 1. Sometimes denominationalism can seem overwhelming.
    - i. With all their "entertainment" packages to draw people in it can seem like a losing battle and sometimes like "why bother."
  - 2. What we see from Lydia's case is that we never know.
    - i. Lydia, by all accounts, was a devout Jew dedicated to Judaism.
    - ii. However her heart proved to be devout to God more than religion.
  - 3. Therefore we must never assume someone is not interested in the truth just because they are not a Christian.
    - i. **Ac 10:34** "Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality" (NASB95)
- B. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding we only need to preach the Word of God because it has the power not us
  - 1. Sometimes we can feel we are not knowledgeable enough to teach someone.
    - i. We think we need to know how to answer every question before we can present the truth to anyone.
  - 2. We must understand that we are simply the presenters of the Word and not the converters.
    - i. The Word of God is has the power to save, it is not our words.
      - a. **Ro 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."
  - 3. Therefore we must always be willing to teach and open up the Bible to those that are wanting to learn. We must never recoil back in fear!!!
- C. Knowing these things helps us help others by understanding we need to not only spend a special amount of time teaching babes in Christ but that we need to be willing to allow them to be hospitable to us
  - 1. Many older Christians feel it is there duty to be the hospitable one so as to not put out the young Christian.
    - i. This is of course a very kind hearted and gentle thing however it doesn't allow for the new Christian to "be hospitable."
  - 2. There we must all young Christians to share their excitement with us by allowing them to be hospitable for us.
    - i. As we have seen this is a very natural reaction to becoming a Christian.

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### CONCLUSION

1. Henry Adams once said, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." (Merriam-Webster, I. (1992). The Merriam-Webster dictionary of quotations (p. 408). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.)
  - a. Brethren we must remember that as teachers of the gospel to a lost and dying world we may never know the totality of our influence however we can take courage knowing that those we teach we have influenced for good rather than evil.
2. Question: Are you influencing the lost world around you?
  - a. If so continue therein!!!
  - b. If not why not???
3. Invitation
  - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
    - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
  - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
    - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
    - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
    - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
    - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
    - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
    - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**