

The Way: Following, Lydia the Merchant

Reflect

1. Where are you comfortable in your life right now? What is going well?
2. When in your life have you taken a new step that was a risk?
3. What did you gain?

Read Your Bible

- Acts 16:11-15
- Matthew 16:22-24

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. Name the people and places mentioned in the text. Look up these places on a map to situate yourself in the world of the text.
2. Who is Lydia? What does she do? What does she believe?
3. In what ways do you imagine that Lydia is comfortable?
4. What happens to Lydia and her household in the text?
5. What risks does she take in her next step of faith?
6. Where are you comfortable in your life?
7. How is God calling you forward like Lydia into a deeper faith?

Conclusion

The story of Lydia's conversion is interesting on several fronts. We sense the excitement of the travels of the early Christians. They move with haste from one place to the next. There is an urgency in their mission to share the good news of Jesus, yet they are present in the people they meet in the places they visit. It is on a Sabbath day that they gather with believers in God. Mingling with the crowd, they meet Lydia who is curious in many ways. She is a businesswoman, uncommon at the time. She is a Gentile believer in God. She also appears to be the head of her household, which is also uncommon for a woman in this context. The first recorded European convert, Lydia is transformed by the message of the Gospel. By the power of the Holy Spirit, she is brought into a next step of faith. She goes from belief in God to following the way of Jesus. In this conversion, her life and the life of her household is transformed. She will later be a place of respite for Paul and Silas when they come out of prison.

Pray

Father in Heaven, You give us the gift of faith. By the good news of Jesus, You set us free. Help us today to follow deeper into a life with You. Lay the path before us and show us the way. In the strong name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.