

“8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. 11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to Neapolis; 12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. 13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.” (Ac 16:8-15 AV)

“And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.” (Ac 16:40 AV)

Introduction. Paul is on his second missionary journey, and his companion now is Silas. They have come up from Antioch of Syria into what is now the nation of Turkey. They passed into the central part of what is now Turkey, but was then known as Galatia and Phrygia but God would not allow them to preach there or to further north into Bythynia, on the coasts of the Black Sea. So instead they turned directly west until they came to the port of Troas, on the Adriatic Sea, just south of where Constantinople, now Istanbul, would be built many years later.

Troas was a port on the west coast of what is now Turkey, on the Aegean Sea, southwest of Istanbul, Constantinople. If you draw a line from Istanbul through what is now Troas and extend it across the sea in a southwest direction you will reach Greece and the city of Athens. If, instead you took a right angle at Troas and drew the line to the northwest, you would cross the sea and enter Macedonia which lies north of the Aegean Sea. You would find in Macedonia the cities of Samothrace, Neapolis, and Philippi and Thessalonica. This was the homeland of Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great who had conquered Greece and built a world empire before it was divided after the death of Alexander, but united under the rule of Rome and Augustus Caesar. But that had happened long before Paul came into Macedonia and planted the church there. The area, however, had been thoroughly Grecianized since the days of Phillip.

That brings us to the Biblical Account of Luke in Acts 16:8-15 that we read a few moments ago. I want to note three things that are important.

## I. The Gospel goes at the call of God.

A. We saw last week that the Holy Spirit had forbidden them to go into northern Turkey.

The gospel would go there later, but it was not to go at that time. Later, Peter would write “to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia...” but that was not Paul’s field of service.

- B. At Troas, Paul had a vision in the night of a Macedonian man calling him to come over to Macedonia. Come and help us, was the message, and Paul and his companions immediately made preparation to cross the sea into Macedonia, which, as I said lay to the north of the Aegean sea. They landed at Samothracia or Samothrace, went on to Neapolis, but we have no record of any events in those cities. But things did happen at Phillipi. It was a colony of Rome and a chief city in that area. It was named after Phillip, the father of Alexander the Great. They stayed there for some days.
- C. On one of the Sabbath days they went down to the river side, where the custom was to offer prayers.
- II. The Preparation for the Gospel is by the Spirit of God alone. There are many things that could be said, but I will give the very simple things that God always does.
- A. God's Providence.
1. Probably Jewish women, prayers on the Sabbath. No synagogue. Perhaps the men were banished. It took a certain number of men to have a synagogue
  2. Lydia was a proselyte: The word seems to indicate that, also that she was singled out from the other women who met on the Sabbath.
  3. We see something now, of why the missionaries were not allowed to go into Galatia or Bythinia. God had Lydia waiting for them in Phillipi.
  4. This was the physical preparation: the convert meets the messenger at the time and place appointed by God.
- B. The internal preparation in the soul itself: There are several levels of preparation for the Gospel, which are of God alone, and are not the works of men:
1. Creation itself      Man as the image of God.
    - a. Lights every man that comes into the world: John 1:9. This is the light of reason, the ability to make sense of things, but this is not sufficient, for man is blinded by sin.
    - b. Light of conscience: Proverbs 20:27 with Romans 2:14ff This also is not sufficient, corrupted by sin.
  2. Light of Scripture:
    - a. Romans 2:17ff the knowledge of revelation: this also is not enough; to know, but not do. But this is necessary, for how shall they believe if they do not hear.
    - b. Matthew 6:22ff double minded. Halting between two opinions.
- III. The Opening of the Heart. There was more for Lydia: God had opened her heart.
- A. The is the irresistible grace of God that penetrates the heart and breaks the bondage of unbelief: 2 Cor 4:3. Exegete
- B. The result: `

1. Attended to the things Paul taught: brought them near to her. Pay attention to; either as a positive or as a negative. Not like the seed that fell by the wayside.
  - a. Beware
  - b. Take heed
2. Baptism: She acted on her faith and received baptism
  - a. Submitted to the order of the church.
  - b. She and her household: Baptism does not in itself mean salvation, but it means being brought under the order of the church and discipline of the church.
  - c. Baptism indicated union with Christ and death to the old life and the old man: Romans 6:1,2 You are no longer your own, but belong to Jesus Christ.
  - d. Faithful to the Lord; entertained the missionaries "She constrained us" the power of the gospel was working in her life.

Application: See Hebrews 10:18-25 No halfway business here, but commitment to Christ.

Mention tract: "Baby steps in following Jesus."