

# *Lydia of Philippi*

## *Leader Suggestions for Study Sessions*

*Dear leader,*

*Thank you for taking time to lead a group of young girls through this study of Lydia. I believe there is no more important calling than helping the next generation learn what the Word of God has to say to them. I pray that you will find it rewarding.*

*Sherree Funk*

### **Before you begin:**

Choose a meeting time that works well for you and most of the group. You will need **nine meeting times**, including an introductory session for distributing books. Allow about **ninety minutes for each session**. Expect to spend about thirty minutes in conversation over snacks or a meal. Unstructured fellowship time is important for the girls, and it gives you a chance to get to know them better, too. Some of this time can also be used to share prayer concerns and answers to prayer.

### **Introductory Session:**

Suggested location: In a home or comfortable room at church – your home base.

Activities:

- 1) Hand out workbooks, review calendar.
- 2) Discuss the importance of doing the workbook work at home. It should not take longer than about 25 minutes and could be done in 5 minutes a day, each day of the week. Make sure everyone has a Bible. NIV is the version used in the study guide and it will be easiest to use that version for the study, but other translations may be used.
- 3) **Names.** Be sure everyone knows everyone else's name. Play a game or have fun with introductions.
- 4) **Small group etiquette.** Go over the basics of respect for each other's answers, confidentiality, doing the homework, mutual care and concern.
- 5) Don't expect the girls to already know who Lydia is. Perhaps some of the group members have never been in a serious Bible study. Encourage them. The reading is not too much. You might help them look up Acts 16 and Philippians to see where they are located, since most of the study will be in these two books.

Starter questions:

- 1) What do you hope to get out of this Bible study?
- 2) Can you name one thing you would like everyone to pray for you this week? Share these around the circle and write them on Page 3.

## **Week One – Following the Holy Spirit:**

Suggested location: Home base.

Activities: Touch on last week's prayer requests, ask for any new prayer needs. Do this every week.

Starter questions:

*Note: These questions are meant to encourage sharing and help steer your discussion toward the work done in the study guide. They are optional. You may use your own questions, or just go over the work in order. You might just ask what particularly interested them in the lesson or was meaningful to them.*

1. Did you sense any "divine appointments" this week?
2. Are you interested in going on a mission trip? Where?
3. What do you think about the idea of giving up your advantage for the sake of others?
4. How have you felt the Holy Spirit working in your life? (refer to list on pp 9-10)

## **Week Two – Confidence:**

Suggested location: A Greek restaurant.

Activities: Your discussions about the history of Philippi and Lydia's relocation could be enhanced in this different environment. You can encourage the girls to sample some traditional Greek foods, such as Lydia might have eaten. Try gyros, stuffed grape leaves, or spanokopita and, of course, baklava for dessert!

Starter questions:

1. Do you think of yourself as a confident person? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever lived somewhere else? What was it like to move? What were the positive and negative things about moving?
3. Did you memorize Philippians 1:6? What good work might the Lord be doing in you right now?
4. From the little we know about Lydia, what inspires you?

## **Week Three – Prayer:**

Suggested location: By a creek or river. Bring chairs or a blanket or gather around a picnic table.

Activities: Pray in a circle in a place where you can hear the river or creek.

Starter questions:

1. In what way does Lydia's commitment to prayer and worship inspire you?

2. Compare responses to Worship Experience Survey.
3. Did you try to have a personal prayer time in the morning? In the evening?
4. Is anyone baptized? Confirmed? Share experiences.

### **Week Four – “I Say, Rejoice!”:**

Suggested location: Home base.

Activities: Have some fun refreshments using the color purple, like grape juice, grape jelly, Purple Cows (remember those? A root beer float using grape soda instead of root beer) You might have everyone wear purple for this session.

- Starter questions:
1. What do you think is the difference between happiness and joy?
  2. How well do you rejoice when things go wrong?
  3. Have you ever noticed how joy attracts others?
  4. What was interesting about the story in Acts 16?

### **Week Five – Hospitality:**

Suggested location: Home base.

Activities: Plan a Lydia party for the last session of the study. Suggestions are in the workbook. Details are up to you.

- Starter questions:
1. Do you know anyone with the gift of hospitality?
  2. Did you understand the reversal of normal social rules in the story Jesus told to the Pharisees?
  3. What would it mean to you to “entertain an angel?”
  4. Did you think of any ways to offer kingdom hospitality to someone in your life?

### **Week Six-- The Grace of Giving:**

Suggested location: Home base.

Activities: Discuss what to collect for the needy (p. 49) Plan when you will deliver the items to the food bank, homeless shelter, etc.

- Starter questions:
1. Are you a cheerful giver?
  2. How much do you wish you could help support a Christian missionary?

3. What do you think Lydia would have done to show excellence in the grace of giving?
4. Have you ever seen proof of Luke 6: 38?

### **Week Seven – Shining Like Stars:**

Suggested location: Home base, on a starry night? That might be hard to arrange. But it could provide an object lesson. Or you might take a trip to deliver the items you have collected.

Activities: This could be a time when you deliver the collected items. Or you might want to provide stationery and let the girls write notes to encourage or thank a servant of the Lord – pastor, missionary, ‘shining Christian.’

Starter questions:

1. Which shining star quality do you see most in each of the other members of the group? Which one do you want to do better in?
2. Have you ever been persecuted for your faith? How did you handle it?
3. Do you think it is harder for teens or for adults to stand firm in the LORD?
4. What can you do to “hold out the Word of life?”

### **Week Eight – Heaven-Bound:**

Suggested location: Home base or inviting room at church, large enough to be comfortable for all your guests.

Activities: Enjoy the Lydia party you have planned (p. 43) after sharing prayer requests and briefly going over the homework.

Starter questions:

1. What did you learn this week about heaven and hell?
2. What inspired you about Paul’s discussion of his feelings about death?
3. Where is your ultimate citizenship? How do you know?