

## **Children and family talk for Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**

Good morning!

Last week we heard about Jesus's instruction to his followers to 'Love Each other'. This week we are looking at a story from Acts, which to give it its full title is 'The acts of the Apostles', or 'What the followers of Jesus did next!' Let's see what some of them got up to after Jesus had left them this instruction.

### **Acts 16, verses 11 to 15.**

#### **Lydia Becomes a Christian**

<sup>11</sup> We left Troas in a ship, and we sailed straight to the island of Samothrace. The next day we sailed to Neapolis. <sup>12</sup> Then we went by land to Philippi, the leading city in that part of Macedonia. It is also a Roman colony. We stayed there for several days.

<sup>13</sup> On the Sabbath day we went outside the city gate to the river. There we thought we would find a special place for prayer. Some women had gathered there, so we sat down and talked with them. <sup>14</sup> There was a woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira. Her job was selling purple cloth. She worshiped the true God. The Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. <sup>15</sup> She and all the people in her house were baptized. Then Lydia invited us to her home. She said, "If you think I am truly a believer in the Lord, then come stay in my house." And she persuaded us to stay with her.

The book of Acts is believed to have been written by Luke, the same guy who wrote Luke's gospel. So, this is seen as the second part of the story of all Jesus began to do and teach, and takes us on a journey following some of the early Christians as they began to spread the Christian message around the world. In this book of Acts, you can find the first time the word Christian was used, Acts 11 verse 26, Christian means follower of Christ.

Today's reading shows us Jesus' followers in action. If we look back a couple of verses, we can read the reason they decided to go to Macedonia in Northern Greece, Paul had had a vision where a man from Macedonia had pleaded with him to come and help them there. Verses 9 and 10.

They sail across and stay there for several days before meeting Lydia, a business woman, who is already worshipping God as a Jew. Listening to the followers of Jesus, Lydia opens her heart and accepts what they are saying, and then she is baptised along with all her household. Baptism is a way of showing to others that you want to make a clean start in life and you believe and want to follow Jesus. Lydia would probably have been baptised by being dipped fully in a river so that her whole body was covered by the water, and then

raised up by the person baptising her. I was baptised in a similar way and it is a beautiful symbol of being washed clean and being ready to start a new life with Jesus as your guide. Jewish people were used to ceremonial washing, so this would not have seemed unusual to them. The early Christians were carrying out Jesus' instructions by talking about Jesus and sharing his love with others, and Lydia too showed this in asking Paul and Silas to stay at her house.

The book of Acts is spread out over about 30 years, and shows how Christianity began to spread around the world, the followers of Jesus used all the opportunities that came to them to tell people about Jesus and we can do this too. God gives us these opportunities to speak to people just as he did Paul and Silas. If you are not sure, try talking to God first and ask God to give you the right words to say.

Let's do that now,

Dear God

You are great and wonderful,

Forgive us when we have doubts and are afraid,

Help us to have the courage to talk to others about you

And open their hearts to listen

**Amen.**

Let's finish by saying the grace together:

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hold out your hands as if receiving a present)

The Love of God (Cross your hands over your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (hold hands together)

Be with us all, now and for evermore, Amen. (Bring thumbs together).

Here is a link for an action song: 'I have decided to follow Jesus', with lyrics and you can dance along and join in if you want to! [https://youtu.be/G\\_fZfiuONi0](https://youtu.be/G_fZfiuONi0)

Here is the activity sheet:

[https://www.rootsontheweb.com/media/13036/r65\\_chs\\_5may13.pdf](https://www.rootsontheweb.com/media/13036/r65_chs_5may13.pdf)