

Intro.

- A. If you were looking for 2 words to illustrate distinct contrast, prob. could not do better than *light* and *darkness*.
- At least 60 verses of scripture make this contrasting comparison, c. **Lk. 1:75-79**
 - Believers were “sometimes in darkness, but now you are in the light of the Lord, **Eph. 5:8; 1 Pt. 2:9**
- B. One of the conversions accounts in Acts is about Lydia, and how she moved from darkness into light.
- Jesus is indeed, *the light of the world*, & He said, *he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of the world* **Jn. 8:12**
 - In **Ac. 16:11-15** we can learn 3 important lessons for life as we study about Lydia’s conversion.

Discuss.**I. First, A LESSON FOR SOWERS.**

- A. *Sower* is word God used to describe the joys & sorrows of being a soul-winner, **Ps. 126:5f & Lk. 8:5-15**
- In context, Paul, Silas, Timothy & Luke (c. **Ac. 16:10** “we”)
 - Their teaching efforts in Philippi teach important lessons to all who carry the “good news” of salvation.
- B. *Therefore* connects the record of Lydia’s conversion to the preceding thought, of submitting to will of God.
- Paul & companions had to trust in God’s perfect will, as should we, **Rom. 12:2**.
 - Should not expect a literal “Macedonian call,” we need to look at opportunities *awa* closed doors, all the while trusting in God’s divine providence (c. **Rom. 8:28**)
 - Though God could have revealed His will to Lydia via a vision, he used Paul as an *earthen vessel*.
 - The faith that comes by hearing needs a messenger willing to deliver the message, **Rm. 10:14f**.
 - “God’s work, done God’s way, will not lack God’s support.” (Hudson Taylor)

II. Second, A LESSON FOR SINNERS.

- A. What anticipation the apostles must have had about the prospects of *the chief city of that part of Macedoni*
- If they were true to form, they 1st looked for the synagogue where they might speak to the worshippers.
 - Finding no synagogue, they sought out a prayer pavilion by the river where they found a few women.
 - That small band of women gathered for worship explained the absence of synag., (10 men needed).
 - It was a good thing that Paul & companions were submissive to God’s will re: this opportunity!
- B. Lydia & these ladies were aliens: sinners (**Eph. 2:12**), women (c. **Jn. 4:27**), f/ Thyratira (Europe, thus 1st to hear gospel on European soil was a Gentile prosylte, c. **Ac. 10:2; 13:43**).
- Lydia = worthy recipient of Truth -- entrepreneur, seller of purple *from Thyratira!* (*dye*) wise, success
 - She *worshipped God* (**Ac. 16:14**), though paganism was popular where she was from & where she lived
 - She had the respect of her household, who also obeyed the gospel.
 - Lydia is an inspiration to all who feel unworthy or out of place. (c. **Rom. 8:14-17**)

III. Third, A LESSON FOR SEEKERS.

- A. Lydia was a seeker (as well as a sinner), & she listened attentively to Paul’s teaching (**vs. 14-15**)
- Lydia’s heart was receptive of God’s truth. C. **Rom. 6:17; 2 Cor. 4:6 (5-7)**
 - Heart = the intellect, as well as seat of our emotion, **Ezra 7:10 & Mt. 13:15**.
 - God has placed His trust in us (Christians) to spread the *good news* of His power to salvation, **Rm.1:16**
- B. God made a promise to serious searchers in **Mt. 7:7-8**.
- Immediately after her conversion, she was aggressively hospitable, (c. **16:15**)
 - The letter in **Rev. 2:18ff** may well be evidence of Lydia’s influence in her hometown.

Concl.

- A. Lydia’s name has been immortalized in scripture. She was an outsider, an alien, but she became an heir to the kingdom of heaven!
- Her conversion teaches a powerful lesson to us about sowing the seed, and how men & women should seek the truthes of God’s holy word.
 - Jesus invites sinners to walk with Lydia. Salvation is not a far-fetched idea, but a marvelous opportunity.
- B. I wonder if in this audience we may have the same sort of combination: *a loving God, dedicated sowers & seaching sinners seeking salvation*. If so, we stand ready to help you in your journey f/ darkness to light.