

2.28 Making Space for All God's Children

the big idea: Lydia:
Called to Serve



Shenora stood outside of the church but was hesitant to go in. It had been about a year since she had attended church, and she was nervous about visiting a new one.

What if people don't like me? she thought. What if the service is boring or there aren't any other young people?

Setting her fears aside, she said a quick prayer and walked inside.

As she entered the building, she did a quick scan of the lobby. People mingled and clustered together in different groups. A few looked her way and acknowledge her, but some looked her way and didn't acknowledge her.

Okay, that was weird, she thought, but I can do this. I just need to grab my bulletin and find a seat. Oh wait, where are the restrooms?

She looked around but couldn't see any signs for the ladies restroom, and she didn't feel comfortable asking. As she turned around,

she bumped into a teenage girl behind her.

"Oh!" Shenora said. "I am so sorry! I didn't realize someone was behind me."

"It's my fault," Erika said. "You looked a little lost, and I wanted to pop over and help you. My name's Erika, by the way, and it's very nice to meet you. Have you been here before?"

"Nice to meet you, too, Erika," Shenora said, shaking Erika's hand. "I'm Shenora, and this is my first time here."

"Welcome!" Erika said. "I'm so glad you're joining us today. Let me give you the scoop and show you around. You can sit with me and my friends if you'd like. The restrooms are just down the hall and to the left. After the service, the church ladies always serve coffee and donuts in the fellowship hall."

Filled with relief, Shenora smiled as she listened to Erika and followed her into the sanctuary.

from your Bible

Acts 16:11–15, 40; 1 Corinthians 1:26–30, NIV—
From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samo-

thrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the

city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵**When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.** ⁴⁰After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encour-

aged them. Then they left. **1 Corinthians 1:26** Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Scripture discussion

In today's Scripture passage, you learned about Lydia. She is considered a model of service and hospitality. Paul enjoyed the hospitality of Lydia's household, as well as the benefits of a relationship with such a prominent and well-respected woman.

As a dealer of purple cloth, Lydia was connected to the elite and wealthy in the area. Rich and royal people in the Roman world could afford purple cloth. It signified status. Lydia owned a business and a home, which was unusual for a woman at this time. She was a woman of faith. She opened her home to others and shared her hospitality with them.

make it real



check it

1. Why was Shenora nervous about attending a new church?
2. How did people make Shenora feel welcome?
3. How did they make her feel unwelcome?



think it

1. Who was Lydia? (Acts 16:14)
2. What did Paul and Silas do after they got out of prison? (v. 40)
3. Who is Jesus to the believers? (1 Corinthians 1:30)



do it

In today's lesson, you learned about Lydia and the importance of welcoming others and serving those in need. How can you apply what you learned to your own life? Consider today's passage and develop a plan to implement what you've learned. Then share your insights on social media.



keep it

"When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. 'If you consider me a believer in the Lord,' she said, 'come and stay at my house.' And she persuaded us" (Acts 16:15, NIV).