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# “Macedonia Vision & Lydia Accepts the Gospel”

Sunday School Lesson from Acts 16:9-15

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As we meet characters like Lydia and her household, we will discuss how we have responsibility to not just tell people about Jesus, but to encourage and build up our friends and those around us.

We'll also make sure to emphasize not being intimidated by status or age, but working with all equally.

**Lesson focus:** God wants us to share the good news of Jesus with everyone, because He made us all the same and loves us. Sharing His love means loving others and praying for friends as well as strangers.

**Passage:** Acts 16:9-15

**Target Audience:** K-6<sup>th</sup> Grade (adaptable)

**Materials Needed:** Card stock/cards, fabric, coffee filters, paint, dye (food coloring), muffin pans

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# Lesson Opening Activity – Lydia Purple

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Let's make some purple!

Start off the lesson with some color experimentation. Use muffin tins or small cups as mixing elements and invite students to play around with food coloring and paint to make various shades of purple.

Encourage them to put different amounts of red and blue in different cups, aiming for lighter and darker kinds of purple.

Then provide coffee filters, papers, or felt/fabric to dip into the colors and make a dyed "cloth" of sorts. Students can attach smaller filters or cloths to larger paper, glue to a Popsicle stick, or just hang to dry and take as is.

Explain that today we are going to talk about someone who worked with the color purple.

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# Bible Lesson: Paul & Lydia

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Explain that today we are going to talk about another church-founding missionary, Paul. Re-cap who he was and how he was so important to the church. Paul went on several journeys as a missionary and traveled to many places. One time, he was specifically led by a dream to a place called Macedonia:

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*During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10 After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. –Acts 16:9-10*

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Talk briefly about how God spoke to people in the Bible...there are lots of times when people have dreams or visions and do things based off of them. How could they be sure they weren't just chomping on some spoiled venison? How did they know these things were from God?

Talk with kids (especially older) about if they think these sorts of things still take place these days. At any rate, in this case, Paul definitely heard from God, and as a result he changed his direction and sailed for Macedonia:

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*From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, 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[a] of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. –Acts 16:11-12*

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Make note of the place name **Philippi**...does that sound familiar at all? (See if anyone recognizes the relation to the book of Philippians). Well, while they were

staying there, they were given a chance to meet and speak with all sorts of people. One of them was a woman named Lydia:

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*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. 14 One 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. –Acts 16:13-14*

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Paul and his companions did not find a local church, so they went to the river to pray. Maybe it was laundry day (well, not if it was the Sabbath...but anyway), because a group of women was hanging out, among them Lydia. The fact that she was a “dealer in purple cloth” probably meant she was someone pretty special, and that she had money.

In those days, purple was a very rare and significant color, and only people in royalty or power could wear it. If she worked with it, she was likely a skilled artisan. But the fact that she was down by the river also meant she was worshiping and honoring the Sabbath. When Paul spoke, her heart was opened.

The message clicked and Lydia realized she needed the power of Jesus that they spoke about. So she responded immediately, and also insisted that her whole family be baptized as well:

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*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*

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What are the most important elements of this story for us to notice and take away? First, there is the emphasis on immediacy. In Paul's case, as soon as God asked him to change direction, he did it.

There was no second-guessing God's plan. If he hadn't listened and followed directions, Lydia would not have heard the Gospel. For Lydia, she also responded as soon as she heard the message of Jesus.

We should not hesitate to obey God. Sometimes His directions are very clear and at other times we might have to listen extra carefully or leap out in faith. But we should be open and willing. Also, we see again how God spread the news of the Gospel to everyone from former Jews to people everywhere.

Lydia had her heart transformed, and though we do not know details about the rest of her life, she likely spent it serving God. We can have an impact on people all around, whether or not we explicitly share the message. What are other ways we can help and encourage people with God's word?

**Close** with prayer and reminder of God's work in our lives. Ask that God would help us pay attention for how we can love and share the good news of Jesus with everyone around us.

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# Lydia Craft Activity for Sunday School

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Finish up the purple dye activity (if not previously done), and make “welcome back” cards...decorate and sign cards for Sunday School students who may have not attended recently.

Make cards to encourage them to return, and address envelopes to mail out. Make extra cards to invite friends at school or in the community to come to church or try Sunday school.

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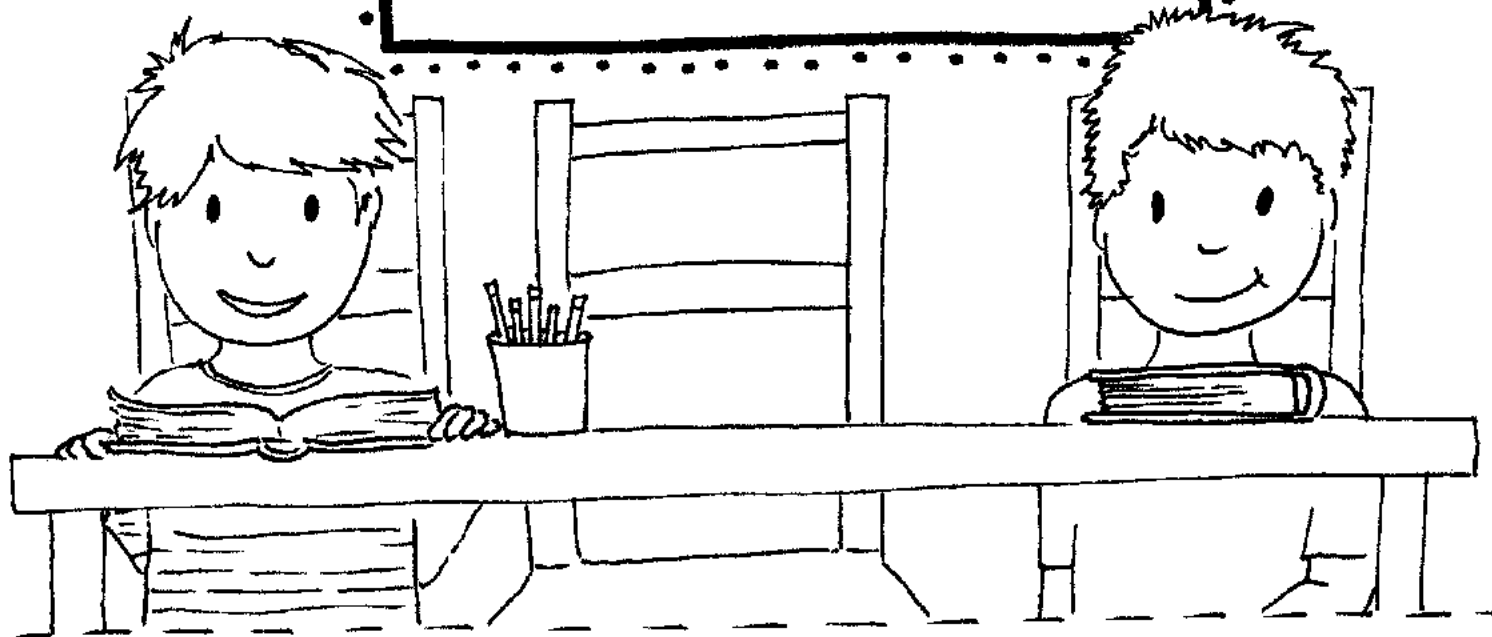
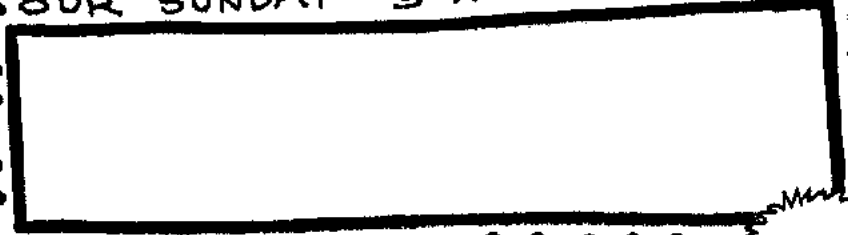
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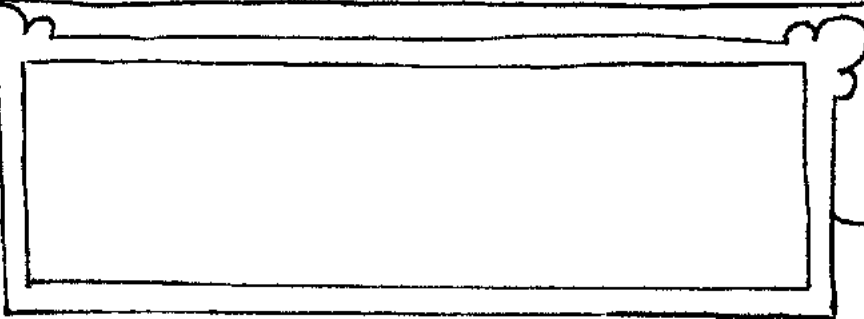
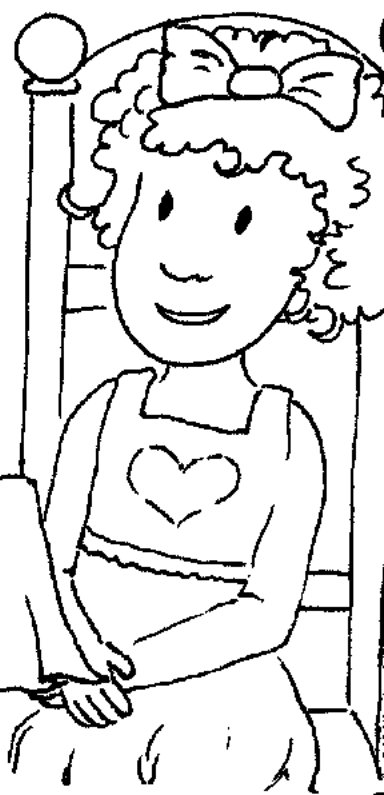
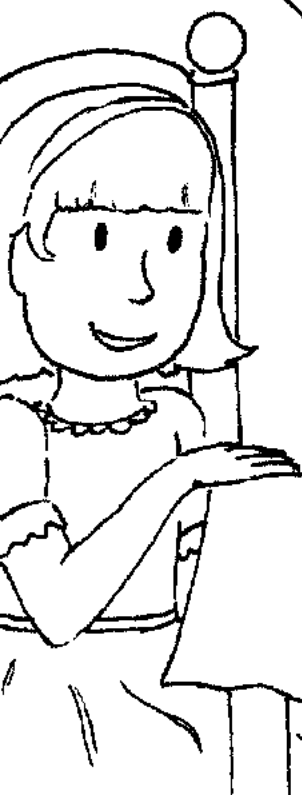
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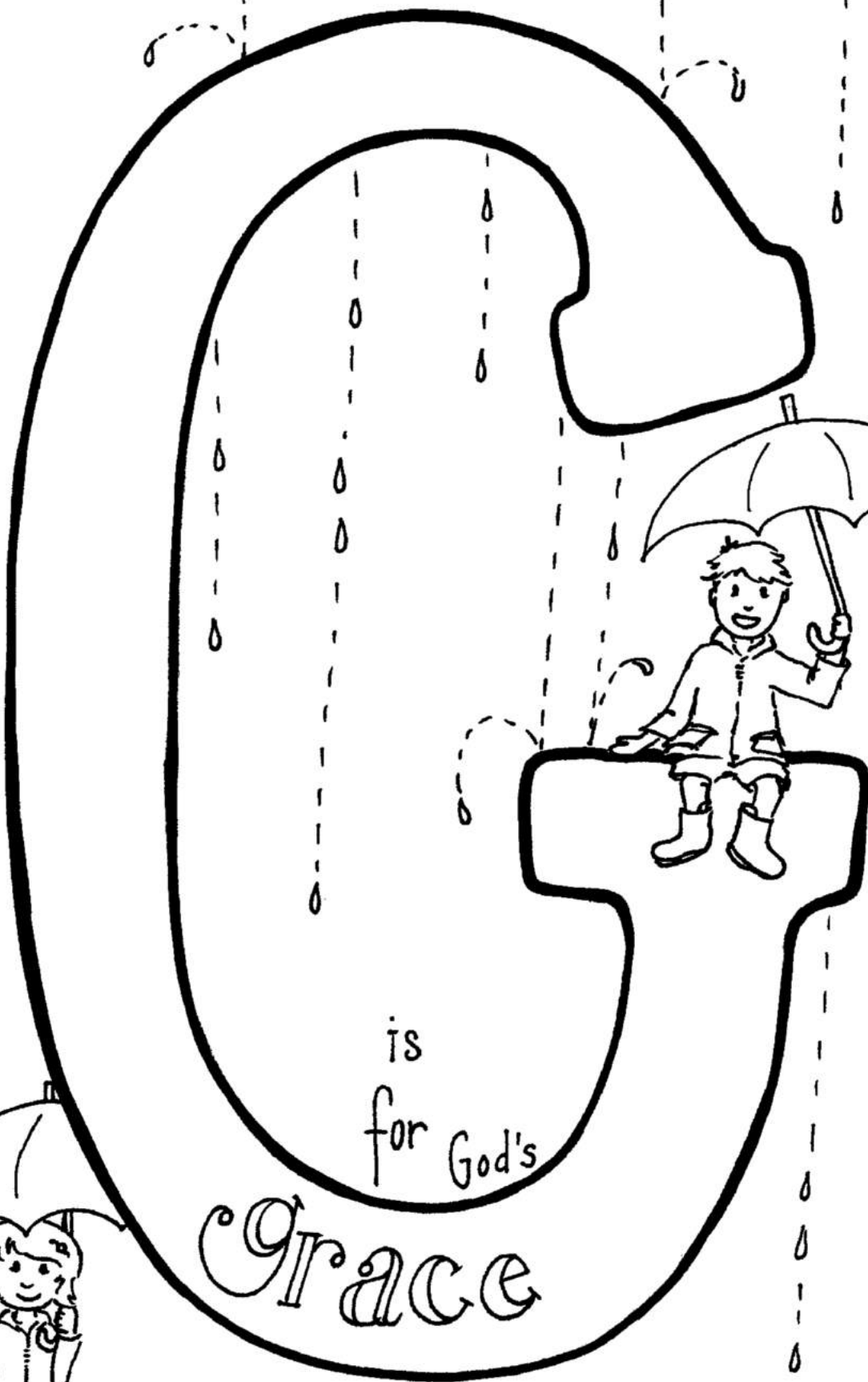
OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL MEETS: ..



You are

Invited





is  
for God's

Grace





## Bad and Good

Paul had many adventures as he traveled around as a missionary.

Read each sentence. If something bad happened, color the frowning face. If something good happened, color the smiling face.



Before Paul became a Christian, he was mean to the Christians and tried to kill them. (Acts 8)



Paul saw a bright light and heard Jesus speaking to him, and Paul became a Christian. (Acts 9)



The Holy Spirit chose Paul and Barnabas to become missionaries. (Acts 13)



Barnabas and Paul traveled to Cyprus and other places to tell people about Jesus. (Acts 13)



God helped Paul to heal a crippled man in Lystra. (Acts 14)



Some people who didn't want Paul to preach tried to kill him. (Acts 14)



Paul went on another missionary trip with Silas. (Acts 15)



In Philippi a woman named Lydia became a Christian. (Acts 16)



Paul and Silas were thrown in jail for preaching about Jesus. (Acts 16)



In Ephesus Paul healed many sick people. (Acts 19)



Paul was arrested and taken on a ship to Rome. (Acts 27)



Even in prison Paul kept telling people about Jesus. (Acts 28)

PAUL PREACHING AT THE  
SYNAGOGUE

