**A Worshiper of God and A Jailor Baptized**

Acts 16:11-13

Introduction:

1. In the previous study we learned about Cornelius, a good man who needed to do more to make his relationship with God right. We might not expect that a good man, like Cornelius, a devout man, who feared God, gave alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually would need to do anything to make his relationship to God right.

2. In this study I want to consider with you two other characters that we might not expect respond as they did to the message of the gospel.

3. Begin with reading of Acts 16:11-13.

 a. Paul and Silas had traveled to Philippi.

 b. On the regular day of worship for Jews they went down to the riverside. Evidently,

 there is no synagogue in Philippi.

 c. They went down to the riverside supposing that there would be a place of prayer there.

 d. They found some women there who had evidently assembled to pray.

Discussion:

I. A woman named Lydia was there (14-15).

 A. She is described as from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of

 God, was listening.

 1. What is of particular interest to me is that she is described as a worshiper of God.

 2. In all likelihood this means that she was a Jewish woman. She obviously is a

 business woman and probably was here in Philippi plying her trade as a seller of

 purple fabrics.

 3. Many today who go out of town on business give little attention to the worship of

 God. This woman is not like that. Even though it was unlikely that there was a

 synagogue there, she found a place of prayer and assembled as best she could.

 How many of us would have said, “There is no congregation here, so no need to

 worship or pray. I am excused?” Not Lydia. I would have to conclude that she is a

 woman of more than nominal faith.

 4. Does she need to do more in her faith? Is her faith sufficient? We might think so.

 1. She is a worshiper of God.

 2. She prays.

 3. She worships even when away from home and there is no synagogue. She is so

 diligent she goes to prayer meetings when she is out of town.

 B. But here she is listening to the things spoken by Paul.

 1. Sometimes it just seems like those that we would think need the least seem to thirst

 for more.

 2. The text says the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.

 What was he saying? The text does not say, but we know Paul and what he taught.

 3. A good example is evidenced in Acts 13:16-41.

 4. She responded by being baptized.

 5. She said, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and

 stay.”

 6. Was she faithful to the Lord before Paul and Silas spoke to her? Or only after she

 listened and responded to the things Paul and Silas spoke? I would answer, “Her

 on-going faithfulness to the Lord was evidenced by her response to the things

 spoken by Paul and Silas. Had she not responded in the way she did she would

 have proven herself unfaithful.” Sometimes faithfulness to the Lord becomes evident

 when people are called on to do something that they did not know to do before.

 7. Lydia established her loyalty to the Lord when she responded positively to what Paul

 and Silas taught her. She would have proven herself unfaithful if she had responded

 in some other way.

 8. Have you responded in the way she responded?

 C. Evidently Paul and Silas returned to this place of prayer (16-21).

 1. I don’t know if it was the next Sabbath day or some other time.

 2. But a girl with a “spirit of divination” kept saying, “These men are bond-servants of

 the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.”

 3. Paul caused the spirit to come out of her in the name of Jesus Christ. And it did.

 4. He was then accused of teaching things inappropriate for Romans to accept. A

 mob like circumstance arose and they were beaten and put in prison.

II. A jailor baptized (16:22ff).

 A. We might expect that this jailor would be an unlikely candidate to respond to the things

 that Paul and Silas were preaching.

 1. We might expect that along with the city magistrates he would be in opposition to

 them.

 2. Or we might expect him to just not care one way or the other. They being just other

 prisoners that he had to take care of. He put them in the inner prison and fastened

 their feet in the stocks.

 B. Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God. The prisoners were

 listening to them.

 1. I don’t know if they were speaking to them about Jesus or not.

 2. It would not surprise me if they were.

 3. There was an earthquake and the doors of the prison were opened and their chains

 unfastened. Was this a coincidence or did God cause it?

 C. The jailor drew his sword and was about to kill himself, but the prisoners were not

 escaping.

 1. I find that incredible.

 2. Why not? Had Paul and Silas so influenced them that they were now docile? Had

 the songs and prayers so transformed them that they did not do what normal

 prisoners would do?

 3. The jailer asked, “What must I do to be saved?” Had he heard the songs, the

 prayers, some teaching? What made him ask this question?

 D. Paul said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

 1. Evidently like Cornelius and Lydia, he need to hear more, so, “They spoke the

 word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house.”

 2. He washed their wounds and was immediately baptized.

 3. Like Cornelius and Lydia, he heard the word of the Lord, believed and was

 baptized. Jesus had said, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be

 saved” (Mk. 16:16).

 4. After this he brought them into his house and set food before them and rejoiced

 greatly having believed in God with his whole household.

 5. After this he must have put them back in jail (v. 35ff). Isn’t that incredible???

 There is a lot of details in this account that we do not have.

 6. The magistrates, having learned that they were Romans, came down and asked

 them to leave. Paul and Silas cooperated. First visiting the house of Lydia.

 E. One of the things I notice about these accounts. When these individuals heard and

 believed they were immediately baptized.

 1. Have you heard?

 2. Have you believed?

 3. Are you ready to be baptized?

Conclusion:

1. I remember a class I taught of a group of young people many years ago.

2. There were 5 or 6 of them.

3. We studied about hearing, believing, repenting, and being baptized. We studied for about two or three months. One night I asked, “If you understand about Christ? If you understand about hearing and believing and repenting and being baptized what should you do?

4. I looked around the room and everyone but me was looking at the floor. That told me they knew what they needed to do.

5. For the next few weeks when the invitation was extended one went forward, then another, then another. Like Cornelius, and Lydia and the jailor they knew what they needed to do and they did it.

6. Will you?