

And a certain woman named Lydia . . . heard us, v. 14. In this humble place of prayer, frequented chiefly by women, Paul found hearts prepared for the gospel. Lydia was baptized with all her household, and when Paul left Philippi, there had been established a little church, which meant, not simply so many souls brought to Christ, but also that the day was drawing nigh when the city and the whole Roman empire would become Christian. God does not visit us with high ambitions, great ideals and dreams, just to delude us, but when we go out and try to

reach them, the very God who gave them to us will open the way to their attainment.

Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended, v. 14. In our Lord's parable of the sower, the "good ground" hearers are those who receive the word "in an honest and good heart", who "keep it", and who "bring forth fruit with patience," Luke 8: 15. Lydia had all these qualities of a good hearer of the word. If we would have "an honest and good heart," the same Lord who "opened the heart of Lydia" will give it to us in answer to prayer.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The Holy Ghost determines to whom, as well as by whom, the gospel is to be preached. v. 6.

God's plan for us is better than our plan for ourselves. v. 7.

Lesser ends should be sacrificed to greater. v. 8.

A divine voice speaks through human needs. v. 9.

Convictions of conscience lead to courage in conduct. v. 10.

When God gives a message, He prepares hearts to receive it. v. 13.

Conversion is the Lord's work, not the preacher's. v. 14.

Christianity enlarges the heart to desire fellowship with all who love Christ. v. 15.

We must distinguish between the district of Galatia and the Roman province of Galatia. The latter included the former. Other districts of this province mentioned in the Acts are Pisidia, Lycaonia and Phrygia. Parts of some of these districts were in other provinces. Asia is another Roman province in which the district of Lydia was situated. Ramsay holds that Paul and Silas did not go northward into the district of Galatia and that the Epistle to the Galatians was addressed to the churches of Phrygia and Lycaonia. That is to say, Paul addressed these people by the name of the Roman province and not by the name of the district in which they lived.

How shall we avail ourselves of divine guidance? First of all, we must take the

case to God in prayer. No matter if it may be a trifle in the eyes of others, if it be important enough to trouble us, He will not ridicule our uneasiness, but give us grace according to our day. Then, we must remember that the first open door is not always the best or safest for us. When an apparent way is opened, let us ask ourselves whether there is anything in it that would be likely to endanger our principles or to render it probable that we shall fall into evil habits if we take it; if there be, let us avoid it. Again, hesitancy as to duty always means in God's vocabulary, "Stand still." "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat," Rom. 14: 23, Rev. Ver. Once more, when a door opens in front and that which is behind us shuts, then God says "Go forward!"—Taylor.

Perhaps it is venturesome to say that the gospel was now first preached on the continent of Europe, as the "good tidings" may have reached Rome through the Jews and proselytes who heard Peter on the Day of Pentecost.—Knowing.

It was in the neighborhood of Philippi in the year 42 B.C. that Octavius and Anthony won their great and decisive victory over Brutus and Cassius, and in honor of that event the city had been made a Roman colony. Its citizens were Roman and its laws were Roman laws. The city was, in fact, so far as language, government and customs went, a miniature Rome. In this thoroughly Romanized town, Paul's missionary labors in Europe began. There seem to have been few Jews in the place, for they