

Today's Bible Story: Hey, Sew Sister (Lydia) • Acts 16:13-15

Today's Bottom Line: Use your gifts to help others.

Monthly Memory Verse: *How you made me is amazing and wonderful. I praise you for that. What you have done is wonderful. I know that very well.*
Psalm 139:14 (NirV)

Monthly Life App: Individuality—Discovering who you're meant to be so you can make a difference

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Leader enters, carrying the bag of original Skittles®.

Video: Countdown (optional... ask Carrie)

OPENER

LEADER: "Sweet! You're all here! I'm really glad to see you today—each and every one of you! Each of you brings something different to KIDZONE with your individuality!"

Video (Media Package): Theme Transition to Life App

"Individuality is discovering who you're meant to be so you can make a difference."

Video (Media Package): Life App Transition to Theme

"Each of us has something different to bring to the world. *(Hold up a candy and pop it in your mouth.)* Mmmm, just like each color in a bag of Skittles®! *(Hold up another color and eat it.)* Imagine how boring just one color of Skittles would be. It's the combination of those different colors and flavors that make them so tasty!"

“Today, you’ll work in teams to move a bunch of Skittles—with straws!

“First, let’s divide into two teams.

Divide the kids in half—either by sides of the room or by gender.

“Here’s a straw for each of you. Make sure you keep track of your straw and ONLY use yours—no one else’s! You can unwrap your straw then put the trash in here. *(Indicate the trash can.)*

Pass out the individually wrapped straws.

“All right—can everyone get in a line with your teammates, right in front of this table?

Depending on the setup of your room and how many kids you have, you can have kids from each team stand on either side of the table so that two kids per team work at the same time; or you can have two different tables (one per team).

Once you have the kids organized and in place, pour out the bag of Skittles® on the table(s). Make sure the candy is spread out and not in piles so that kids only suck up one piece at a time and not contaminate the others.

“When it’s your turn, you’ll use your straw to suck up a Skittle here then move it down the table to your team’s cup and drop it in. *(Demonstrate.)* If you drop your Skittle along the way, you can pick it up, count to five, then walk over and drop it in. *(Demonstrate.)* Make sure you keep moving that same Skittle you started with; don’t switch to a different one. Once you got your Skittle into the cup, get back in line. The next person can start as soon as you move out of the way.

“You’ll keep working together to fill your team’s cup until time is up. The team with

the most complete SETS of Skittles—red, orange, yellow, green, and purple—is the winner! So when it's your turn, choose your color carefully so your team ends up with a good mix at the end.

“Are you ready? Are you set? Let's go!

Set a timer on your phone for two minutes. Comment on the action and make sure the kids play correctly. Count down the last ten seconds.

When time is up, pour out each team's cup and combine their Skittles into complete sets of all five colors. Give them a point for each complete set. Declare the winning team that has the most complete sets.

If you give out fun-size bags of Skittles, you can do that now or announce that they'll come later.

“You all really know how to work together! Each of those flavors is so unique and important. That's how God made us, too—and we have WAY more individuality than candy! Let's take a few minutes to worship God together.”

WORSHIP

LEADER: “Our God is so faithful! He always keeps His promises. In Paul’s letter to the church at Philippi, he wrote, *‘God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns.’* (Philippians 1:6, NIV) Let’s worship God and thank Him for working in each of our lives.

Video: “You Are Faithful”

“Let’s check out this video together.

Video: Live Loud Video from Get Reel

“God has a plan for each of us, and He doesn’t make mistakes! I want to hear you sing this next song nice and strong. Let’s celebrate because God made each and every one of us on purpose. Sing this with me.

Video: “Gloriously Free”

SLIDE: Theme Background

“What an absolutely amazing truth to celebrate: God made us to be free! I hope your heart is encouraged by those words. You can have a seat.”

BIBLE STORY

SETTING UP THE STORY

LEADER: “Today, I need help from a few of you to tell this story. First, I need a girl volunteer to play our main character.

Bring up a girl (older, if possible). Give her the purple cloth and ask her to wrap it around herself.

“This is Lydia. We can read about her in the book of Acts in the Bible. (*Hold up Bible.*) She was from a city called Thyatira, which was known for its craftsmen and women. Lydia’s specialty was making purple cloth, which was rare and valuable back then.

“Lydia had traveled to the Roman city of Philippi to sell her purple cloth.

Hand “Lydia” the canvas bag with the purple cloth coming out of the top. Then point to the “Philippi” sign and send her to stand by it.

“Where Lydia grew up, most people were raised to believe in many false gods. But Lydia might have wondered about the God that the Jewish people believed in.”

SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER?

LEADER: “In Philippi, most people believed in lots of different gods. There weren’t a lot of people who believed in the one true God, which meant there wasn’t a meeting place or a synagogue for people to gather. But Lydia began meeting with a group of women who believed in the one true God. They met outside the city gates, on the riverbank.

Direct Lydia to stand next to the “river” on the floor. Bring up two or three other girls to stand with her.

“Lydia and the other women had never heard of Jesus. But that was about to change! As they talked about God together, God sent a vision to someone else:

the apostle Paul who was in the Greek city of Troas.

“Can I get a boy up here to play Paul?”

Bring up a boy and give him a prop (a fake beard or robe). Have him stand by the “Troas” sign.

(to “Paul”) “Paul, let me tell you about your vision. Close your eyes and look surprised. *(Pause for response.)* Perfect. (to audience) In Paul’s vision, a man from Macedonia came to him and said, ‘Come over to Macedonia! . . . Help us!’ (Acts 16:9, NIV)

“Right away, Paul and his friends set sail for Macedonia to tell the people there about Jesus.

Hand Paul a backpack or life jacket.

(to Paul) “Paul, let’s pick some friends to join you, then you can head that direction.

Bring up two or three boys to join Paul. Point to “Philippi” and cue them to walk there.

(to audience) “Within a few days, Paul and his friends reached Philippi, which was one of the most important cities in Macedonia.”

THE GOOD NEWS

LEADER: “Of course, that’s where Lydia and her friends were. *(Reference Lydia and the other women.)* They were spending time down by the river, talking about God.

(to the boys) “Paul, you and your friends can head to the river now.

Cue the boys to go to the “riverbank.”

“Listen to what happened next. This is written by Luke who was one of Paul’s companions.

Open the Bible to Acts 16:13-14 (NirV) and read.

“On the Sabbath day, we went outside the city gate. We walked down to the river. There we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered together. One of the women listening was from the city of Thyatira. Her name was Lydia, and her business was selling purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to accept Paul’s message.

“Whoa. Isn’t that amazing? Paul told the story of Jesus, and he explained how anyone who chose to follow Jesus could have a relationship with God that lasts forever. God opened Lydia’s heart to believe every word of Paul’s message. She and her whole family were baptized.”

AT LYDIA’S HOUSE

LEADER: “Then, Lydia did something very kind. She invited Paul and his friends to come stay at her home. Lydia, you can stand up and read this so we can all hear it?”

Hand the Bible to Lydia, which should be highlighted at Acts 16:15 (NirV) so she knows what to read.

KID (as LYDIA): “Do you consider me a believer in the Lord? . . . If you do, come and stay at my house.”

LEADER: “Isn’t that so generous of her? Paul and his friends went with Lydia to her home. *(to all the kid volunteers)* Come on, everyone!

Call all the kid volunteers to the area with the floor pillows, etc. labeled “Lydia’s House.”

“Lydia shared what she had with Paul and his friends. Later on, it turned out that Paul and his friend Silas were thrown into prison.

Give the two wrapping paper tubes or PVC

pipes to Paul. Have him hold them up like jail bars.

(to Paul) “Sorry, Paul.

Take back the “jail bars.”

(to audience) “But when they were released, Paul and Silas immediately returned to Lydia’s house. They knew it would be a safe place for them to rest up and get ready before they left the city.

“Come on, Paul and friends. Let’s say goodbye to Lydia and the others for now.

Wave goodbye to Lydia and the other girls as you bring the boys up to the stage.

“Paul eventually wrote a letter to Lydia and others at the church in Philippi.

Hand the scroll and feather pen to Paul.

“He remembered the time he spent in Lydia’s home and the time he spent with her and all the other believers. Listen to what Paul wrote.”

Hand Lydia the Bible, open at Philippians 1:3-6 (NIRV) for her to read.

KID (as LYDIA): *“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy. I am happy because you have joined me in spreading the good news. You have done so from the first day until now. God began a good work in you. And I am sure that he will carry it on until it is completed. That will be on the day Christ Jesus returns.”*

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

Walk over to stand next to Lydia.

LEADER: “Think about how Lydia used her individuality to make a difference. She had a special talent and a successful business, making and selling purple cloth. But she didn’t just use the money that she made for herself. When she put

her faith in Jesus, Lydia put her faith into action by inviting Paul and his friends to stay at her house. Then she continued to use her gifts to help other people in the church. *(to Lydia)* Thank you, Lydia, for being such a great example for us.

(to audience) “You and I can do what Lydia did, too. We can use our gifts to help others. That’s a great thing for us to remember, isn’t it?”

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] “Use your gifts to help others.

SLIDE: Theme Background

(to the kid volunteers) “Everyone, thank you so much for your help in telling this story. You can head back to your seats.

Gather the props and let everyone sit down before you continue.

“Let’s talk to God and ask Him to help us use our gifts like Lydia did.”

Video: Bible Story (Play on Carrie’s cue)

CLOSER

LEADER: “Every one of us has some pretty amazing gifts, skills, and talents. That’s how God made us. Those things are part of our own unique and special individuality.

“It can be something you’re really good at, like baking, swimming, organizing things, making people laugh, or just being a friend. As you grow up, you’ll continue to find out what those gifts and talents might be and how God can use them in your life.

“Lydia’s gift was that she was good at business. She knew how to make money by selling things that people wanted. *(Hold up the purple cloth from the story.)*

But even more important than her gift was how Lydia used it. She used the money she made in her business to provide a place for Paul and his friends to stay. She used her gift to help others.

“When we’re good at something, we shouldn’t just use it to help ourselves or to make ourselves look good. God gave us our gifts. We should share them with other people.

SLIDE: Bottom Line

[Bottom Line] “Use your gifts to help others. Say that with me.”

LEADER and KIDS: **[Bottom Line]** “Use your gifts to help others.”

LEADER: “Remember, that’s something that Jesus did, too. Jesus was constantly teaching people, healing people, and loving people. He was always helping others.

“As you think about how you can use YOUR gifts to help others, think about what we often say in here. **[Basic Truth]** I should treat others the way I want to be treated. Think about how your gift could make someone’s life better, and go do it!

OFFERING

PRAY

LEADER: “Dear God, it’s so cool to read Lydia’s story and see how she put her faith in Jesus. And not only that, she used the gifts You’d given her to help others. We want to do that, too. You’ve given each of us unique gifts that we can use to help the people around us. Show us how we can use our gifts to share Your love and show what a difference You’ve made in our lives. We love You, and we ask these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

SLIDE: Theme Background with music

- Long table (one or two, depending on your space and how many kids you have)
- Plastic tablecloth(s)
- Large bag of original Skittles®
- Straws, individually wrapped; one for each kid
- Two clear plastic cups
- Trash can
- Leader's phone
- Fun-size bags of Skittles (optional prizes; one for each kid)
- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have screen capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Make posterboard signs that read "Philippi," "Troas," and "Lydia's house." Hang the "Troas" sign on the opposite side of the room or stage from the other two. Set up "Lydia's house" (and the "Lydia's house" sign) in a corner if possible, but not too far from the "Philippi" sign. Set up the blue paper, fabric, or tape on the floor in front of the "Philippi" sign to represent the river.
- If you can, set up the signs, the river, and the cozy corner representing Lydia's house before Large Group starts. If these will be in the way for the Opener and Worship, you can also set them up in real time during Large Group.
- Highlight the Bible at Acts 16:15 with Lydia's exact lines from the script or put a cue card inside the Bible for the girl to read instead.