

Growing up as a Canadian born chinese, whose parents had struggled when they were young so they could go to university and eventually immigrate into a world of financial freedom, I was raised to be a successful business woman. Throughout the years, my parents have poured everything they have into me, so that I would not need to struggle to make ends meet. I grew up believing the lie that to be financially successful is to reach the epitome of life. I often saw hospitality as being a waste of time, and a distraction from the pursuit of finance.

In coming to know Jesus, I realized that there is something great about the fellowship that comes as we get to know others who have their eyes focussed on Christ.. However, I often would see hospitality (and using that hospitality to share the Gospel) and success in life as being incompatible. Lydia's life brings to light the lies I have been listening to—and the lies I am sure many other women in this possession-persuing world face. Her life encourages me the most for three reasons:

Firstly, she prized God above all else. She prized God above financial stability and even her own physical safety. So willing was she to deny herself, pick up her cross and follow Jesus, that she opened her home to God's servants who were despised, taking the chance that she too would be despised.

Secondly, Lydia valued the Gospel she had come to know was true. It is often a struggle for me to share this valuable Treasure with family and friends, and yet Lydia, a new believer shared with her whole household in faith. That faith was rewarded when she saw her whole household believe! What a great example of taking the initiative in faith!

Thirdly, Lydia did not hold her earthly possessions close to her, but rather used these possessions to bring God glory! She gave generously and allowed her finances to be used to build God's kingdom.

To me, Lydia epitomizes a woman sold out for God's reknown. This is why her life has encouraged me the most. In a world that chases after everything material, Lydia chased after God's heart. She was a perfect example of Jim Elliot's quote: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."