

Men and Women of the Bible

Lives - Times - Events - Principles

FOURTH QUARTER

THE CHURCH AGE

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Fourth Quarter: The Church Age

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Lesson 1: Matthias, Barsabas, Those Converted On Pentecost (Acts 2 & 3)

Introduction: Jesus commanded his disciples to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). After the Lord's ascension they returned to Jerusalem, and they "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers" (Acts 1:14). While they waited, they selected someone to take the place of Judas.

I. A New Apostle Chosen (Acts 1:15-26)

A. Peter spoke concerning Judas.

1. Judas became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.
2. He obtained a part in their ministry.
3. Judas died.
4. "The Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas" (Acts 1:16).
 - a. "Let his dwelling place be desolate, and let no one live in it" (Acts 1:20; Ps. 69:25). This prophecy is not of "Judas alone, but of the enemies of the Messiah in general, of which Judas was one" (Barnes).
 - b. "Let another take his office" (Acts 1:20; Ps. 109:8). In this psalm, David is saying that his enemy is unworthy of his office and that it should be given to another. The application by Peter was that Judas was unworthy of his office, and that it should be given to another.

B. One was selected to replace Judas.

1. Qualifications:
 - a. A man
 - b. One who accompanied the other apostles "all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us" (Acts 1:21, 22)
 - b. A witness of the resurrection of Jesus
2. Candidates:
 - a. Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus
 - b. Matthias
3. Selection:
 - a. Prayer: "And they prayed and said, 'You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place'" (Acts 1:24, 25).
 - b. They cast lots.
 - c. The lot fell on Matthias. This was whom the Lord selected.

Principles:

1. **Scripture must be fulfilled.**
2. **The enemies of Christ have no part with Him.**

3. Witnesses to the resurrection were essential.

II. Those Converted On The Day Of Pentecost (Acts 2)

A. Description (Acts 2:5, 8-11)

1. They were dwelling in Jerusalem.
2. They were Jews.
3. They were devout.
4. They were from every nation under heaven.

B. The reaction of the multitude when they heard the apostles speaking in their own languages:

1. Confused
2. Amazed
3. Marveled
4. Perplexed
5. Some mocked.

C. The reaction of the multitude when they heard Peter's sermon:

1. They were cut to the heart (2:36).
2. They asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
3. About 3000 souls gladly received the word and were baptized (2:41).
4. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers "(2:42).
5. They feared because of the wonders and signs performed by the apostles (2:43).
6. They "had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need" (2:44, 45).
7. They continued daily with one accord (2:46).
8. They praised God (2:47).

Principles:

1. **People react differently to the gospel.**
2. **Christianity requires continuing to do God's will.**
3. **Circumstances may require one to sell possessions.**
4. **God desires unity among believers (Jn. 17:20, 21).**
5. **Reflection on God's blessings evokes praise.**

Questions:

1. Why were the apostles in Jerusalem?
2. How does Luke's account of Judas' death in Acts 1:18-19 compare to Matthew's (Mt. 27:5-8)?
3. What did Peter mean when he said the Holy Spirit spoke by David (Acts 1:16)?

4. There were many women disciples; why was a man selected to take Judas' place?
5. What were the qualifications of an apostle? Why were these important?
6. Does the selection of Mathias imply that there was something wrong with Barsabas?
7. Discuss the subject of casting lots considering the following scriptures: 1 Chron. 24:5; Num. 26:55; 1 Sam. 14:41, 42; Josh. 7:16-18; Prov. 16:33.
8. Does the example of casting lots in the selection of Judas authorize the use of voting to make decisions in the church (i.e., the selection of elders)?
9. How do people react toward the gospel today?
10. Are Christians required to sell their possessions and have all things in common with their brethren?
11. What made it possible for the Christians converted on Pentecost to be united?

Lesson 2: Barnabas, The Sanhedrin, Gamaliel

Introduction: In this lesson, we will study people who influenced the church. Barnabas, a disciple, was a man of good character with a good influence. Gamaliel, a member of the Sanhedrin and a great teacher, was an unbeliever who advised tolerance concerning the church.

I. **Barnabas** (Acts 4:36; 9:27; 11:22-30; 12:25; 13:1-15; 14:12-20; 15:2, 12, 39; 1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:1, 9, 13; Col 4:10)

A. Identity (Acts 4:36, 37)

1. His given name was *Joses* or *Joseph*.
2. He was a Levite.
3. He was from Cyprus.
4. A cousin of John Mark (Col. 4:10)
5. Referred to as an apostle (Acts 14:14)

B. Character

1. His character is revealed in the name given to him by the apostles, *Barnabas*, "son of encouragement" (Acts 4:36).
2. "When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord" (Acts 11:23).
3. "For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" (Acts 11:24).
4. When Christians in Jerusalem were in need, he sold his land and brought the money to the apostles (Acts 4:37).
5. When Paul tried to join himself to the Jerusalem Christians, they were afraid of him. Barnabas took Paul to the apostles so Paul could tell his story (Acts 9:26, 27).
6. He and Paul were entrusted with the relief sent to the brethren in Judea during a famine (Acts 11:29).
7. He refused the worship of the people of Lystra (Acts 14:12-15).
8. He was involved in hypocrisy along with Peter and others with respect to the treatment of the Gentiles in Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14).
9. He contended with Paul over taking John Mark on a second journey (Acts 15:37-39). This contention "became so sharp that they parted from one another" (Acts 15:39).
10. He was willing to preach the gospel without charge that he might not be a burden (1 Cor. 9:4-18).

Principles:

1. **There is a great need today for those who will encourage, exhort, and console.**
2. **Christians must be generous when it comes to the needs of other Christians.**

3. **A good name is important (Prov. 22:1).**
4. **A good disciple is fearless, trustworthy, and sacrificial.**
5. **Good men can be led into hypocrisy.**

II. The Sanhedrin

- A. Highest Jewish tribunal in Jerusalem, consisting of 71 members
- B. According to Jewish tradition, it was constituted by Moses (Num. 11:16-24).
- C. Historically, the Sanhedrin, or "Council", had its beginning during the Hellenistic period. It was abolished after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- D. The Sanhedrin's corruption is seen in the unfair treatment of Jesus and His disciples.
- E. Influence on the early church
 1. Jesus warned that his disciples would be brought before councils (Mt. 10:17).
 2. Jesus was brought before the Council and convicted (Mt. 26:57-68).
 3. Peter and John appeared before the Council, threatened concerning their teaching, then released (Acts 4:1-22).
 4. Peter and John were placed on trial again because they refused to stop preaching. This time they were beaten and commanded not to preach (Acts 5:17-42).
 5. Following his condemnation by the Council, Stephen was accused of blasphemy, and stoned (Acts 6:8-7:60).
 6. Paul appeared before the Council, caused dissension among the members when he spoke of the resurrection, and was rescued by a Roman commander (Acts 22:30-23:10).

III. Gamaliel (Acts 5:33-40; 22:3)

- A. A Pharisee, a member of the Council, who persuaded its members to take less drastic action toward the apostles with respect to their refusal to quit preaching the gospel
 1. He reminded them of past seditions that had failed.
 2. He suggested that if these apostles were teaching truth, they would be fighting against God. If it were not, the movement would die out.
 3. As a result of this argument, the apostles were only beaten and then released.
- B. When Paul was on trial, he testified that Gamaliel was his teacher (Acts 22:3).

Principles:

1. **When Christians face opposition, they should be bold and unafraid.**
2. **Some unbelievers will treat Christians fairly; others will not.**

Questions:

1. Why did the apostles call Joseph, "Barnabas?"

2. What does Acts 11:24 mean when it says that Barnabas was "full of the Holy Spirit?"
3. Barnabas sold his land to help Christians in need. In what circumstances would we have to do the same?
4. Why were the Jerusalem Christians afraid of Saul?
5. What happened to Barnabas in Lystra (Acts 14)?
6. Why did Paul not want to take John Mark on his second journey? What can we learn from the contention that developed between Paul and Barnabas over this matter?
7. What are the rights of one who preaches the gospel (1 Cor. 9)?
8. How did the Sanhedrin treat the disciples after Pentecost? Cite examples.
9. Who made up the Sanhedrin?
10. How did Peter and the other apostles respond to the Sanhedrin's command not to teach?
11. How did Paul cause dissension among Council members (Acts 23)?
12. How did Gamaliel prevent the Council from severely punishing the apostles?

Lesson 3: The Lame Man, Ananias & Sapphira

Introduction: When the church began, great powers were at work. The healing of the lame man gave opportunity for preaching the gospel and confirming the message. An important message was also delivered in the punishment of two Christians who lied.

I. The Lame Man (Acts 3)

- A. Peter and John went to the temple at the hour of prayer (vs. 1)
- B. The lame man was carried to the gate called "Beautiful." There he begged for alms (vs. 2).
- C. The lame man asked Peter and John for alms (vs. 3).
- D. Peter's answer (vss. 4-7)
 - 1. "Look at us."
 - 2. "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."
 - 3 Peter took the lame man by the hand and lifted him up.
- E. The lame man was healed (vss. 8. 9).
 - 1. He leaped, stood, and walked. He was given "perfect soundness" (vs. 16).
 - 2. He praised God.
- F. The people saw him and were filled with wonder and amazement (vs. 10).
- G. Peter's Sermon (vss. 11-26)
 - 1. Miracle explained
 - a. It was done in the name of Jesus, Whom they had delivered up, denied, and killed (vss. 13-16).
 - 2. Their rejection of the "Prince of life" was done in ignorance (vs. 17).
 - 3. Forgiveness was offered to those who would repent and be converted (vs. 19).
 - 4. Condemnation would come upon all who rejected Christ, the Prophet of whom Moses spoke (vss. 22,23; Deut. 18:15,18,19).
- H. Peter and John were arrested because the Sadducees were greatly disturbed, having heard that they taught resurrection from the dead (Acts 4:1-2).

Principles:

- 1. Miracles of the Bible were clear manifestations of supernatural power.**
- 2. Praising God comes naturally to those understand His rich blessings.**
- 3. Ignorance of God's will is a reason for rejection, but not an excuse.**
- 4. Sermons should provoke and disturb those who are complacent.**

II. Ananias And Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)

- A. Because of need, the disciples had all things in common. Those who owned property sold it and brought the proceeds to the apostles for distribution (Acts 4:32-37).
- B. Ananias and Sapphira sold a possession but kept back part of the proceeds.

- C. Peter confronted Ananias, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself" (vs. 3)?
 - 1. Before Ananias sold the possession, it belonged to him.
 - 2. After he sold the possession, the money belonged to him.
 - 3. In bringing a portion and implying that it was all, he had lied to the Holy Spirit.
- D. Ananias fell down and died.
- E. About three hours later, Sapphira came to Peter and said it was the full amount.
 - 1. Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out" (vs. 9).
 - 2. Sapphira fell down and died.
- F. Fear came upon all the church (vs. 11).

Principles:

- 1. Those who are "of one heart and one soul" will sacrifice for one another.**
- 2. Conspirators in sin share the guilt.**
- 3. Absolute control of our money ends after we give it to the church.**
- 4. Threat of punishment increases respect.**

Questions:

- 1. Describe what you can find out about the place of beggars in first century society.

- 2. What time of day did Peter and John go to the temple?

- 3. How does the miraculous healing of the lame man compare to the so-called "miracles" of today?

- 4. Is a person guilty of sin if they commit a sin in ignorance? Explain.

- 5. How does Peter's answer for sin in Acts 3:19 differ from his answer in Acts 2:38?

6. Why were the Sadducees upset with Peter's preaching?
7. How does the example of giving (Acts 4:32-5:11) differ from our present day giving?
8. To whom did Ananias and Sapphira lie?
9. To what extent do we control our money before and after we give it?
10. How did the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira benefit the church?

Lesson 4: The Seven, Stephen, Philip

Introduction: Men and women of good character are needed for the church to do its work. In this lesson, we will study seven men who were chosen to serve the early church in a special way. Two of these men began preaching the gospel. They preached the same gospel, but the results of their preaching were different.

I. Seven Chosen To Serve (Acts 6)

- A. The number of disciples in Jerusalem was growing rapidly. Greek speaking Jews believed their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution (vs. 1).
- B. The apostles called for the disciples and told them it was not desirable for them to leave their work to serve tables (vs. 2). The apostles wanted to be able to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word (vs. 4).
- C. The apostles told the disciples to choose 7 men "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" whom they could appoint over this business (vs. 3).
- D. This pleased the disciples and they chose 7 men.
 - 1. Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit
 - 2. Philip
 - 3. Prochorus
 - 4. Nicanor
 - 5. Timon
 - 6. Parmenas
 - 7. Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch
- E. When the seven were presented, the apostles prayed and laid their hands on them.

Principles:

- 1. **Problems that arise in the church must be dealt with quickly. Murmuring can destroy fellowship.**
- 2. **The church has physical needs, and men need to be appointed to take care of them.**

II. Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:2)

- A. Stephen performed great wonders and signs among the people (6:8).
- B. Those from the synagogue of the Freedmen disputed with Stephen, but they could not resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which Stephen spoke (6:9,10).
- C. These Jews secretly induced men to accuse Stephen of speaking blasphemy against Moses and God. They accused him of speaking against the temple and the law, saying that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the temple and change the customs of Moses.

- D. Stephen was seized and brought before the Council (6:12).
- E. Stephen answered the charges by reviewing Jewish history (7:1-53).
 - 1. Abraham (vss. 1-8)
 - 2. Joseph (vss. 9-16)
 - 3. Moses (vss. 17-44)
 - 4. Joshua, David, Solomon (vss. 45-50)
 - 5. Condemnation of the Council (vss. 51-53)
 - a. "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears"
 - b. "You always resist the Holy Spirit"
 - c. You like your fathers murdered the prophets. You betrayed and murdered the Just One.
- F. The Council members were cut to the heart. They gnashed at him with their teeth, stopped their ears, ran at him with one accord, cast him out of the city, and stoned him.
- G. Stephen said (vss. 59,60)
 - 1. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
 - 2. "Lord, do not charge them with this sin."
- H. Stephen died and was buried by devout men (8:2).

Principles:

- 1. Men cannot resist the wisdom of God's word.**
- 2. False accusations are weapons used by the enemies of God's people.**
- 3. Courageous proclamation of the gospel is needed.**

III. Philip (Acts 8; 21:8,9)

- A. Philip preached and performed miracles in Samaria (vss. 5-8).
- B. Simon the sorcerer and the Samaritans believed and were baptized (vss. 9-13).
- C. Peter and John came to Samaria and laid hands on them so that the Samaritans could receive the Holy Spirit (vss. 14-17). This was necessary because Philip was not an apostle.
- D. Philip was sent by an angel to meet an Ethiopian nobleman. He preached Jesus to him and baptized him (vss. 26-40).
- E. Philip was "caught away" and was found in Azotus. He preached in the cities until he came to Caesarea (vss. 39-40).
- F. Paul stayed with Philip in Caesarea. At this time, Philip had four daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8,9).

Principle: We must teach others the gospel (Mt. 28:18-20).

Questions:

- 1. Why were some in the church murmuring? What does the Bible say about murmuring (1 Cor. 10:10)?

2. Who were the "Hellenists" (Acts 6:1)? What was the solution to their problem?
3. What was the work of the seven men who were chosen? Were they deacons?
4. If someone is not satisfied with the way things are being handled in the local church, what should they do?
5. What were the qualifications of the seven? What are the qualifications for deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13).
6. Philip had the ability to work great wonders and signs, but he was not able to give the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans. Explain.
7. What were the accusations brought against Stephen?
8. Outline Stephen's sermon (Acts 7). What point was he trying to make? Did he successfully make his point?
9. Some today might characterize Stephen's sermon as "unloving." What do you think?
10. What did Stephen see when he gazed into heaven (Acts 7:55,56)? Explain.
11. What were Stephen's last words?
12. How would you describe Philip?

Lesson 5: Paul, The Early Life and Conversion

Introduction: The next four lessons deal with the apostle Paul. This lesson will focus on his early life, his persecution of Christians, and his conversion.

Historical records show that a young Jewish boy began studying the scriptures at age 5. At age 10, he began studying legal traditions, and at age 13, he could become a "son of the commandment" (*bar mitzvah*). Paul describes his own early life with little detail, yet with enough detail to show that he fulfilled part, if not all, of the traditional learning process (Acts 26:4). Paul also describes how his training and zeal fueled his commitment to suppress "the Way."

I. The Early Life of Saul

- A. Born in Tarsus of Cilicia (Acts 22:3), a significant city (Acts 21:39)
- B. Born a Roman citizen (Acts 22:28)
- C. Tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:5)
- D. Raised in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3)
- E. Educated at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3)
- F. A Pharisee (Acts 23:6)
- G. Zealous for the "traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1:14)
- H. Familiar with various languages (Acts 21:37-38; 22:2)
- I. Unmarried (1 Cor. 7:7)

Principles:

1. **Young children can be taught about God (Acts. 22:3; 26:4; Duet. 6:6-9; 2 Tim. 3:15).**
2. **Secular education does not lead people to Christ (Acts 22:3; 1 Cor. 1:20-24).**

II. Saul's Persecution of the Church

- A. Saul attended and supported the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58 - 8:1).
- B. The church scattered (except apostles), and Saul "made havoc of the church, entering into every house..." (Acts 8:3).
- C. Saul continued to threaten disciples. He sought authority from the high priest to arrest Christians (Acts 9:1-2).
- D. He was a blasphemer, persecutor, injurious (1 Tim. 1:13).
- E. He stated later that because he persecuted the church, he was the "least of the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:9).
- F. He acted ignorantly in unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13).
- G. Yet, he acted in "good conscience" (Acts 23:1).

Principles:

- 1. Christians pay a price for their devotion to Christ (Acts 7:58-8:2).**
- 2. As men could not destroy the church in the 1st century, we cannot overpower God's will today (Acts 8:1-4).**
- 3. Persecution often stimulates growth (Acts 8:1-4).**
- 4. Depending on whether they are right or wrong, religious zealots are either greatly beneficial or harmful to the cause of Christ.**
- 5. Being zealous is no substitute for being right (Rom. 10:2).**
- 6. A conscience is not a reliable, stand-alone guide for righteousness (Acts 23:1; Prov. 14:12).**

III. Saul's Conversion (Acts 9, 22, 26)

- A. Saul met Jesus while travelling with others to persecute Christians.
- B. A bright light appeared, and they fell to the ground (26:14).
- C. Jesus spoke to Saul in Hebrew. Those with him heard the voice, yet did not understand (see NASV 9:7; 22:9).
- D. Jesus told Saul, "Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do." (22:10).
- E. Paul was blinded, so others led him into Damascus.
- F. He was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank (9:9).
- G. Ananias was told to meet Saul (9:10-16).
- H. Saul regained his sight and was told that he would be a witness (22:12-15).
- I. Ananias said, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (22:16).
- J. Saul was baptized (9:18).
- K. Luke later calls Saul "Paul" (Acts 13:9).

Principles:

- 1. Hearing the word does not remit sins, though it can lead to it (Acts 22:12-16).**
- 2. God will save those who repent, even if they have blasphemed His name and promoted murder.**

Questions:

1. Comment on Ecc. 9:10. How does this apply to Paul's early life as a Pharisee?

2. How can zeal hurt the church? How can zeal help the church?

3. List at least 10 things that zealous Christians do, but that apathetic Christians do not do.

4. Look at this list (from the previous question). Should we be careful about trying to do everything on the list, making sure that we don't "overdo it" and earn our way to heaven?

5. Look again at the list. Do these deeds often reflect a good heart, one of devotion? What does Jesus say (Matt. 7:20)?

6. Look again at the list. Is it possible to perform these works, yet still be displeasing to our brethren and to God? What does Paul say (I Cor. 13:1-3)?

7. Read 1 Kgs. 19:9-14; it records a moving event of Elijah approaching God. It states that as Elijah talked with God, he was able to claim being zealous. Why could he do this? What had he done that demonstrated zeal (vs. 14)?

(Do not write answers to the next two questions, but be prepared to discuss them.)

Imagine yourself in Elijah's place. You stand on the mountain as the Lord passes by. You see a strong wind splitting the mountains and breaking rocks into pieces. Then you see an earthquake, then a fire. At last, you hear a gentle wind, and you wrap your face in a mantle. When it is your time to talk, you say, "Lord, I have been very zealous."
What would God say to you?

How would you convince God that you have been zealous?

8. What can destroy zeal in an individual? What prevents zeal from developing in a Christian?

9. Did Paul regard secular education as the key to effective evangelism (1 Cor. 1:20; 2:1-5)?

10. Did Paul ever use his education to qualify credentials? If so, how (Acts 22:3)?

11. When referring to marriage, did Paul command men to become "even as I myself am" (1 Cor. 7:7-9)?

What were two spiritual benefits of remaining unmarried (1 Cor. 7:32-35)?

12. After Saul met Jesus, he met Ananias, who called him "brother" (Acts 22:13). This was before Saul was baptized. Was Saul still in sin at this point? (Read entire context: 22:12-16.) Why did Ananias call him "brother?" (See also Acts 2:37; 7:2; 23:5.)

13. Why was Paul shown mercy (1 Tim. 1:13)?

Lesson 6: Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

Introduction: After Paul was converted, he began preaching and travelling through Damascus, Jerusalem, Tarsus, and Arabia (Acts 9:19-30; Gal. 1:16-21). While in Antioch, the Holy Spirit called him and Barnabas for a special work. This lesson will discuss that work -- the 1st journey of the apostle Paul.

I. From Antioch of Syria to Perga (Acts 13:1-13)

- A. At Antioch, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (vss. 1-3).
- B. Selucia, Cyprus (13:4)
- C. At Salamis, they preached in synagogues (vs. 5).
- D. At Paphos, they encountered Bar-Jesus (13:6-12; see Lesson 12).
- E. At Perga, John left them (vs. 13).

II. At Antioch of Pisidia (13:14-52)

- A. They went to the synagogue.
- B. They were invited to speak.
- C. Paul delivered a sermon Jews would understand.
 - 1. the birth of the Israelite nation
 - 2. their deliverance from Egypt
 - 3. their wilderness wanderings
 - 4. their land inheritance
 - 5. their first and second kings
 - 6. David's offspring, Jesus
 - 7. John the Baptist
 - 8. Jesus, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy
- D. While leaving the synagogue, the people begged Paul and Barnabas for more of this teaching the next Sabbath.
- E. The Jews and proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas.
- F. Almost the entire city gathered the next Sabbath.
- G. The Jews became envious, then contradicted the teaching and blasphemed.
- H. Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles.
- I. Gentiles believed.
- J. The Jews stirred up the "devout and honorable women and chief men of the city," and expelled Paul and Barnabas.

Principles:

- 1. **When given the opportunity, we should teach the gospel (13:15).**
- 2. **The numerous events in Jewish history are actually parts of a single, much larger story (13:17-49).**

3. **The Bible contains proof that Jesus is the Messiah, and this proof can convert souls to Christ (13:17-49).**
4. **Many people have a strong desire to hear teaching about Christ (13:42-43).**
5. **Envious people cause others to have sinful feelings (13:45-50).**
6. **Envious people stir up trouble (13:45-50).**
7. **Those who hear the gospel can bring others to hear it (13:44).**
8. **Unlearned people can be manipulated easily (13:50).**
9. **Unpleasant experiences should not keep us from teaching the gospel (13:51).**

III. At Iconium and Lystra (14:1-20)

- A. They spoke in the synagogue.
- B. "A great multitude of both Jews and also of Gentiles believed."
- C. Unbelieving Jews stirred up the brethren and turned them against the apostles.
- D. The city was divided.
- E. Opponents planned a stoning, but "they were aware of it and fled...."
- F. At Lystra, Paul healed a lame man, was believed to be Mercury (Hermes), was worshipped, then stoned (14:6-20; see Lesson 3).

Principles:

1. **Evil people persuade others to be evil 14:2).**
2. **New brethren are often lured away early (14:2).**
3. **The Bible does not teach that the "most religious" leaders in the church sought physical suffering. The apostles often fled to avoid physical harm (14:6).**

IV. To Derbe, then the Return to Antioch of Syria (14:21 - 28)

- A. At Derbe, they preached and made many disciples.
- B. Lystra, Iconium, Antioch (14:22-23)
 1. They strengthened the souls and encouraged them.
 2. "...that we, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God."
 3. They also "ordained them elders in every church."
- B. Provinces of Pisidia & Pamphylia (14:24)
- C. They spoke the word in Perga and passed through Attalia (14:25).
- D. They returned to Antioch (14:26-28).
 1. Reported the work with the Gentiles
 2. Spent a long time there

Questions:

1. Looking at the two verses below, comment of Paul's commitment to teaching.

Acts 13:15 --

Acts 13:51 --

2. What was wrong with the hearts of the unbelieving Jews (Acts 13:45-50)?

How did they affect others?

What does this say about the destruction caused by envy?

Is envy a sin, does it lead to sin, or both? Explain. Also, list the sins in this passage that resulted from the Jew's envy.

3. If I am envious,

- a) others are causing it by flaunting their good fortune.
- b) my heart is evil.
- c) I have worse luck than others.
- d) so is everyone else, they just hide it better than I do.

4. How do you suppose such widespread interest, both positive (Acts 13:42-44) and negative (Acts 13:50), was created in only one week?

Could the tongue have been involved? Comment on the verses below.

Jas. 3:5b --

Prov. 26:20-23 --

2 Tim. 2:2 --

5. What happened at Iconium (Acts 14:2) that had occurred at Antioch (Acts 13:50)?

6. Who "opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27)?

Lesson 7: Paul's 2nd Journey (Acts 15:36 - 18:32)

Introduction: After the meeting at Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas expressed a desire to visit the churches from their first journey. After a disagreement, Barnabas took John Mark and Paul took Silas. This lesson deals with Paul's second journey. It highlights his character, as well as the character of the Bereans and the Athenians.

I. From Antioch to Berea (15:36 - 17:14)

- A. Paul and Barnabas parted (15:36-40).
- B. Paul and Silas travelled through provinces of Syria & Cilicia (15:41).
- C. To Derbe (16:1)
- D. At Lystra, Paul took Timothy (16:1-3; see also Lesson 13).
- E. They spread "decrees ordained of the apostles and elders" in Jerusalem (16:4).
- F. They entered Phrygia & Galatia, but were forbidden to preach in Asia (16:6).
- G. At Troas, Paul received a vision (16:8-10).
- H. So "we" went to Samothrace, then Neapolis (16:11).
- I. At Philippi, they converted Lydia, healed a demon-possessed woman, received a beating, were imprisoned, and converted a jailer (16:12-40; see also Lesson 14).
- J. Amphipolis, Apollonia (17:1)
- K. Thessalonica (17:1-10; see also Lesson 15)
- L. Berea (17:10-14)
 - 1. Went into the synagogue
 - 2. They "received the word with all readiness of mind, and search the scriptures daily...."
 - 3. The Jews from Thessalonica came and "stirred up the people."
 - 4. Paul left, but Silas and Timothy remained.

Principles:

- 1. **Good Christians often disagree (15:36-40).**
- 2. **The apostles spread "one faith," not several conflicting doctrines (16:4; Eph. 4:5).**
- 3. **Even though they were inspired, the apostles restricted their teaching as God instructed (16:6).**
- 4. **It is noble to "receive the word with all readiness of mind" and to "search the scriptures daily."**
- 5. **As listeners, we should verify teaching with the scriptures (17:11).**
- 6. **Those who "stir up" trouble are displeasing to God.**

II. From Athens back to Antioch (17:15 - 18:22)

- A. Athens (17:15-24)
 - 1. Paul's "spirit was stirred in him" when he saw the idolatry.
 - 2. He taught many Athenians in many places (vss. 17-18).

3. He encountered philosophers and spoke at the Areopagus.
 4. He told them that they were religious, as evidenced by the altar to the "Unknown god."
 5. Paul quoted one of their own poets.
 6. When he mentioned the resurrection, some disbelieved, some wanted to hear more, and some believed.
- B. Corinth (18:1-7)
1. He met Aquila and Priscilla.
 2. He reasoned in the synagogues with the Jews and Greeks.
 3. He was joined by Silas and Timothy.
 4. He taught effectively there for 1.5 years.
 5. The Jews brought him before Gallio, but Gallio was indifferent.
- C. Cenchrea (18:18)
- D. Ephesus (18:19-21; see Lesson 18)
- E. Caesarea, Antioch (18:22)

Principles:

- 1. Ungodliness should "stir" our hearts (Acts 17:16).**
- 2. We should teach constantly, even though we will face ridicule (17:18, 32).**
- 3. When we teach others, we should be reasonable (17:17; 18:4,19).**
- 4. Some people love to talk about unimportant things (17:21).**
- 5. False teachers can make true statements (17:28).**
- 6. All life comes from God (Job 12:10; Acts 17:25; 14:15; Rom. 1:25).**
- 7. Many people believe in a god but deny the resurrection (17:18,32).**
- 8. In the past, God overlooked ignorance; now He requires repentance (17:30).**

Questions:

1. Does Acts 15:36-40 offer apostolic authority to have an argument? Comment also on Col. 4:10 and 2 Tim. 4:11.

2. When Paul entered a city, where did he go and what did he do (Acts 17:1-2,10; 18:4)?

3. How did Paul discuss religion with others (Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 19)?

How should we apply this today?

Describe our teaching when we fail to apply this approach.

4. After reading passages like 1 Cor. 1:26, we often think that prominent men and women were rarely converted to Christ. Is this correct (17:4, 12)?

5. In the King James Version, Paul's opening statement is, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious."

Looking at newer translations what does this type of opening statement say about Paul?

- a) He was impulsive and careless in his choice of words.
- b) He flattered them to gain popularity.
- c) He noticed a good trait in the people.
- d) He was too spineless to stand up for the truth.
- e) He was too wimpy to deliver a "fire & brimstone" sermon.

How should we apply this approach in our teaching?

6. Why did the Athenians say that Paul was a babbler who promoted strange gods (Acts 17:18)?

How did they react after they heard more of this teaching (17:32)?

7. In Acts 17:21, what is said of the Athenians?

What does Jesus say about idle talk (Matt. 12:36)?

How does Paul describe those who talk this way (I Tim. 5:13)?

Is idle talk unique to pagans like the Athenians? Does it occur among brethren?

Describe idle talk as it occurs today...

...at work.

...in the church.

8. Read Acts 17:30. In this context, what does ignorance refer to?

How does this statement relate to a previous one Paul made (Acts 14:16)?

9. When teaching Gentiles, Paul described the nature and works of God in clear language (14:15; 17:24-31).

According to Paul's description, what is God like?

What has God done?

Lesson 8: Paul's 3rd Journey & Voyage to Rome

Introduction: By the time he began his 3rd journey, Paul had a good following and a bad one. It became difficult for him to teach. Yet he kept teaching, even though he was told to expect suffering. In this lesson, we will see how Paul worked with the newly established churches. We will also study his imprisonment. We will use the last 10 chapters of Acts as our text and avoid addressing the episodes at Ephesus and Corinth; those churches are discussed in future lessons.

I. Paul's 3rd Journey (Acts 18:23-21:15)

- A. Through Galatia and Phrygia (18:23)
- B. At Ephesus (See Lesson 18.)
 - 1. He taught about the baptism of John vs. baptism in Christ (19:1-7).
 - 2. Paul spoke boldly in the synagogue for 3 months.
 - 3. He reasoned with them.
 - 4. "This continued by the space of 2 years" (19:10).
- C. He possibly went to Troas and Macedonia next (2 Cor. 2:12-13).
- D. Possibly to Corinth (20:3)
 - 1. He may have written to the Romans here (Rom. 15:23-26; 16:23).
 - 2. He collected support for Jerusalem here (I Cor. 16:1-4).
- E. To Philippi (20:6)
- F. To Troas
 - 1. Stayed for 7 days (20:6-13)
 - 2. Raised Eutychus (20:3-13)
- G. At Assos, Mitylene, Chios, and Samos (20:14, 15)
- H. At Miletus, he spoke to the Ephesian elders (20:17-35).
- I. At Cos, Rhodes, Patara, and Cyprus (21:1-3)
- J. At Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea (21:3-14)
- K. To Jerusalem (21:15-16)

Principles:

- 1. **At one time, all in Asia heard the word (19:10).**
- 2. **Compared to worldly people, dedicated Christians should place less worth on their physical lives (20:22-24).**
- 3. **Collective, religious activity "on the first day of the week" is described as a routine practice at Troas, Corinth, and "the churches of Galatia" (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-4).**
- 4. **Elders should watch for false teachers (20:17, 28-31).**

II. Paul's Imprisonment and Voyage to Rome (21:27-28:31)

- A. In Jerusalem (21:27-23:30)
 - 1. The Jews from Asia "stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him..." (21:27).

2. Before they could kill Paul, a Roman commander rescued him (21:31-36).
 3. Paul spoke to the crowd (22:1-21).
 4. The Jews listened until Paul mentioned his ministry to Gentiles (22:22).
 5. Paul was imprisoned but spared a beating because he was a Roman citizen (22:24-29).
 6. In order to find out why Paul was accused, the commander brought him before the chief priest and the Council (22:30).
 7. Paul created dissension before the Council (23:6-9).
- B. In Caesarea (23:33-27:1)
1. He appeared before Felix, but his hearing was postponed (23:33-35).
 2. He was accused by Ananias, Tertullus, and the Jews (24:1-9).
 3. Paul answered his accusers (24:10-21).
 4. His case was suspended. He remained imprisoned with liberty (24:22-26).
 5. Festus visited Felix, then Jerusalem (24:27-25:5).
 6. Festus returned to Caesarea and heard Paul's case (25:6-10).
 7. "I appeal unto Caesar" (25:11).
 8. Festus told King Agrippa about Paul (25:13-21).
 9. Agrippa heard Paul's case (25:22-26:32).
- C. To Rome (27:1-28:16)
1. They sailed to Sidon (27:2).
 2. They sailed under Cyprus, changed ships at Myra, then past Crete (27:4-7).
 3. At Fair Havens, the centurion ignored Paul's advice, sailing on (28:8-12).
 4. They were blown off course (27:13-20).
 5. They lost hope, but Paul encouraged them (27:20-26).
 6. They sailed until they identified land, then suffered shipwreck trying to reach shore (27:27-44).
 7. At Melita, Paul performed miracles (28:1-11).
 8. After 3 months, they sailed to Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, Appii, the Three Taverns, and then to Rome (28:12-16).
- D. In Rome (28:16-31)
1. Paul was allowed to live alone (vs. 16).
 2. Paul summoned and spoke to the Roman Jews (vss. 17-28).
 3. Paul "dwelt 2 whole years in his own hired house" (vs. 30).
 4. He taught freely (vss. 30-31).

Principles:

1. **Evil people can seduce naive, innocent bystanders to join their evil cause (21:27).**
2. **The gospel was made available at considerable cost (21:30-32; 2 Cor. 11:23-30).**
3. **We must teach others, even if we anticipate an angry reaction (22:1-21).**
4. **Hate can inhibit reason (22:22).**
5. **Christians can make use of civil privileges (22:24-29).**
6. **The Lord is standing beside us (23:11).**
7. **Becoming a Christian will not eliminate unfair treatment (24:10-21).**

- 8. Christians should express respect for civil rulers (24:10; 26:2-3).
- 9. The truth can be frightening (24:25).
- 10. Men exploit their powerful to satisfy their greed (24:26).
- 11. People are fickle and superstitious (28:3-6).
- 12. If we want to teach others, we often need to "make the first move."
People may not ask to study but will do so when invited (28:17,23).

Questions:

1. Non-religious people believe that religion is for the simple-minded, not the educated. How does the example of Paul contradict this (Acts 22:3)?

The text in this lesson shows that Paul was clever. Discuss Paul's ability to outwit those who opposed the cause of Christ.

Acts 23:1-9 --

Acts 22:24-29 --

How had he done this before (Acts 16:19-24, 35-39)?

Do Paul's actions reflect an ignorant individual, or an intelligent one?

2. Comment on Paul's statement in Acts 20:22-24.

Did Paul enjoy punishment?

Did he have complete disregard for his life?

What lesson should we learn from this? Give examples of how we can apply this lesson.

3. How did the N.T. Christians regard the first day of the week? (Cite scripture.)
4. Why must elders be alert (Acts 20:17,28-31)?
5. An elder's assigned duty is to watch
 - a) the flock he was appointed to oversee.
 - b) the flock he oversees and the one his church sponsors.
 - c) the flock he oversees and the community.
 - d) all the flocks, if he presides on the national board of elders.

6. Theologians often state that Paul taught a "pauline" doctrine but Peter taught a different,

"petrine" doctrine. (Some people like words.) Did Peter agree with Paul on the role of elders (1 Pet. 5:1-3)?

How can problems arise from ignoring this commandment?

7. Read 2 Cor. 11:23-30. What does this say about those of us who do not study and meditate on God's word? (Specifically, what do we think of Paul and his work?)

8. What teaching made the Jews quit listening to Paul (Acts 22:21-22)?

Is this the same teaching that made the Gentiles quit listening (Acts 17:32)?

How does Paul describe these two reactions (1 Cor. 1:23)?

9. When Paul taught Felix about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgement, what was Felix's reaction (Acts 24:25)?

10. What reasons did Felix leave Paul in prison (Acts 24:26-27)?

What do Jesus and Paul say about such motives (Jno. 12:43; 1 Tim. 6:10)?

Lesson 9; John Mark, Silas, Luke, James

Introduction: John Mark, Silas, Luke and James are given to us as examples of faithful men who sacrificed their lives in service to God. They understood the importance of spiritual matters. They obeyed and served after the pattern of the prophets of the Old Testament, often suffering imprisonment, shipwreck, and persecutions.

I. John Mark

- A. First mentioned in Acts 12:12 where saints had gathered in the home of John Mark's mother. They were praying for Peter who had been imprisoned by Herod.
- B. Peter was released miraculously and Herod died soon thereafter (Acts 12:18-23).
- C. John Mark saw the power of God in the defeat of Herod and the spread of the Church (Acts 12:24-25). He joined Barnabas and Saul in their ministry.
- D. He was present at the conversion of the proconsul in Salamis and the defeat of Elymas the sorcerer (Acts 13:4-12).
- E. John went with Paul as far as Pamphylia, but then left the group to return to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).
- F. Later, Paul and Barnabas disagreed over whether to take John Mark with them (Acts 15:36-41). Mark went with Barnabas to Cyprus.
- G. However, Paul tells the Church at Colossae to welcome John Mark (Col. 4:10).
- H. John Mark became a useful worker for the Lord (2 Tim. 4:11; Phile. 24; 1 Pet. 5:13). He is the author of the book of Mark.

Principles:

- 1. Preaching the gospel is hard work. It requires faith, boldness, and zeal. It takes a lot of time and sacrifice (Lk. 14:26-33).**
- 2. Other Christians depend upon us. Our attitudes and willingness to work will add or detract from the effectiveness of God's workers.**
- 3. Serving the Lord draws us closer together. If you work for the Lord, you will be welcomed by your brethren.**

II. Silas

- A. Silas is first seen as a messenger for the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:22-35). He and Judas were prophets and they stayed to strengthen the saints in Antioch. He was also a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37).
- B. When Paul and Barnabas disagreed over John Mark, Paul took Silas with him to Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:37-41).
- C. Paul and Silas stayed with Lydia in Philippi where Silas was arrested along with Paul (Acts 16:11-40). They preached to the Philippian jailer and his family.
- D. Silas went with Paul to Thessalonica where there was trouble with the envious Jews (Acts 17:1-9). They were sent away by night to Berea. When the Jews followed

- them to stir up trouble, Silas and Timothy stayed while Paul went on to Athens (Acts 17:10-15). Silas and Timothy caught up with Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5).
- E. Silas continued to serve the Lord and the apostles (2 Cor. 1:19; 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1; 1 Pet. 5:12).

Principles:

- 1. A chance to visit another congregation is a chance to strengthen them.**
- 2. Silas was not only a messenger to the church in Antioch, but also a great help to Paul in preaching the word (Rom. 10:15).**
- 3. It is a great privilege to teach others about Jesus Christ.**

III. Luke

- A. Luke appears to have been with Jesus during His ministry (Lk. 1:1-4). He wrote the books of Luke and Acts.
- B. Luke records the travels of Paul as an eyewitness. He was with Paul on the trip to Macedonia (Acts 16:10-13).
- C. Luke was also with Paul on his return to Troas (Acts 20:5-12). He accompanied Paul to Miletus and on to Jerusalem (Acts 20:13-21:18).
- D. Luke traveled with Paul to Rome and suffered through the same shipwreck (Acts 27 and 28).
- E. He remained in Rome while Paul was in prison. For a time he was Paul's only companion (2 Tim. 4:11; Phile. 24).
- F. Luke was a physician (Col. 4:14). He was also an excellent writer and historian.

Principles:

- 1. All abilities are gifts from God, and therefore, should be used to glorify God. Conversely, to not use our talents or to use them for purposes other than serving God is selfish and sinful.**
- 2. We need to run with endurance the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1-2).**

IV. James

- A. James is best known as the brother of John. He and John were called the Sons of Thunder. He was a fisherman who left all to follow Christ. He became one of Christ's most beloved apostles (Mat. 4:21-22; 10:2).
- B. He was present at the transfiguration (Mat. 17:1). His mother asked that he be given a place of power in Christ's kingdom (Mat. 20:20-23). He went with Christ to the garden of Gethsemane before the crucifixion (Mat. 26:37). He was present at Christ's death (Mat. 27:56). Jesus allowed only Peter, John, and James to be present at the healing of Jarius' daughter (Lk. 8:51). He and John wanted fire from heaven to punish the Samaritans (Lk. 9:54).
- C. James was one of the first to give his life for Christ (Acts 12:2).

Principles:

- 1. Fellowship with Christ involves service (Mat. 7:21; 18:1-4).**
- 2. Discipleship may require our physical lives. We must serve whether we die of old age or of torture (Jn. 12:25-26; Mat. 10:27-28; Rev. 2:10).**

Questions:

1. The church was gathered in the home of John Mark's mother specifically for the purpose of prayer. What does this teach us about the role of prayer among saints? Should we gather in homes simply to pray?

2. Why did John Mark abandon Paul's company? What effect did this have on Paul? on Barnabas? on the church in Colossi? What effect do we have on our brethren if we abandon them, or refuse to assist them in doing the Lord's work? Is all the work to be done by the preacher or the elders?

3. How did Silas encourage his brethren (Acts 15:31-32)? How can we accomplish the same thing? Comment on Hebrews 10:24. How does visiting other congregations help them? Us? Our families?

4. Jesus gave us many examples of the humility required in true discipleship. Comment on the following passages in relation to the men of this lesson: Mat. 18:1-4; Phil. 2:1-4; Mat. 5:3; Mk. 10:43-44; Eph. 3:8-9; Phil. 4:12. Have you ever acted out of pride? What can a Christian do to overcome pride?

5. Both Paul and Luke were highly educated men. Comment of the following passages: Mat. 11:25; 1 Cor. 1:25-29; 1 Cor. 3:18-20. Is an education sinful in God's eyes? Do these passages imply that the lack of an education is a noble thing? How can an education be helpful to a Christian (Eccl. 7:11-12)?

6. Luke was a gifted writer and historian. What talents do you have? Are you using the abilities

that God gave you? Does everyone have the same abilities? See 1 Cor. 12:12-31. How does one develop skills to preach, teach others, to pray, to sing, etc...?

7. Comment on Hebrews 12:1-2.

8. We know that James gave his life in service to God, and traditional writings hold that the other men also died a martyr's death. Are you prepared to make the same sacrifice if necessary? Make a list of the things for which you are prepared to die.

9. What should our attitude be towards the lost? What should our attitude be towards teaching the lost (1 Cor 1:21)? Is teaching a duty? A privilege? The job of the preacher (Rom. 10:15)?

Lesson 10: Simon the Sorcerer, Ethiopian Nobleman, Dorcas, Aeneas

Introduction: Luke records the history of the work of the apostles and early church so that we might gain a better understanding of how Christians should conduct their lives. Luke gives us examples of church discipline. We see examples of love between Christians. We marvel at the power of God as seen in the miracles.

I. Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:1-25)

- A. The persecution of the church in Jerusalem sent disciples everywhere preaching the word. Phillip went to Samaria where he preached and performed miracles. Multitudes believed and were baptized (8:4-8).
- B. Simon practiced sorcery or "magic" for a living. He was held in great esteem by the people. However, at the preaching and miracles of Philip, he believed and was baptized (8:9-13).
- C. Peter and John came so that the new Christians could receive the Holy Spirit. Simon tried to purchase the gift of God and was rebuked by Peter (8:14-25).

Principles:

- 1. The Lord's Church will grow in spite of persecution.**
- 2. The difference between magic and miracles is obvious.**
- 3. God's gifts cannot be bought.**
- 4. It is possible for a Christian to fall from grace.**
- 5. If we sin, we do not have to be baptized again. We must repent and pray for forgiveness.**

II. Ethiopian Nobleman (Acts 8:26-40)

- A. Philip was sent to an area of desert outside of Jerusalem by an angel.
- B. There he met the Ethiopian nobleman who had been to Jerusalem to worship. He was reading from Isaiah as he traveled.
- C. Philip was directed by the Spirit to overtake the chariot. He then proceeded to use the passage in Isaiah to preach Jesus Christ.
- D. The Ethiopian requested to be baptized. Philip heard his confession of faith and then baptized him.
- E. Philip was taken away by the Spirit of the Lord. The nobleman went on his way rejoicing.

Principles:

- 1. Teach others willingly, joyfully, and at each opportunity.**
- 2. When God's Word is understood, obedience in baptism follows naturally.**

3. Conversion is accompanied by great joy.

III. Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43)

- A. Her name was Tabitha in Aramaic and Dorcas in Greek. Both names meant 'Gazelle.' She lived in Joppa. She was well known for her acts of kindness.
- B. She became sick and died and was taken to an upper room to prepare her body for burial.
- C. They sent two men for Peter who was in the nearby town of Lydda, a little over 10 miles away.
- D. The widows stood by weeping and showed Peter the garments Dorcas had made.
- E. Peter sent them all away and prayed. Dorcas was restored to life and returned to the disciples.
- F. All of Joppa heard the story and many believed on the Lord.

Principles:

- 1. **Our actions are noticed by our brothers and sisters in Christ. Good works encourage our brethren.**
- 2. **Luke the physician records that she had truly died. The miracles of the Bible are undeniable.**
- 3. **Miracles were performed to confirm the word and produce believers. They are recorded for us to accomplish the same thing.**

IV. Aeneas (Acts 9:33-35)

- A. Peter came to Lydda and found Aeneas who had been bedridden for eight years. Luke used the Greek medical term; paralysis.
- B. He was healed by the power of Jesus Christ.
- C. The cities of Lydda and Sharon turned to the Lord.

Principles:

- 1. **Miracles were witnessed by many and widely known.**
- 2. **Miraculous healing did not deal with questionable cures of subtle symptoms.**
- 3. **The power of God produces faith.**

Questions:

- 1. How would you answer the common teaching that baptism is not essential for forgiveness since you would have to be baptized after each sin? What story illustrates this point?

2. Why do people listen to false teachers? Are people inherently gullible?
3. How would you answer the common teaching that one cannot fall from grace?
4. Was the Ethiopian nobleman the first gentile convert? What was the status of eunuchs under the Old Law? See Deut. 23:1 and Isaiah 56:3-8. How does this relate to the promises made to Abraham?
5. Should we wait for an angel to show us who to teach? How does God feel about the lost? How are we to feel about the lost (2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16)?
6. Philip ran to catch the nobleman. Do we run towards a chance to study God's word or do we run away from a study? How will God judge those who do not teach others (Ezek. 3:17-19)?
7. Who can be baptized? What passages can you quote to prove your position?
8. Why is there rejoicing after baptism? How long does this joy last (Luke 15:7,10)?
9. How do faithful Christians make us stronger? Why does the writer of Hebrews mention assembling in this context (Hebrews 10:24-25)?
10. Why was Dorcas so dearly loved? Would the response to the death of Dorcas been the same if she had not been such a hard worker for the Lord? Does this imply some sort of favoritism?
11. Why do you believe miracles really happened? How would you answer criticism that these stories were fabricated by the apostles?

Lesson 11: Cornelius and His Household

Introduction: This lesson is about the conversion of Cornelius and his household and the events by which salvation through Jesus Christ was offered to the Gentiles. Parts of this lesson are based on secular history.

- I. **Cornelius The Centurion**-at the time the events in Acts chapter 10 occurred, the Roman army of occupation in Judea consisted of 5 cohorts, containing a total of approximately 3,400 men. A typical cohort consisted of 600 men. The Italian cohort of which Cornelius was a centurion was composed of Romans. The other four cohorts were composed mainly of Samaritans and Syrian Greeks. In Acts 27:1, it is mentioned that Julius was a centurion in the Augustan cohort also stationed at Caesarea. In Acts 23:18, Claudius Lysias is named as the commander of the large cohort (1000 men) stationed at Jerusalem.

- II. **Gentiles**-The covenant of God with Abraham separated mankind into two groups, Israel and the Gentiles. This distinction was to be temporary, with the Jews being entrusted with the oracles of God. The Gentiles were not excluded from sharing in God's love by this arrangement. However, by the time of Christ, a great gulf separated the two groups. This was based upon nationalism, Jewish traditions, etc. The new covenant which Jesus made with mankind abolished the distinction made by Abraham's covenant but did not easily or always abolish those made by man.

- III. **Cornelius**- His name meant "of a horn" and was that of a distinguished Roman family. Cornelius may, therefore, have been a man of political importance. Cornelius was... (Acts 10:2,22).
 - A. Devout
 - B. Feared God with his household
 - C. Benevolent
 - D. Prayerful
 - E. Well spoken of by the entire Jewish nation
 - F. A soldier

- IV. **God Selected Cornelius** (Acts 10:3-48)
 - A. Cornelius' vision (vss. 3-8)
 1. The angel told Cornelius that he was pleasing to God.
 2. He was instructed to send for Simon Peter.
 3. He immediately sent three men to Joppa for Peter.
 - B. Peter's vision (vss. 9-16)
 1. A voice instructed Peter to kill and eat unclean things three times.

2. Peter refused each time as he had "never eaten anything unholy or unclean."
 3. Peter was perplexed by his vision.
- C. Peter sent to Cornelius (vss. 17-23)
1. Cornelius' servants arrived at Peter's lodging asking for him.
 2. The Spirit told Peter to accompany the men as "I have sent them myself"
 3. After inquiring of the men as to their mission, Peter gave them lodging and on the following day accompanied them to go to Caesarea. He took six brethren with him.
- D. Peter taught Cornelius (vss. 24-48)
1. Cornelius was prepared for Peter's arrival.
 2. He fell down to worship Peter.
 3. Peter forbade this worship saying, "I too am a man."
 4. Peter explained his vision, "God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean."
 5. Cornelius told of his vision and why he had sent for Peter.
 6. Cornelius requested that Peter instruct him and his household.
 7. Peter preached the first gospel sermon to the Gentiles.
 - a. All righteous men were welcome to God.
 - b. He recounted Jesus's ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection.
 - c. He was a chosen witness of these things and was now ordered to preach that "through His name everyone who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins."
 - d. the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household.
 - e. Peter ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ after they had received the Holy Spirit as the apostles had on Pentecost.
- E. The Gentiles included in the Church (Acts 11)
1. The brethren throughout Judea heard that Gentiles has received the word of God.
 2. The brethren in Jerusalem took issue with Peter, saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."
 3. Peter told them of the events concerning himself and Cornelius.
 4. Peter summarized the matter, saying, "God gave them the same gift as He gave us, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"
 5. They then withdrew their opposition and glorified God realizing that "God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."
 6. The gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles.
 7. Antioch became a center of Gentile conversion.
 8. Barnabas and Saul began their missionary work to the Gentiles from Antioch.

Principles:

- 1. God's eternal plan included all men.**
- 2. God hears the prayers of righteous people.**
- 3. Man should submit to God and conform to his ways.**
- 4. God only is to be worshipped.**
- 5. Baptism is necessary for the forgiveness of sins.**

Questions:

1. God chose Cornelius as the first Gentile convert. Comment on the fact that Cornelius was a Roman and a soldier.
2. What separated the Gentiles from God?
3. How could Cornelius, a Roman centurion, be well spoken of by the entire Jewish nation? Did this imply acceptance?
4. What was Cornelius' reaction to his vision?
5. Why did God instruct Peter in a vision about uncleanness?
6. Why was it necessary for the Holy Spirit to instruct Peter to accompany Cornelius' servants?
7. Describe Cornelius' preparations for Peter's arrival. What did he request from Peter?
8. What message did Peter preach? What promise of Jesus to Peter did this fulfill?
9. Since Cornelius was righteous and the Holy Spirit fell upon him, why did Peter require his baptism?

10. Describe the attitude of the Jewish brethren when they first heard of the inclusion of the Gentiles.

11. Thought Question: Why did the Holy Spirit fall upon Cornelius and his household?

Lesson 12: Herod, Elymas, Sergius Paulus

Introduction: This lesson concerns three men mentioned in the book of Acts: Herod, the king of Palestine; Elymas, a magician; and Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul of Cyprus.

I. Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12)

- A. Herod Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great.
- B. Secular history records that while living in Rome, he became a favorite of Emperor Caligula who gave him a kingdom subsequently enlarged by Claudius to include all of Palestine. Apparently to please the Jews, (vs. 3) he joined his government to the persecution of the church.
- C. Herod the persecutor (vss. 1-19)
 - 1. He had the apostle James beheaded. This occurred about ten years after the death of Jesus.
 - 2. He then arrested and imprisoned Peter under heavy guard.
 - 3. The church prayed fervently for Peter.
 - 4. Unknown to the soldiers, an angel led Peter from the prison. This caused no small disturbance among the soldiers.
 - 5. Peter presented himself to the brethren and departed to another place.
 - 6. Herod ordered the execution of the soldiers (12:19).
- D. The death of Herod (vss. 20-23)
 - 1. At Caesarea, Herod celebrated a festival in honor of Emperor Cladius.
 - 2. He addressed the people (clad in a garment fashioned of silver-Josephus).
 - 3. The people exclaimed that "he is a god."
 - 4. An angel struck him because he did not give God the glory. He was eaten by worms and died. Josephus wrote that this death took five days.

Principles:

- 1. The prayers of the righteous avail much.**
- 2. We must give God the glory.**
- 3. God humbles the proud.**
- 4. God's ways are not man's ways.**

II. Elymas (Acts 13:6-11)

- A. Elymas was a magician, a Jewish false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus.
- B. Elymas opposed Barnabas and Saul seeking to turn Sergius Paulus from the faith.
- C. Paul rebuked him and struck him with temporary blindness. This is the only recorded miracle wrought by an apostle to the injury of a person. Paul said that he was:
 - 1. Full of guile and fraud
 - 2. A son of the devil

3. An enemy of righteousness
4. A perverter of the right ways of the Lord

III. Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7-13)

- A. A Roman proconsul of Cyprus at Paphos.
- B. A man of understanding.
- C. Sought to hear the word of God from Barnabas and Saul.
- D. Believed after Paul struck Elymas with blindness for hindering the gospel.
- E. Saul now called Paul (a name which he used thereafter)
- F. Paul now recognized as the dominant member of his company.

Questions:

1. Comment on the death of James and the statement of Jesus in Matthew 20:22-23.
2. Why did Herod take such elaborate precautions to prevent Peter's escape (See Acts 5:17-23)?
3. Considering Acts 12:15, did the disciples expect their prayers to be answered?
4. What two options were open to Herod to explain Peter's escape? What alternative did the soldiers have?
5. Why did God strike down Herod?
6. Why did Elymas oppose Barnabas and Saul?
7. Why did Paul strike him blind? What other opposer of the gospel was struck blind? Does Paul's action agree with his teaching in 2 Tim. 2:25?
8. What was Sergius Paulus' nature? Why were there good men such as Sergius Paulus and Cornelius among the Gentiles?
9. Why did Sergius Paulus believe? Did he become a Christian?

Lesson 13: Timothy

Introduction: This lesson discusses the life and ministry of Timothy, "Paul's true child in the faith."

I. Timothy's Early Life (Acts 16:1-3)

- A. His father was a Greek.
- B. He was a native of Lystra
- C. His mother and grandmother were Jewish and instructed him in that faith (II Tim. 1:5).
- D. He was uncircumcised.

II. Timothy's Conversion And Circumcision

- A. Converted as a result of Paul's first journey through Lystra
- B. Named as a disciple there upon Paul's arrival on his second missionary journey
- C. Circumcised by Paul because of the Jews who knew his father was a Greek

III. Assisted Paul On His Second Missionary Journey

- A. At Berea (Acts 17:14)
- B. Instructed to join Paul at Athens (Acts 17:15)
- C. Sent by Paul to Thessalonica to establish and comfort brethren (I Tim. 3:1-3)
- D. Rejoined Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:5, Rom. 16:21)

IV. Assisted Paul On His Third Missionary Journey

- A. Paul sent him from Ephesus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22) and Corinth (I Cor. 16:8).
- B. Rejoined Paul in Macedonia (II Cor. 1:1)
- C. Accompanied Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4)

V. Accompanied Paul To Rome

- A. Recorded in Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philemon vs. 1.
- B. Paul spoke very highly of him in Phil. 2:19-20.

VI. Assisted Paul After His Release From Prison

- A. Sent to Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3)
- B. Requested to rejoin Paul at Rome during his second imprisonment. (II Tim. 4:9)

VII. Paul's Instructions To Timothy (I Timothy)

- A. Instruct men not to teach false doctrines (1:3).
- B. Fight the good fight, keep the faith and a good conscience (1:18-19).
- C. Know how to conduct oneself in the church.
- D. Teach the pure gospel (4:6-7).
- E. Be an example to the believers (4:12).
- F. Flee worldliness and pursue righteousness.
- G. "O, Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you."

VIII. Paul's Instructions To Timothy (II Timothy)

- A. Be strong in the faith (2: 1-3).
- B. Be diligent to present yourself to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the work of truth (2:15).
- C. Flee youthful lusts (2:22).
- D. Live according to God's word (3:14-17).
- E. Proclaim the word (4:1-2).
- G. Endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (4:5).

Principles:

- 1. Train up a child in the way that he should go and he will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6).**
- 2. Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth (Eccl. 12:1).**
- 3. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God**
- 4. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.**
- 5. Young christians can be valuable workers for the Lord.**
- 6. Older christians often take younger ones "under their wings."**

1. Was Timothy raised in the Jewish faith?

2. Why was Timothy circumcised and not Titus (Gal 2:3)?

3. Why was Timothy so entrusted by Paul with great responsibility at an early age?

4. What was the role of Timothy at Ephesus as described in 1 and 2 Timothy?

5. Was Paul concerned for Timothy's spiritual fate?

6. What were Paul's feelings toward Timothy?

7. Was Timothy also imprisoned for his faith (Heb 13:23)?

Lesson 14: Lydia, Philippian Jailer, Priscilla and Aquila, and Apollos

Introduction: This lesson is about five people mentioned in Acts who were involved in the early spread of the word to the Gentiles.

I. **Lydia** (Acts 16:14-15)

- A. Jewish proselyte "a worshiper of God" (Acts 18:7)
- B. Merchant (from Lydia, from whence her name?)
- C. Devout
- D. Responded to Paul's teaching (God opened her heart)
- E. Baptized with her household.
- F. Assisted Paul at Philippi.

Principle: God knows who His people are and provides for them (Acts 18:10).

II. **The Philippian Jailer** (Acts 16:16-40)

- A. The demon-possessed girl (vs 16-23)
 - 1. She followed Paul for many days saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."
 - 2. Paul became annoyed and cast the demon out of her.
 - 3. Her masters seized Paul and Silas and took them to the authorities, bringing false accusations against them.
 - 4. The crowd rose up against them; they were beaten and thrown into prison.
- B. Paul and Silas in prison (vs 24-26)
 - 1. In the inner prison with their feet in stocks
 - 2. They prayed and sang hymns of praise to God.
 - 3. An earthquake occurred, the prison doors were opened, the prisoners freed.
- C. Conversion of the Jailer (vs 27-34)
 - 1. Fearing his prisoners escaped, the Jailer prepared to commit suicide.
 - 2. Paul stopped him from suicide.
 - 3. The Jailer asked Paul, "What must I do to be saved?"
 - 4. After hearing Paul and Silas, the Jailer and his household were baptized.
 - 5. The Jailer rejoiced greatly.
- D. Paul's release (vs. 35-40)
 - 1. The next day the magistrates ordered Paul and Silas released.
 - 2. Paul refused release as they were Roman citizens imprisoned without trial and beaten.
 - 3. The magistrates were afraid and went and appealed to Paul and Silas, released them, and begged them to leave the city.

Principle: In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God (Phil. 4:6-7).

III. Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18)

- A. Assisted Paul and worked with him in Corinth (Acts 18:2-3)
- B. Traveled with Paul to Ephesus (vs. 18-21)
- C. Taught Apollos (vs. 26)
- D. Returned to Rome and worked with the church (Rom. 16:3)
- E. Mentioned in the First Corinthian epistle. Their house was used as a place of worship (1 Cor. 16:18)
- F. Mentioned in 2 Timothy as being back in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19)

Principle: Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

IV. Apollos (Acts 18)

- A. A Jew of Alexandria
- B. Knowledgeable about the scriptures (vs 24-25)
- C. Taught at the synagogue in Ephesus "teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John"
- D. Taught the way of God "more accurately" by Priscilla and Aquila
- E. Went to Greece to teach
- F. Strengthened the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 3:6)
- G. Some brethren in Corinth set up an Apollos faction (1 Cor. 3:4-7).
- H. Reluctant to return to Corinth from Ephesus (1 Cor. 16-12)
- I. Commended by Paul to Titus (Titus 3:13)

Principle: Preach the word: be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

Questions:

1. What does the statement concerning Lydia that the Lord opened her heart mean? (See Luke 24:25)
2. Who was included in Lydia's household who were baptized? See verse 13.

3. Could the demon-possessed slave girl actually foretell the future?
4. How did she recognize Paul and Silas as gospel preachers.
5. What "possessed" her to follow after Paul?
6. Were Paul and Silas guilty of the charges made against them? (vss. 20-21).
8. Why did the Philippian Jailer ask what he needed to do to be saved?
9. How did Paul and Silas maintain such a positive attitude in prison?
10. Why didn't Paul take revenge for his unlawful beating and imprisonment? (Rom 12:19)
11. Did Priscilla and Aquila maintain their faith as they were persecuted and moved from place to place?
12. How accurately did Apollos teach before being instructed by Priscilla and Aquila?
13. Why was Apollos reluctant to return to Corinth?

Lesson 15: The Thessalonians

Introduction: "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance...And **you became followers** of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit...**you received the word of God** which you heard from us, **you welcomed it** not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the **word of God**, which also effectively **works in you** who believe" (1 Thes. 1:5,6; 2:13b).

I. Background

- A. The church at Thessalonica was established during Paul's 2nd journey (Acts 17).
 - 1. Paul reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue for three Sabbaths (17:2).
 - 2. He explained and demonstrated that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead and that Jesus was the Christ (17:3).
 - 3. Some were persuaded, including a great multitude of devout Greeks and leading women (17:4).
 - 4. The Jews who were not persuaded stirred up the people. They assaulted the house of Jason, thinking that Paul and Silas were there. When they were not found, Jason and some of the brethren were dragged before the rulers, charged, and released (17:5-9).
- B. They were not as fair-minded as those in Berea (Acts 17:11).
- B. Individual Christians named Aristarchus, Secundus, and Demas (Acts 20:4; 27:2; 2 Tim.4:10).
- C. The church at Philippi supported Paul in his work at Thessalonica (Phil. 4:16).

II. Commendation

- A. They turned from idols to serve God (1 Thes. 1:9)
- B. They were commended for their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope (1 Thes. 1:3; 4:10; 2 Thes. 1:3,4).
- C. They faithfully endured under trial (1 Thes. 1:6; 2:15; 3:3; 2 Thes. 1:4,6).
- D. They were examples to the other churches of Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thes. 1:7).
- E. They were imitators of the churches in Judea (1 Thes. 2:14).
- F. They welcomed the word, not as of men, but as the word of God (1 Thes. 2:13).

III. Condemnation

- A. Some in Thessalonica troubled the Christians (1 Thes. 2:14-16; 2 Thes. 1:6-10).
- B. Disorderliness, failing to work, busybodies (2 Thes. 3:6-15)

IV. Clarification

- A. Concerning those who had died in the Lord before His return (1 Thes. 4:13-18)
 - 1. Do not be sorrowful about those who have died in the Lord.
 - 2. When Jesus comes, He will bring them.

3. Was the church in Thessalonica primarily Jew or Gentile?
4. What was the source of the persecution against the church in Thessalonica?
5. In what way should we be imitators of the churches of Judea today (1 Thes. 2:14)?
6. What does Paul write concerning those who refused to work?
7. What concern did the Thessalonians have about those who had died, and how did Paul comfort them?
8. What did Paul mean when he wrote, "that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel" (1 Thes. 4:4)? If one did not do this, what would be the result (1 Thes. 4:6)?
9. What relationship were they to have with those who labored among them (1 Thes. 5:12,13)?
10. Explain the command, "do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thes. 5:19). How does this apply to us?
11. To whom does God send "strong delusion, that they should believe the lie" (2 Thes. 2:10,12)?
12. How should one who walks disorderly be treated (2 Thes. 3:6-15)?

Lesson 16: The Corinthians

Introduction: The city of Corinth was the capital of the province of Achaia. The apostle Paul came to this city and established the church during his second missionary journey. In spite of opposition by the Jews, he remained in Corinth for about a year and a half teaching the word of God. Five years after leaving, he received word concerning problems in Corinth and addressed those problems in his epistles to that church. He wrote, "the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37). We like the Corinthians must carefully study these epistles and apply their teaching to our lives.

I. Background (Acts 18)

- A. Paul arrived in Corinth after leaving Athens (Acts 18:1).
- B. He worked with Pricilla and Aquila making tents, and reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue every Sabbath, testifying that Jesus is the Christ (18:4,5).
- C. When the Jews rejected his teaching, he turned to the Gentiles (18:6).
- D. Many of the Corinthians, including Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and his household, "hearing, believed, and were baptized" (18:8).
- E. The Lord spoke to Paul in a vision saying, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city" (18:9,10).
- F. Paul continued in Corinth for a year and six months (18:11).
- G. The Jews brought Paul before the judgment seat of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law" (18:12,13). Gallio did not want to hear the case and drove them out (18:14-17).
- H. Paul remained many days and then left Corinth (18:18).
- I. Shortly after Paul left, Apollos went to Corinth (18:27).
- J. Problems arose, and the church wrote Paul concerning them (1 Cor. 1:11; 7:1).

II. Teaching And Problems Addressed In 1 Corinthians

- A. Division: 1:10-4:21
- B. The Message of the Cross: 1:18-31
- C. Immorality: 5:1-18; 6:9-20
- D. Contention Between Brethren: 6:1-8
- E. Marriage: 7:1-40
- F. Conscience and Liberty: 8:1-13; 10:14-33
- G. Supporting a Preacher of the Gospel: 9:1-27
- H. Temptation: 10:1-13
- I. The Divine Order in Relationships: 11:1-16
- J. Perversions of the Lord's Supper: 11:17-34
- K. The Use of Spiritual Gifts: 12:1 - 14:40
- L. The Resurrection: 15:1-58

M. First Day of the Week Contribution: 16:1-4

III. Teaching And Problems Addressed In 2 Corinthians

- A. Comfort In Suffering: 1:1-12
- B. Paul's Apostleship and Authority: 1:13-24; 3:1-6; 10:1-13:14
- C. Forgiveness Of One Disciplined In Accordance With 1st Epistle: 2:1-11
- D. The Gospel and the Law of Moses: 2:12-7:1
- E. The Corinthian's Repentance: 7:2-16
- F. The Collection For Those In Need: 8:1-9:15

IV. Condemnation

- A. "For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men" (1 Cor. 3:3).
- B. "Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you" (1 Cor. 4:18).
- C. "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you...And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you" (1 Cor. 5:1,2).
- D. "You yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren" (1 Cor. 6:8)
- E. "When you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ" (1 Cor. 8:12).
- F. "For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Cor. 11:29).

V. Exhortation

- A. "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise" (1 Cor. 3:18).
- B. "That you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other" (1 Cor. 4:6).
- C. "Not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; not even to eat with such a person" (1 Cor. 5:11).
- D. "Flee sexual immorality" (1 Cor. 6:18).
- E. "A wife is not to depart from her husband...And a husband is not to divorce his wife" (1 Cor. 7:10,11).
- F. "Flee from idolatry" (1 Cor. 10:14).
- G. "Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being" (1 Cor. 10:24).
- H. Characteristics of love (1 Cor. 13)
- I. "Comfort those who are in any trouble" (2 Cor. 1:4).

- J. "Do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing" (2 Cor. 4:16).
K. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).

Principles:

1. **"Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love" (1 Cor. 16:13-14).**
2. **"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).**

Questions:

1. How was Paul's preaching received in the city of Corinth?
2. What was the cause of the division in Corinth? How should division be handled?
3. Why is the message of the cross said to be foolish? Does this mean that the message is illogical, unreasonable, and irrational, and must be accepted by a "leap of faith?"
4. How should civil problems between brethren be handled? Why?
5. How can a liberty for one become a stumbling block for another (1 Cor. 8)?
6. How can a gospel preacher earn a living (Acts 18:4; 1 Cor 9:1-18)?
7. How were the Corinthians perverting the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11)?
8. What can one logically conclude if Christ was not raised (1 Cor. 15:14-19)?
9. What characteristics of giving are commended in 2 Cor. 8 and 9?
10. If the church withdraws fellowship from one of its members and they repent, how should they be treated (2 Cor. 2:3-11)?

Lesson 17: The Galatians and The Romans

Introduction: Although the churches of Galatia and the church at Rome were separated by over 1000 miles, the primary teaching in their respective epistles was the same. It is believed that the epistles were written at about the same time, at the end of Paul's third journey (58 AD). Judaizing teachers in the early church were a formidable force and the faith of many Christians was tried by their negative influence. "For by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Gal. 2:16). "By the deed of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight" (Rom. 3:20). Today, we must be on guard against false teaching.

I. The Christians In Galatia (Galatians)

A. Background

1. Galatia is a region in central Asia Minor.
2. The churches of Galatia most likely included the churches of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch Pisidia.
3. These churches were established during Paul's first missionary journey.

B. Problem Addressed: Judaizing teachers had come in and were teaching that Gentile converts needed to be circumcised.

C. Paul's Concern

1. "I marvel that you are turning away so soon" (Gal. 1:6).
2. "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you" (Gal. 3:1)?
3. "I am afraid for you" (Gal. 4:11).
4. "Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth" (Gal. 4:16)?
5. "I have doubts about you" (Gal. 4:20).
6. "You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth" (Gal. 5:7)?

D. Condemnation

1. Of Judaizing Teachers

- a.. They trouble you and pervert the gospel. "Let them be accursed" (Gal. 1:7-9).
- b. "He who troubles you will bear his judgment" (Gal. 5:10).
- c. "I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off" (Gal. 5:12).
- d. "...compel you to be circumcised, only that they may not suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" (Gal. 6:12).

2. Of Galatians

- a. "Turn again to the weak and beggarly elements" (Gal. 4:9).
- b. "You who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

D. Exhortation

1. Stand fast and do not be entangled with a yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1).
2. Through love, serve one another (Gal. 5:13)
3. Walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16, 22-25).
4. Do not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another (Gal.

5:26).

5. Restore one who is fallen in a spirit of gentleness (Gal. 6:1).
6. Bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2).
7. Let him who is taught the word share with him who teaches (Gal. 6:6).
8. Do not grow weary in doing good (Gal. 6:9).
9. Let us do good to all (Gal. 6:10).

Principles:

- 1. The way to prevent apostasy is to stand fast in the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- 2. It is possible to fall from grace.**
- 3. False teachers pervert, bewitch, court and persuade (Gal. 1:6; 3:1; 4:17; 5:8).**
- 4. It is possible that telling someone the truth will make them turn against you.**

II. The Christians In Rome (Romans)

A. Background

1. Jews from Rome were present on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10).
2. The church may have had its beginning when Jews converted in the early days of the church returned to their homeland following the persecution that arose after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8).
3. Paul had planned to go to Rome (Acts 19:21; Rom. 1:10,13; 15:22). He wrote of his plans in the epistle to the church in Rome at the end of his 3rd journey about 58 AD. He finally came to Rome as a prisoner and met the brethren (61 AD)(Acts 28:15,16).
4. The church met in the home of Priscilla and Aquila (Rom. 16:3-5).

B. Problems Addressed: Like the epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul addressed the false teaching of the Jews concerning Gentile convert compliance to the Law of Moses.

C. Commendation

1. "Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1:8).
2. "Full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able to admonish one another" (Rom. 15:14).
3. "Your obedience has become known to all" (Rom. 16:19).

D. Exhortation

1. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1).
2. "Do not be conformed to the world" (Rom. 12:2).
3. With respect to gifts of the Holy Spirit, "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (Rom. 12:3).
4. The behavior of a Christian (Rom. 12:9-21).
5. They were to be subject to governing authorities (Rom 13:1-7).
6. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Rom. 13:8-10).
7. Walk properly (Rom. 13:11-14).
8. Receive one weak in the faith (Rom 14:1 - 15:13).

9. Note those who cause divisions and offenses and avoid them (Rom. 16:17).

E. Individual Commendation

1. Priscilla and Aquila: fellow workers in Christ, risked their own necks for Paul's life, church met in their home (Rom. 16:3-5).
2. Mary: "who labored much for us" (Rom. 16:6)
3. Adronicus and Junia: "who are of note among the apostles" (Rom. 16:7)
4. Urbanus: "fellow worker in Christ" (Rom. 16:9)
5. Apelles: "approved in Christ" (Rom. 16:10)
6. Tryphena and Tryphosa: "who have labored in the Lord" (Rom. 16:12)
7. Persis: "who labored much in the Lord" (Rom. 16:12)

Principles:

- 1. We must be filled with knowledge and know how to admonish one another.**
- 2. The church can exist in places where there is gross immorality and worldliness.**
- 3. We must be subject to governing authorities.**

Questions:

1. What was the major problem addressed by Paul in his epistles to the church at Rome and the churches of Galatia? What was the answer to this problem?
2. Describe how the false teachers were turning the Galatians from the truth. How could this be prevented?
3. How should false teaching be handled in the church, today?
 - a. How would it be identified?
 - b. Who would identify it?
 - c. What would be done about it?
4. "God, who is rich in mercy,...does not wholly withdraw the Holy Spirit from his own people...nor suffers them to proceed so far as to lose the grace of adoption, and forfeit the state of justification, or to commit the sin unto death; nor does he permit them to be totally deserted, and to plunge themselves into everlasting destruction" (Canons of Dordt, article 6). This quotation describes the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Is this true or false? Explain in light of the epistle to Galatia.
5. How do people react when we teach them the truth?

6. What kind of example were the churches of Galatia and Rome? How is a reputation like this established? Should a local church be concerned about its reputation? Why?
7. Explain what it means to "present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1-3). Discuss conformity to the world in word, work, dress, speech.
8. How can feelings of superiority affect the local church (Rom. 12:3-8; cf. 1 Cor. 12)?
9. Describe the "governing authorities" to whom the Roman Christians were told to submit.
10. Discuss the behavior of Christians expected by God (Rom. 12:9-21).
11. Thought Question: If Paul were familiar with you and your work in the church here, what do you think he would say about you?
12. What is involved in learning to admonish one another (Rom. 15:14).

Lesson 18: The Philippians and Colossians

Introduction: In this lesson, we will study the Christians who lived in Philippi and Colosse. Paul established a church in Philippi during his 2nd journey (Acts 16:12). Luke is silent concerning a trip to the city of Colosse in the Roman province of Asia. On the 2nd journey they passed through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, but were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia (Acts 16:6). During the 3rd journey, Paul "went over all the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples" (Acts 18:23). He then traveled to Ephesus where he stayed for over 2 years. Some believe it was during this time that his influence was felt as far as Colosse which was 100 miles to the east.

I. The Christians In Philippi (Acts 16, Philippians)

A. Background (See Lesson 14)

1. Lydia and her household (Acts 16:15) and the jailer and his family (Acts 16:33) were baptized by Paul and Silas during the 2nd missionary journey.
2. After Paul and Silas were released from prison, they encouraged the brethren and departed (Acts 16:40).
3. Paul wrote the epistle to the Philippians during his Roman imprisonment.

B. Commendation

1. Their fellowship with Paul in the gospel (Phil. 1:5-7; 4:10-20)
 - a. partakers with me of grace (Phil. 1:5-7).
 - b. in Paul's distress (Phil. 4:14)
 - c. in giving and receiving (Phil. 4:15)
 - d. providing necessities (Phil. 4:16)
 - e. sending a gift by Epaphroditus (Phil 4:17,18)
2. They always obeyed. even though Paul was absent (Phil. 2:12).

C. Condemnation

1. Some preach Christ from envy, strife, selfish ambition (Phil. 1:15-16)
2. They seek their own (Phil. 2:21).
3. Of false teachers who were enemies of the cross, end was destruction, god was their belly, gloried in their shame, set mind on earthly things (Phil. 3:18,19)
4. Of Judaizing teachers (3:2-3)

D. Exhortation

1. Love to abound in knowledge and discernment (Phil. 1:9)
2. They were to approve the things excellent, that they might be sincere and without offense (Phil. 1:10).
3. Be filled with the fruits of righteousness (Phil 1:10).
4. Have their conduct worthy of the gospel (1:27)
5. To be united (1:27; 2:2-4; 4:2-3)
6. Not to be afraid of adversaries (1:28)
7. Humility (2:5-11)
8. To work out salvation with fear and trembling (2:12)
9. To do all things without murmuring or disputing (2:14)

10. To hold fast the word (2:16)
11. To be glad and rejoice with Paul (2:18)
12. Hold men like Epaphroditus in esteem (2:29)
13. They were to follow Paul's example (3:17).
14. To be anxious for nothing, making request known to God through prayer (4:6,7)
15. They were to meditate on things true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, and virtuous (4:8)

Principles:

- 1. The need for spreading the gospel is just as important today as it was in the 1st century.**
- 2. We should be self-motivated when it comes to obedience.**
- 3. We must beware of false teaching.**
- 4. We need not be afraid of those who stand opposed to us.**
- 5. The epistles are a pattern for our work and worship today (Phil. 3:17).**
- 6. We should be joyful.**

II. The Christians In Colosse (Colossians)

A. Background (See introduction)

B. Commendation

1. Their faith in Christ (Col. 1:4)
2. Their love for all the saints (Col. 1:4) love in the Spirit (Col. 1:8)
3. Bearing fruit (Col. 1:6)
4. Good order and steadfastness of faith (Col. 2:5)

C. Exhortation

1. Continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, not moved from hope (1:23).
2. Walk in Christ, rooted, built up, established in the faith, abounding in thanksgiving (2:6).
3. Beware of philosophy (2:4-10).
4. Beware of those insist on the observance of rites and customs of the Jewish religion (2:16-17; 20-23).
5. Seek things above (3:1), set mind on things above (3:2).
6. Put to death fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language, lying (3:5-9).
7. Put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness, meekness, longsuffering, love (3:12-14).
8. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts (3:15).
9. Be thankful (3:15).
10. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...admonishing one another in psalms...singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (3:16).
11. Do all things in the name of the Lord (3:17).
12. In relationships:

- a. Wives submit to husbands (3:18).
 - b. Husbands love you wives and do not be bitter toward them (3:19).
 - c. Children obey your parents in all things (3:20).
 - d. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged (3:21).
 - e. Servants obey masters (3:22-25).
 - f. Masters give servants what is just and fair (4:1).
13. Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving (4:2).
 14. Pray that God would provide opportunity to teach the gospel (4:3).
 15. Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time (4:5).
 16. Let your speech always be with grace, that you may know how to answer each one (4:6).

Principles:

- 1. We can remain faithful even though we are surrounded by temptations and trials (1 Cor. 10:10).**
- 2. We must seek the things that are above if we hope to be in heaven.**
- 3. A Christian must put off certain behavior and put on other behavior.**
- 4. Our faith should affect every relationship in our lives.**
- 5. Prayer is a vital part of a Christian's life.**

Questions:

1. How was a church established in Philippi? In Colosse? If you moved to a town with no church, what would you do to start one?

2. What relationship existed between Paul and the church at Philippi that continued even after Paul left?

3. What concern should we have toward the spread of the gospel in other parts of our country or in other parts of the world? What could the church here do to increase its work of evangelism in other areas?

4. How did Paul describe the false teachers in Phil. 3:18,19? Does this describe every individual who is teaching something that is incorrect? Explain.

5. In what two things does Paul say love should abound (Phil. 1:9-10)? Explain.

6. How is Christ an example of humility for the Christian?

7. Some deny the importance of following the pattern of the New Testament church in work and worship. How would you convince someone that we need to be concerned about following the pattern?

8. How does Paul describe the dangers of philosophy in his letter to Colosse (Col. 2:4-10)?

9. What modern day philosophies are of particular concern to the Christian?

10. How can a father provoke his children? How can a father avoid provoking his children?

Lesson 19: Agabus, Felix, Festus, Arippa

Introduction: This lesson covers four men from the book of Acts. Agabus was a New Testament prophet who was a contemporary of the apostle Paul. The other three men, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, were all rulers before whom Paul was able to preach Jesus.

I. Agabus, A New Testament Prophet (Acts 11:27-30; 21:10-14)

- A. This was the first mention of the gift of prophecy among the disciples.
- B. He foretold a famine which would occur throughout the world (11:27-30).
 - 1. The brethren in Antioch believed Agabus and prepared for the famine. They even sent relief to Judea even though the famine was to include them.
 - 2. The famine occurred during the time of Claudius Caesar.
- C. He foretold Paul's arrest in Jerusalem (21:10-14).
 - 1. The brethren did not want Paul to go to Jerusalem.
 - 2. Paul was determined to go anyway.
 - 3. "The will of the Lord be done."

Principles:

- 1. **God's prophecies always come to pass.**
- 2. **We must help meet the needs of our brethren and even be willing to sacrifice for them.**
- 3. **The events recorded in the Bible are real. They are not fables. They occurred concurrently with secularly recorded history.**
- 4. **We should always be willing to accept God's will, and we should desire that His will be done.**

II. Felix (Acts 23:24-24:27)

- A. The Roman governor of Palestine who succeeded Pilate in that position (Caesarea was the Roman capitol of Judea).
- B. He was married to Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Arippa I. Josephus records that he had taken Drusilla from another man and was living in adultery.
- C. Tacitus, a historian of the day, recorded that Felix exercised his authority with every kind of cruelty and lust.
- D. Paul was sent as a prisoner from Claudius Lysias to Felix (23:24-35).
- E. Jews of Jerusalem went to Felix to present their case against Paul (24:1).
- F. Tertullus was brought forth as an attorney against Paul (24:1-2).
- G. Paul was accused of being a troublemaker with three charges (24:5-6).
 - 1. He was accused of exciting the Jews to insurrection.
 - 2. He was accused of being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazrenes.
 - 3. He was accused of attempting to profane the temple.
- H. Paul answered each charge (24:10-21).
 - 1. He had only come to Jerusalem 12 days earlier and had been in prison for 5

- days. That was hardly enough time to start an insurrection.
2. He confessed to be following Jesus the Nazarene and claimed to believe in the law and the prophets, to hoping for a resurrection, and to living a conscientious life.
 3. He stated that he was obeying the law when found in the temple, not profaning it. Those witnesses who found him in the temple had not been called to testify.
- I. Felix kept Paul in prison but allowed him visitors (24:22-23).
 - J. Paul had the opportunity to preach to Felix and Drusilla. He reasoned with them of righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come (24:24-25).
 - K. Felix trembled at Paul's preaching but chose to wait for a convenient season (24:25).
 - L. Felix hoped to receive money in order to release Paul (24:26).
 - M. Secular history records that Felix was removed from office after accusations of the mishandling of his position.

Principles:

- 1. Being a Christian may bring persecution upon you.**
- 2. The gospel is powerful and causes people to tremble (Heb. 4:12).**
- 3. Belief and trembling do not always lead to obedience (Js. 2:19).**
- 4. Following Christ is not a life of convenience.**

III. Festus (Acts 25:1-21)

- A. He succeeded Felix as governor of Palestine.
- B. The Jews renewed their case against Paul with the new governor (25:1-6).
- C. The Jews brought charges against Paul which they could not prove (25:7).
- D. Paul pleaded his innocence to their charges (25:8).
- E. Paul should have been released since he was not proven guilty of any crime. However, Festus wanted to please the Jews, and he asked if Paul would be willing to be tried in Jerusalem (25:9).
- F. Paul knew he stood a better chance of justice before Caesar than before the Sanhedrin, so he appealed to Caesar (25:10-11).
- G. Under Roman law, when a citizen appealed to Caesar, all proceedings stopped, and he and his accusers were sent to Rome.
- H. Festus discussed Paul's case with King Agrippa (25:13-21).

IV. Agrippa (Acts 25:13-26:32)

- A. This was Herod Agrippa II.
 1. He was the son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12) who killed the apostle James.
 2. He was the nephew of Herod Antipas who killed John the baptist and mocked Jesus during His trial.
 3. He was the great grandson of Herod the Great who killed the children of Bethlehem after Jesus was born.
- B. Josephus recorded that Caesar had entrusted Agrippa with the oversight of religious affairs in Jerusalem since he knew the Jewish religion very well (26:2-3). He was about 31 years old when he heard Paul's case.

- C. Festus wanted Agrippa to help him with a letter to Caesar stating why Paul was being sent, so Agrippa wanted to hear Paul's case.
- D. Paul spoke before Agrippa, Bernice, Festus, and other important people (26:1-9).
 - 1. Paul spent his youth as a strict Pharisee (26:1-8).
 - 2. At that time he was convinced he should do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. He imprisoned Christians and even consented to their death (26:9-11).
 - 3. He said the appearance of Jesus to him on the road to Damascus is what changed his life (26:12-18).
 - 4. Paul did not disobey Jesus' instructions but began preaching that people should repent and turn to God (26:19-20).
 - 5. He said he was arrested for teaching what Moses and the prophets had taught, that Jesus would suffer and be raised to give light to all (26:21-23).
 - 6. Festus thought Paul was mad when he spoke of the resurrection, but Paul said he was speaking the truth (26:24-26).
 - 7. Agrippa said that with a little persuasion, Paul might have made him a Christian (26:27-28).
 - 8. Paul desired that all would become Christians (26:29).
- E. Festus and Agrippa agreed that Paul had done nothing worthy of death (26:31-32).

Principles:

- 1. We must always be ready to give an answer when asked for a reason for the hope which is in us (1 Pet. 3:15).**
- 2. Paul's change of life is evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**
- 3. The apostle's lives are evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:16-21).**
- 4. Belief in God, Jesus, and the resurrection will drastically change our lives.**
- 5. Our conscience is not a reliable guide to truth.**

Questions:

- 1. What was the purpose of spiritual gifts during New Testament times? Cite scriptures.
- 2. How far should we be willing to go to help meet the needs of our brethren?
- 3. Acts 25:1-7 discusses various people going down from Jerusalem to Caesarea. Caesarea is actually north of Jerusalem. Does that concern you as to the accuracy of the Bible? Why or why not?
- 4. Considering what we know of the lifestyle of Felix, why might he tremble when hearing about righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come?

5. Is it always convenient to be a Christian?

6. The gospel changed the lives of the following people. What kind of people were they before hearing the gospel? Is the gospel still powerful today?
 - a. Paul (Acts 26:1-9)
 - b. Onesimus (Phile. 10-19)
 - c. The Corinthians (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

7. Why might King Agrippa have been able to relate to Paul's attitude toward Jesus during his youth?

8. Why are each of the following not reliable guides to truth?
 - a. Our conscience (Acts 23:1):
 - b. Traditions (Mt. 15:9):
 - c. The word of an angel (Gal. 1:6-9):

9. What is the only reliable guide to truth today?

10. What must we do in order to be prepared to answer those who may ask us about Jesus?

Lesson 20: The Books of James and Jude

Introduction: Matthew 13:55 mentions four brothers of Jesus. Two of them, James and Jude (Judas), are credited with the writing of the books which bear their names. This lesson will cover some of the principles we can learn from these two books. It is obviously not intended to be an exhaustive study of these books.

James - Principles

I. Chapter 1

- A. We should rejoice when faced with trials (2-4).
 - 1. The testing of our faith produces endurance.
 - 2. Endurance helps to make us complete spiritually.
- B. We should pray for wisdom (5).
- C. Our prayers should be accompanied by an unwavering faith (6-8).
- D. God will reward us if we remain faithful to Him and endure trials (12).
- E. Some facts about temptations (13-16)
 - 1. God does not tempt us with evil.
 - 2. Our temptations result from our own lusts.
 - 3. Our lusts give birth to sin.
 - 4. Sin brings forth death.
- F. We must be doers of the word and not hearers only (21-25).
 - 1. Those who hear but do not do God's will deceive themselves.
 - 2. Those who hear and do God's will shall be blessed.

II. Chapter 2

- A. We must not show partiality (1-13).
 - 1. Partiality results from evil motives.
 - 2. God has not shown partiality.
 - 3. "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
- B. Faith without works is dead (14-26).

III. Chapter 3

- A. We must control what we say (1-12).
 - 1. Our tongues can defile our bodies.
 - 2. Our tongues are hard to tame.
 - 3. Our religion is vain if we do not control our tongues (Js. 1:26).
- B. The truly wise person is known by his behavior (13-18).

IV. Chapter 4

- A. Wrongly motivated prayers will not be answered (3).
- B. Those who are friends of the world are enemies of God (4).
- C. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (7).
- D. If we humble ourselves before God, He will exalt us (10).
- E. In the context of eternity, our lives last only as long as a quickly vanishing vapor (14).
- F. We sin if we do not do what we know is right (17).

V. Chapter 5

- A. Those who seek earthly riches and not God will receive misery (1-6).
- B. In waiting for the Lord's return, we must be patient and endure suffering as Job did (7-11).
- C. We must be true to our word (12).
- D. We should pray for those who are sick (14-15).
- E. "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (16).
- F. If a fellow Christian strays from the truth, we should try to turn him back to God (19-20).

Jude - Principles

I. God has given us His completed revelation (3).

II. God brings judgment upon evil people

- A. The unbelieving Israelites (5)
- B. The angels who abandoned their proper position (6)
- C. Sodom and Gomorrah (7)
- D. Cain (11)
- E. Balaam (11)
- F. Those involved in the rebellion of Korah (11)
- G. False Teachers (4,8,10-19)

III. We must grow spiritually and build upon our faith (20).

IV. We should do everything possible to keep others from being lost spiritually (23).

V. "To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen" (25).

Questions:

1. Name five trials that may try our faith today.

2. What do the following passages say regarding trials and our attitudes toward them?
 - a. 1 Pet. 4:12-19
 - b. 1 Cor. 3:9-15
 - c. Rom. 5:3-5
 - d. Acts 5:40-41
 - e. 2 Tim. 3:12

3. When faced with a temptation to sin, what can we do to keep from yielding to it? (Gen. 39:7-12; Mt. 4:1-11; Js. 4:7)

4. What does James say is the proper relationship between faith and works?

5. James 2:21 says that Abraham was justified by works. However, Rom. 4:2-3 says that Abraham was not justified by works but by faith. Are these passages contradictory? Why or why not?

6. Name the sins of the tongue mentioned in the following passages:
 - a. 1 Tim. 5:13
 - b. Rev. 21:8; Eph. 4:25
 - c. 2 Pet. 2:1
 - d. Eph. 4:29
 - e. 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 6:4-5; 20-21; 2 Tim. 2:16,23; Titus 3:9

7. How is Elijah's prayer in James 5:17-18 an appropriate example of effective prayer for us today if God does not perform miracles today?

8. Cite three passages that show that God's revelation has been completed. Why is that important?

9. 2 Cor. 5:10 says we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and James 4:14 says our lives are as short as a vanishing vapor. What then should our attitude be toward each of the following?
 - a. material possessions
 - b. our souls
 - c. the souls of others
 - d. God's word

10. Jude 20 says we must build upon our faith, and 2 Pet. 1:5-11 tells us what to add to our faith. How can we accomplish the spiritual growth God expects of us?

Lesson 21: Titus, Philemon, and Onesimus

Introduction: In this lesson, we will learn about three men -- Titus, Philemon, and Onesimus. Paul felt very close to these men. We will study the special things about them as noted in Paul's epistles.

I. Titus

- A. Paul was disappointed in not finding Titus on his arrival at Troas; he could not remain there and be content (2 Cor 2:13).
- B. When Paul was in Macedonia and found no relief there, he was comforted by the arrival of Titus (2 Cor 7:6).
 - 1. Titus brought good news of the faithfulness of the Corinthians (2 Cor 7:12-16).
- C. Paul counted on Titus to encourage the saints in Corinth (2 Cor 8:3-7).
 - 1. Titus had undertaken the business of collecting money from the church at Corinth for the needy saints in Judea.
 - 2. Titus and others like him were "the glory of Christ" (2 Cor 8:16-24).
- D. Titus was faithful and unselfish in his service (2 Cor 12:15-21).
- E. Titus traveled with Paul and Barnabas while they were teaching the gospel (Gal 2:1-10).
 - 1. Titus was a Greek (a Gentile Christian, vs. 3).
- F. Titus eventually left Paul; but we do not know the circumstances (2 Tim 4:10).
- G. Paul's letter to Titus points out the qualifications for elders (Titus 1:5-9).

Principles:

- 1. **We should be faithful and unselfish in our service to God and to others.**
- 2. **We should always try to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ.**
- 3. **We should strive to bring glory to God and Jesus.**

II. Philemon and Onesimus

- A. This letter is addressed to Philemon, a Christian, in whose house the church may have met (Philemon 1:1-3).
- B. It is a letter of commendation of a servant (slave?) of Philemon, who had left his master. The servant turns out to be Onesimus (vss. 10-22).
- C. This may be the same Onesimus, Paul referred to as a "faithful and beloved brother" Colossians 4:9).
- D. Onesimus was converted by an imprisoned Paul (vs. 10).
- E. As a Christian, Onesimus would be more profitable to his master (vs. 11).
- F. Onesimus was to be received by his master (vs. 17).
- G. Onesimus may have wronged Philemon when he left, and Paul offered to repay the damages (vss. 18, 19).
- I. Philemon's acceptance of Onesimus would make Paul happy (vs. 20-21).
- J. Philemon was to pay that Paul might visit (vs. 22).

Principles:

1. Love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8, Prov 10:12).
2. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free,...for you are all one in Christ Jesus "(Gal 3:28).
3. We should provoke each other unto love and good works (Heb 10:24).

Questions:

1. Why was Paul comforted by the arrival of Titus in Macedonia (2 Cor. 7:6)? How can we comfort those who preach the gospel?
2. What was the "grace" Titus was urged to complete in Corinth (2 Cor. 8:6)?
3. How does God put concern for others in a person's heart (2 Cor. 8:16)?
4. Why was Titus not circumcised (Gal. 2:3-5), but Timothy was circumcised (Acts 16:3; 15:23-29)?
5. What was the role of Titus with respect to elders (Titus 1:5)?
6. Describe the character of Philemon.
7. Why was Onesimus sent back to his master?
8. As a Christian, how would Onesimus be expected to behave (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22-25; 1 Pet. 2:18)?
9. How did Paul expect Philemon to treat Onesimus (Col. 4:1)?

Lesson 22: Demas, Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Diotrophes

Introduction: Sometimes saints must be reprov'd and rebuk'd. Sometimes they are used as examples of disobedience. This lesson mentions four men who were bad examples.

I. Demas

- A. Mentioned in Col 4:14 and Philemon verse 24
 - 1. Once a faithful worker with Paul, sending greetings to other saints
- B. In 2 Tim 4:10, he forsook Paul when Paul was awaiting trial.

II. Hymenaeus

- A. Hymenaeus had made shipwreck concerning the faith (1 Tim 1:19).
 - 1. Hymenaeus had been unfaithful.
- B. He was delivered unto Satan (1 Tim 1:20).
 - 1. The church at Corinth was commanded to deliver the incestuous person to Satan (1 Cor 5:5).
- C. Hymenaeus had blasphemed.
 - 1. By delivering him to Satan, he might be taught not to continue sinning.
 - 2. Perhaps he was sinning by his actions and his teaching.
- D. In 2 Tim 2:16, Paul tells Timothy to shun profane babblings or godless chatter because it will only lead people away from the faith.
 - 1. He says foolish words spoken by Hymenaeus will destroy people's faith.
 - 2. Hymenaeus had taught that the resurrection had already passed.
 - 3. This was destroying the faith of some Christians.

III. Alexander

- A. He may have been with Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:33).
- B. Alexander had also made shipwreck concerning the faith (1 Tim 1:19).
 - 1. Paul delivered Alexander unto Satan (1 Tim 1:20).
 - 2. See 1 Cor 5:5.
- C. Alexander had harmed Paul (2 Tim. 4:14).
 - 1. The Lord would repay Alexander for his evil deeds.
 - 2. Paul warned Timothy to beware of him.
 - 3. He opposed the teaching of the gospel (vs. 15).

IV. Diotrophes

- A. John warned Gaius of the evil deeds of Diotrophes in III John, verse 9.

1. He liked to put himself first.
2. Diotrophes did not acknowledge Paul's authority.
3. Diotrophes spoke against Paul (vs. 10).
4. Diotrophes was guilty of various evil activities in the church.

Principles:

- 1. Foolish words can destroy some peoples faith.**
- 2. The church must take action against those who persist or continue in sin.**
- 3. The Lord will repay us for our evil deeds.**
- 4. We must not put ourselves first. We must consider others first.**

Questions:

1. How can we make shipwreck concerning the faith?
2. Why should the church take action to point out the sins of someone and make every effort to keep sin out of the church?
3. How will the Lord repay us for our evil deeds?
4. What does the desertion of Demas (2 Tim. 4:10) teach us about the loyalty we should have toward brethren?
5. How will the desire for preeminence (3 John 9) affect one's ability to work with others (compare 1 Pet. 5:3)?
6. Why was it wrong for Diotrophes not to acknowledge Paul's authority? Should we acknowledge Paul as an authority? Explain your answer.
7. What would be the effect of teaching that the resurrection had already passed (2 Tim. 2:18)?

Lesson 23: The Churches of Asia -1

Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira

Introduction: In the next two lessons, we will study seven churches of Asia. These churches received instruction from the Lord in the book of Revelation. By studying the letters written to these churches, we can learn about problems that troubled Christians in the first century. We can learn the attributes of local congregations that please and displease the Lord, then and now. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29).

I. Ephesus (Acts 18:19-26; 19; 20:16-38; 21:29; 1 Cor. 15:32; 16:8; 1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:12; Rev. 2:1-7)

A. Background

1. Paul came to Ephesus at the end of his 2nd journey (Acts 18:19-26). He did not stay long.
2. Paul returned to Ephesus on his 3rd journey and remained for over three years (Acts 19). He left and traveled in Macedonia, bypassing Ephesus on his return to Jerusalem. He called the elders of Ephesus to Miletus before he left for Jerusalem (Acts 20: 16-38).
3. Timothy labored with the church in Ephesus (1 Tim.; 2 Tim.).

B. Commendation (Rev. 2:1-7)

1. Labored without becoming weary
2. Patience and perseverance
3. They would not bear those who were evil, hating deeds of Nicolaitans.

C. Condemnation

1. They had left their "first love."

D. Exhortation

1. "Remember from where you have fallen."
2. "Repent and do the first works."

E. Promise to those who overcome

1. To eat from the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God

II. Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)

A. Commendation

1. Faithfulness in tribulation, poverty, persecution by Jews

B. Exhortation

1. "Do not fear any of the things you are about to suffer."
2. "Be faithful until death."

C. Promise to those who overcome

1. The crown of life
2. Not be hurt by the second death

III. Pergamos (Rev. 2:12-17)

A. Commendation

- 1. They held fast His name, not denying the Lord even in persecution.
- B. Condemnation
 - 1. Some among them held to the false doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans.
- C. Exhortation
 - 1. "Repent, or else I will come quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."
- D. Promise to those who overcome
 - 1. The hidden manna to eat
 - 2. A white stone
 - 3. On the stone a new name written

IV. Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)

- A. Commendation
 - 1. Last works more than the first works
 - 2. For their love, service, faith, and patience
- B. Condemnation
 - 1. Allowed the woman "Jezebel" to teach and beguile His servants
- C. Exhortation
 - 1. Repent
 - 2. Hold fast
- D. Promise to those who overcome
 - 1. Power over the nations
 - 2. Given the morning star

Principles:

- 1. Churches are required to be working.
- 2. Churches must persevere, not becoming weary.
- 3. Churches cannot allow false teachings to continue.
- 4. Churches may suffer persecution because of their stand for the truth.
- 5. Churches that do not repent will lose their fellowship with the Lord.
- 6. If we overcome temptations and trials, we will receive great reward.

Questions:

- 1. Read Acts 19 and describe what happened to Paul while he was in Ephesus.
- 2. What warning did he give the elders of the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:16-38)?
- 3. The church at Ephesus left their "first love." What does that mean?

4. What was the false teaching of Balaam, the Nicolaitans, and Jezebel (Rev. 2:6,14,15,20)?
5. Discuss the "tree of life" as it is spoken of in the Bible (Gen. 2:9; 3:22; Rev. 2:7; 22:2,14).
6. How can one not be afraid of suffering (Rev. 2:10)?
7. What is the "crown of life" and who will receive it (Rev. 2:10; Js. 1:12)?
8. What is the "second death" (Rev. 2:11)?
9. What is the work of the church?
10. Those who did not repent were told that the Lord would "remove your lampstand from its place." What does that mean?

Lesson 24: The Churches of Asia - 2

Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea

Introduction: In this lesson, we will continue our study of the seven churches of Asia. These churches received instruction from the Lord in the book of Revelation. By studying the letters written to these churches, we can learn about problems that troubled Christians in the first century. We can learn the attributes that please and displease the Lord. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 3:6, 13, 22).

I. Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)

- A. Commendation: A few in Sardis had not "defiled their garments;" they were "worthy"(3:4).
- B. Condemnation
 - 1. They had a "name" that they were alive, but in reality they were dead (3:1).
 - 2. Their works were not "perfect" before God (3:2).
- C. Exhortation
 - 1. "Be watchful" (3:2).
 - 2. "Strengthen the things which remain" (3:2).
 - 3. "Remember...how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent" (3:3).
- D. Promise to those who overcome
 - 1. To walk with Christ in white (3:4)
 - 2. Clothed in white garments (3:5)
 - 3. Name not blotted out of the Book of Life (3:5)
 - 4. The Lord will confess their names before the Father and before his angels (3:5).

II. Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)

- A. Commendation
 - 1. They kept the Lord's word (3:8).
 - 2. They did not deny the Lord's name (3:8).
 - 3. They kept the command to persevere.
- B. Condemnation: None
- C. Exhortation: "Hold fast what you have, that no one may take away your crown" (3:11).
- D. Promise to those who overcome
 - 1. To be kept from the hour of trial that would come upon the whole world (3:10)
 - 2. To be made a pillar in the temple of God, and he would go out no more (3:12)
 - 3. The name of God, the name of the city of God, and the Lord's new name would be written on them (3:12).

III. Laodicea (Col. 2:1; 4:13,15,16; Rev. 3:14-22)

- A. Background

1. Paul spoke of those in Laodicea in his epistle to the Colossians (Col. 2:1).
2. Paul spoke of Epaphras' zeal for them (Col. 4:13).
3. Paul sent his greeting to the church in Laodicea (Col. 4:15).
4. The epistle to the Colossians was to be read to the church in Laodicea, and the Colossians were to read the epistle to the Laodiceans (Col. 4:16).

B. Commendation: None

C. Condemnation

1. Neither cold nor hot (3:15)
2. They thought they were wealthy and in need of nothing, but actually they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked (3:17).

D. Exhortation

1. "Buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich" (3:18).
2. Buy "white garments, that you may be clothed (3:18).
3. "Anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see" (3:18).
4. "Be zealous and repent" (3:19).

E. Promise to those who overcome

1. If they will hear the voice of the Lord and "open the door," He will come in to them and dine with them (3:20).
2. They will be granted the right to sit with the Lord on His throne (3:21).

Principles:

1. **Churches may have a good reputation, but only God knows if they are truly faithful (3:1).**
2. **We must watch, strengthen, perfect, persevere, and be zealous in order to please the Lord.**
3. **There may be faithful Christians in a dead church.**
4. **It is possible to have one's name blotted out of the Book of Life. We must hold fast in order to keep our crown.**
5. **The Lord hates apathy and pride.**
6. **The Lord rebukes and chastens those He loves (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6).**

Questions:

1. Describe how a church could have a name that they are alive and yet be dead.
2. How does one "defile his garments" (Rev. 3:4)? With respect to this, comment on Jude 12-19.
3. How are a church's works perfected (Rev. 3:2; Eph. 4:11-16)?

4. What was the church at Sardis told to remember? Explain.

5. What is the Book of Life? How does one get his name in this book, and what can cause it to be blotted out (Rev. 20:12-15)? What is the result if it is blotted out?

6. What promise did Christ make concerning confession (Mt. 10:32,33; Rom. 10:10)?

7. Who can take away our crown (Rev. 3:11; Jn. 10:29)?

8. List some characteristics of apathy in the church.

9. How is the expression "open door" used in Rev. 3:8, 20?

10. How does the Lord rebuke and chasten today (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6)?

Lesson 25: The Church Age, Review - 1

Lesson 1: Matthias, Barsabas, Those Converted On Pentecost

Unity among believers is desired by God (Jn. 17:20,21). Those converted on Pentecost enjoyed unity (Acts 2:42-47). What things are essential for unity?

Lesson 2: Barnabas, The Sanhedrin, Gamaliel

The apostles faced persecution because of the preaching of the gospel (Acts 3:5-22; 4:22-42). Some unbelievers will treat Christians fairly, others will not. What kind of treatment should disciples of Christ expect to day?

Lesson 3: The Lame Man, Ananias and Sapphira

Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives because they lied to God (Acts 5:4). The lie concerned money. What lessons do we learn from the incident about our possessions? Consider also Mk. 8:36,37; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; 1 Tim. 6:7-10, 17-19.

Lesson 4: The Seven, Stephen, Philip

Problems that arise in the church must be dealt with quickly. How were problems in the early church handled (Acts 6:1-7)? Cite other scriptures that deal with solutions to problems; between individual brethren, of false teaching, murmuring, etc..

Lesson 5: Paul, His Early Life and Conversion

Being zealous is no substitute for being right. Before his conversion, Paul zealously sought to destroy the church. What does he later write concerning zeal (Rom. 10:2)? What problems could zeal "not according to knowledge" create for the church today, both inside and outside the church. Is ignorance or sincerity an excuse for misdirected zeal (Acts 23:1; 1 Tim. 1:13-17)?

Lesson 6: Paul's 1st Missionary Journey

Envious people stirred up trouble for Paul as he proclaimed the gospel (Acts 13:45-50). Describe the destructive role that envy has played throughout Bible history. Describe how envy can destroy the unity of a local church.

Lesson 7: Paul's Second Journey

How did Paul approach unbelievers with the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 17:2-4; 17; 18:4, 19)? What does it take to prepare ourselves to do the same thing today?

Lesson 8: Paul's Third Journey & Voyage to Rome

The gospel was made available at considerable cost in the 1st century (Acts 21:30-32; 2 Cor. 11:23-30; Lk. 14:26-33). What does it cost to make the gospel available today, and what has it cost you?

Lesson 9: John Mark, Silas, Luke, James

Other Christians depend on us, and we depend on other Christians. What types of things could characterize us as undependable? If we are undependable what effect will it have on the church? Or, is my part in the work so unimportant that my failure will have no effect (1 Cor. 12:14-31)?

Lesson 10: Simon the Sorcerer, Ethiopian Nobleman, Dorcas, Aeneas

What lessons do we learn from the account of Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8)?

Lesson 11: Cornelius and His Household

Does God hear the prayers of the sinner (Acts 10:1-4; Jn. 9:31; Ps. 18:41; Prov. 1:28; 15:29; Zech. 7:13)?

Lesson 12: Herod, Elymas, Sergius Paulus

Herod died a terrible death because he did not give God the glory (Acts 12:20-23). How can we give God the glory today?

Lesson 26: The Church Age, Review - 2

Lesson 13: Timothy

Paul instructed Timothy to "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2). Explain this instruction and comment on the importance of this type of preaching today.

Lesson 14: Lydia, Philippian Jailer, Priscilla and Aquila, and Apollos

Discuss the work of Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:2-3; 18-21; 26; Rom. 16:3; 1 Cor. 16:18,19; 2 Tim. 4:19).

Lesson 15: The Thessalonians

Paul told the Thessalonians that they "became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus" (1 Thes. 2:14). In what ways should we imitate the churches of Judea?

Lesson 16: The Corinthians

"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). What is the difference between "filthiness" of the flesh, and of the spirit? Is it possible for us to be holy?

Lesson 17: The Galatians and Romans

To what extent must a Christian be subject to governing authorities (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17)?

Lesson 18: The Colossians and Phillipians

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ" (Col. 2:8). How does Paul describe the dangers of philosophy (Col. 2:4-10)? What modern day philosophies are of particular concern to Christians?

Lesson 19: Agabus, Felix, Festus, Agrippa

Compare the reactions of Felix, Festus, and Agrippa to the gospel.

Lesson 20: James and Jude The Brothers of Jesus

What things do we learn about prayer in the book of James (Js. 1:5; 4:3; 5:14-18)?

Lesson 21: Titus, Philemon, Onesimus

Why did Paul send the slave, Onesimus, back to his master (Philemon)? In what ways did the conversion of Onesimus change his relationship with Philemon? Galatians 3:28 says that we are one in Christ Jesus. Does that relationship in Christ erase all distinctions in the relationships of this life? Explain.

Lesson 22: Demas, Hymaneus, Alexander, Diotrophes

How does John describe Diotrophes (3 Jn. 9-12)? How should a "Diotrophes" in the church, today, be handled?

Lesson 23: Churches of Asia - 1: Smyrna, Pergamom, Thyatira, Ephesus

What would a church have to do to have its "lampstand" removed (Rev. 2:5)?

Lesson 24: Churches of Asia - 2: Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea

What is necessary for a church to persevere today?

