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7. (28:1-10) On what island were they shipwrecked?

Answer: Malta.

8. How could Paul survive a snake bite like this (cf. Mark 16:17-18)?

Answer: Jesus gave the apostles the ability to survive such attacks.

9. How was Paul received by Publius and the rest of the islanders?

Answer: The natives showed him hospitality and Publius entertained him for three days while Paul healed his father. News of this miracle brought the sick from all over to Paul's feet.

10. (28:11-22) Where did Paul and his companions find brethren? How were they received by them?

Answer: The brethren at Puteoli invited them to stay a week. Roman brethren came to meet him at Appii Forum and Three Inns.

11. How did the Romans Jews receive Paul?

Answer: Their minds were more open, since they had not been informed by the Jerusalem Hebrews about Paul. They did know that Christianity was spoken against everywhere, though.

12. (28:23-29) What did Paul preach to them?

Answer: Paul preached the kingdom of God, the church, and persuaded them that the prophecies all pointed to Jesus as the Messiah.

13. How did Paul characterize his audience?

Answer: Paul quoted Isaiah in understanding that these people were beyond hearing and healing due to their dull hearts.

14. (28:30-31) How did Paul spend the next two years?

Answer: He lived in his own rented house, though a prisoner, and preached the church with confidence and permission.

The Acts of the Apostles
Authorship: Luke, A.D. 63

The book is addressed to Theophilus, as Luke had also addressed his gospel account. Theophilus means “lover of God” in Greek and may, therefore, refer to an anonymous individual or someone who actually bore that good name. Effectively, the book is addressed to all of every age who love Jehovah and seek to understand the scheme of redemption and the pattern for the New Testament church.

The author is determined to be the beloved physician, Luke, one of Paul’s traveling companions (Acts 16:10, Second Timothy 4:11). Luke’s scientific and analytical nature and education bring to bear a detailed study of every aspect of this history.

The purpose of this epistle is to complete a two volume historical set on the life of Christ and the church he built. Luke’s gospel closes with an emphasis on Christ’s ascension; Acts opens with an account of this event and its effect on the apostles.

At a loss as to what they should do now, two heavenly men and the Holy Spirit map out their first steps. The apostles replenish their number and then begin taking the urgent gospel message to a dying world, beginning on Pentecost in Jerusalem.

This book is actually some of the acts of some of the apostles. The greater number of them was not with Luke and so their work is more obscure to us. Peter is the main character in the first twelve chapters, but the remarkable conversion of former persecutor Saul of Tarsus makes him the leading man thereafter.

Acts shows us the scheme of redemption at work as the preached gospel converts men to Jesus. Numerous conversion accounts are recorded, creating a pattern for preaching and obedience that has lasted ever since.

The book is also valuable in that explains the nature, organization, work and worship of the church to which we claim to be a part.

The Acts of the Apostles appears to be a sequel to Luke’s gospel account and picks up at the point of Christ’s ascension back into heaven as the apostles and disciples wait for guidance concerning what to do next.

As promised, the Holy Spirit arrives to remind them of Christ’s doctrine and to lead them into further truth. Immediately, redemption through the
blood of the savior becomes the overriding theme of the book and the church’s mission. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, audiences as small as one and as large as many thousands are instructed to believe the truth about Jesus, turn from their sins, confess their faith publicly and courageously, and then be baptized for the remission of sins. The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs just twice, once upon Jews (the apostles in Acts 2) and then upon Gentiles (Cornelius’s household in Acts 10), fulfilling Joel’s prophecy and making the gift of the Holy Spirit (his presence and grace) possible for all of mankind.

The word “witness” is used at least 30 times in the book, showing that the early church used the eyewitness testimony of the apostles and others to assert that this same Jesus was resurrected from the dead and is the savior of the world. Eschewing a social or recreational gospel, the various congregations appointed their own overseers and attended to a spiritual mission centered around the forgiveness of sins.

Our English word “martyr” comes from the same root as witness and the Acts shows how often professing Christ could bring about persecution and even martyrdom. Yet this willingness to die for one’s beliefs is surely also good reason for heathen and Jewish audiences to consider the faith more seriously – if some are willing to give their lives for it, there must be something to it. If we are failing to take risks for our faith, we should not be surprised if the lost understand that our beliefs really don’t mean that much to us.

The governing and practice of the early church becomes an obvious pattern. Outside of Jerusalem where the apostles were, local congregations appointed overseers (known variously as elders, pastors, bishops and presbyters) and deacons (or servants) and labored with evangelists and other teachers. Worship consisted of prayers, singing, the Lord’s Supper and a monetary contribution for needy saints. No pope was selected and no denomination was established; they were simply churches of Christ.

Out of this book springs forth a seminal character in church history. Paul emerges from among the fiercest persecutors of the church to becomes its most tireless proponent, abandoning his influence and prosperity within Judaism to embrace Christ and risk his life preaching him. His efforts take him around the known world and put him in extremely dangerous predicaments, but as the book concludes he is still going strong. His dedication is an example for all those who wear the same blessed name of Christ.

Lesson 13: Paul’s Roman Sojourn

1. (27:1-12) How did the commander, Julius, treat prisoner Paul?

2. What was Paul’s prediction regarding the fate of the voyage? Whose advice did the centurion value more?

3. (27:13-26) How did Luke feel when sight of the sun and stars was lost for many days?

4. What did the angel tell Paul?

5. (27:27-38) How did Paul stop the crew from sneaking away from the ship?

6. (27:39-44) What was the plan of the soldiers when their ship was wrecked? What did the centurion advise instead?
8. (26:1-3) Why was Paul glad to stand before Agrippa?
Answer: He recognized that Agrippa was an expert in Jewish affairs, since he was the son of Herod Agrippa I and had the right to appoint the Jewish high priest as a king of part of Palestine.

9. (26:4-11) To what sect of Judaism did Paul belong before obeying Christ? How would you characterize this sect?
Answer: Paul was a Pharisee, which sect claimed to sling dearly to the law, but in reality, bent the law to fit its own artificial precepts.

10. How does Paul characterize his profession before he obeyed the gospel?
Answer: Paul notes that he was a terrible persecutor of the church, who imprisoned the saints, induced the recantation of others and voted for their death if they would not commit apostasy.

11. (26:12-23) When Jesus appeared to Paul on that road, to what group of people did the Lord intend to send the man? Why?
Answer: Paul was to go to the Gentiles so that they could receive the forgiveness of their sins and an inheritance among the sanctified faithful.

12. Paul’s gospel preaching consisted of three important elements. List them.
Answer: He preached that people should repent, turn to God and do works befitting repentance.

Answer: Festus accused Paul of being mad from so much study. Agrippa told Paul that he was almost persuaded to become a Christian.

Lesson 1: Paul’s First Evangelistic Tour

1. (13:1-12) Name the two evangelists whose work this part of Acts describes. Who is their assistant?


3. What helped convince Sergius Paulus that Paul was honest?


5. (13:26-35) What does Paul claim the rulers of Jerusalem ignored in killing Jesus?

6. How did God beget Jesus, according to verse 33?

7. (13:36-43) What benefit was received by those who believed in the identity and resurrection of Jesus?

8. What warning did Paul give to the scoffers?
9. (13:44-51) Who judged the scoffers to be unworthy of eternal life?
Answer: The scoffers themselves.

10. (14:1-7) What did the unbelieving Jews do?
Answer: They stirred up the minds of the Gentiles and embittered them against the brethren.

11. (14:8-20) How many months or years did Paul’s healing require? Should we expect the same from today’s “faith healers”?
Answer: It was instantaneous unlike today’s fake healers who promise much and deliver nothing.

12. How did the people of Lystra react to Paul’s miraculous healing of the lame man?
Answer: They believed that Paul and Barnabas were gods come down in the likeness of men and prepared to sacrifice oxen to them.

13. What did these people do at the Jews’ influence?
Answer: The people then were persuaded to stone Paul and leave him for dead.

14. (14:21-28) How did they establish the autonomy of each local congregation?
Answer: They appointed to elders in every church.

15. What did they do upon returning to Antioch?
Answer: They gave a report on the work done on their trip.

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Lesson 12: Defense Before Agrippa

1. (25:1-12) What was the plot of the Jewish high priest and the chief men? Is this proper behavior for men in their position?

2. In what three areas did Paul claim innocence to Festus?

3. Why did Festus ask him about facing these charges in Jerusalem?

4. What were Paul’s opinions of the death penalty?

5. How did Paul escape the ill-fated return to Jerusalem?

6. (25:13-22) Festus tells Agrippa what is truly the heart of the Jews’ problems with Paul. What is it?

7. (25:23-27) Festus reveals his concerns about sending Paul on to Caesar. What are they?
7. For what reason did Paul always strive to be inoffensive in conscience toward God and men?

Answer: He had in mind the resurrection of the just and unjust to God's eternal judgment.

8. (24:17-21) What charge did he make against the Asian Jews who brought all this trouble on him?

Answer: He said that they did not at all find him with a mob or tumult and should have been present if they thought his offenses great enough to prosecute.

9. What one statement did he recognize could have bothered his accusers?

Answer: "Concerning the resurrection of the dead, I am being judged by you this day."

10. (24:22-23) For whom did Felix now adjourn the proceedings? How was Paul to be treated in the interim?

Answer: Felix adjourned until Claudius Lysias could come and testify. Until then, Paul was to be given liberty of visits and provision from friends as he waited in jail.

11. (24:24-26) What is peculiar about Drusilla?

Answer: She was Jewish.

12. What three things did Paul preach about to them?

Answer: Righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come.

13. (24:27) What happened when Felix left office?

Answer: Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus and left Paul bound as a favor to the Jews.

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Lesson 2: Conflict Over Circumcision

1. (15:1-5) What doctrine were the Judean teachers bringing to Antioch? Of what Jewish sect were the Judean teachers? Why was this teaching particularly unwelcome in Antioch (11:19-21)?

Answer: The converted Pharisees were teaching that one had to be circumcised according to the law of Moses to be saved. Antioch was home to the first widespread Gentile conversions.

2. What position on this doctrine did Paul and Barnabas take? How did they propose to handle the dispute?

Answer: They opposed the Judaizing doctrine of Gentiles being compelled to observe Moses with circumcision. They decided to take the matter to the apostles and the elders of the Jerusalem church from whence this error had come.

3. (15:6-12) What evidence did Peter present to prove that circumcision was not necessary for Gentiles to gain God's approval?

Answer: He noted the sanction of the Holy Spirit in his preaching to Gentiles like Cornelius.

4. Were Peter, Paul and Barnabas teaching that men should not be circumcised?

Answer: No.

5. (15:13-21) To what prophet did James appeal in his reasoning? What did this prophet add to dispel the controversy?
Lesson 11: Paul’s Defense Before Felix

1. (23:23-35) Why did Claudius Lysias call for so many people to accompany Paul to Caesarea?

2. With what violation of Roman law was Paul charged? Why was he in custody?

3. What reason did Felix give for delaying Paul’s hearing?

4. (24:1-9) Who were Paul’s accusers that came down from Jerusalem for his hearing? What charge did they levy?

5. (24:10-16) Why did Paul express gratitude that Felix was judging him?

6. Did Paul confess all the charges against him? What did he confess and what did he deny?
Lesson 3: The Macedonian Call
Acts of the Apostles 15:36-16:40

1. (15:36-41) What was Paul’s next trip? What caused friction between him and Barnabas?

2. What is the composition of the two preaching pairs?


4. (16:6-10) What kept them from entering Bithynia? What beckoned them to Macedonia instead?

5. (16:11-15) What did they do upon arriving first in Philippi?

6. How was Lydia converted?
7. (16:16-24) Describe the slave girl Paul encounters next. How did her owners react when Paul exorcised the spirit?

Answer: She had a spirit of divination and brought her owners profit by fortune-telling. She continually cried out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation" for many days, annoying Paul. They were angry and seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the authorities in the marketplace.

9. What sentence did the magistrates issue?

Answer: The magistrates demanded that the preachers be beaten with rods and thrown into the inner prison and kept securely.

10. (16:25-34) What were the preachers doing at midnight?

Answer: Paul and Silas were singing hymns and praying while the other prisoners listened.

11. How were they released from their bonds?

Answer: A great earthquake shook the prison, opening the doors and loosening the chains.

12. How did the jailer react to this scene? What stopped him?

Answer: The jailer decided to commit suicide when he thought his prisoners had escaped. Paul stopped him.

13. How did the jailer show his penitence? Why didn’t they wait until an official church assembly to baptize him? Why didn’t they take a vote on his “experience”?

Answer: The jailer took them home and washed their stripes and was baptized immediately. No assembly or vote was scripturally authorized or necessary.

14. (16:35-40) Why did Paul object to being released in the morning by the magistrates?

Answer: He wanted to expose them for punishing him unlawfully.

Lesson 10: Sanhedrin Defense

1. (22:30-23:11) Before whom is Paul now being interrogated?

Answer: The Romans placed Paul before the Jewish chief priests and council to discover why they were accusing him.

2. What claim does Paul make as his speech begins? How can this be reconciled with his record as a zealous persecutor of saints?

Answer: Paul claims to have lived in all good conscience throughout his life. Even his persecution of saints was in obedience to the dictates of his conscience, though his conscience was clearly misguided itself.

3. How did the chief priest respond? What did Paul say? Why did he then apologize?

Answer: The chief priest unlawfully had him slapped. Paul called him a whitewashed wall and then apologized when he realized to whom he was speaking.

4. What realization shaped Paul’s strategy in dealing with this crowd?

Answer: He realized they were divided among Pharisees and Sadducees and turned them against one another by speaking of the resurrection, which the Sadducees denied.

5. What prophecy does Paul receive once back in his barracks?

Answer: Christ tells him that he will also have to testify in Rome, signifying that this episode is far from over.
5. (22:22-29) What made the crowd cease listening to Paul and demand his death?
Answer: They heard him claim that Jesus wanted the Gentiles to receive the gospel as well as the Jews and they were jealous over God.

6. What claim did Paul make that troubled the Roman soldiers?
Answer: Paul claimed his Roman citizenship, which prevented him from being beaten while yet untried and uncondemned.

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**Lesson 4: Greece**

Acts of the Apostles 17:1-34

1. (17:1-9) Where did Paul find an audience upon arriving in Thessalonica? What was his lesson about?

2. Some people today claim this passage shows that Christians should continue to keep the Sabbath according to the law of Moses. What do the following passages indicate about the Sabbath?
   - Exodus 31:12-17:
   - Numbers 15:32-36:
   - Numbers 28:1-2, 9-10:
   - Second Corinthians 3:4-8:

Answer: The unbelieving Jews opposed Paul because they envied his success and influence. They incited a mob riot that threatened Paul and the other brethren in the city, finally expelling the apostle after Jason was compelled to make bail.


5. (17:16-34) What provoked Paul’s spirit in Athens? What did he do about it?
Lesson 9: Paul’s Defense

1. (22:1-5) How does Paul describe his life before obeying Jesus?

2. (22:6-11) What affect did this light and the message Paul heard have on him?

3. (22:12-16) What did Ananias tell Paul in Damascus?

4. (22:17-21) Why did Jesus send Paul out of Jerusalem?

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6. What was the hobby of the Athenians?
Answer: They loved to hear any new philosophy.

7. Whom did Paul proclaim to them?
Answer: Paul preached about their “unknown God,” who created the world and man.

8. What comment does Paul make about God’s accessibility?
Answer: “He is not far from each one of us.”

9. How will a plea of ignorance in the judgment day affect one’s eternal fate? Why?
Answer: It will not change one’s condemnation, for God will not overlook religious ignorance as there is no excuse for it.
7. What did the Jerusalem elders suggest Paul do to assuage the concerns of the Hebrew saints?
   Answer: They suggested he provide for the ceremonial purifying of four men and himself at the temple to show that he still revered Moses.

8. Did this suggestion indicate that the Jerusalem elders had changed their minds about the relationship between Gentiles and the law of Moses?
   Answer: No, but they wanted Jews to understand that they could continue to observe its customs while Gentiles did not.

   Answer: They accused him of teaching against the Jews, the law and the temple. They especially accused him of bringing Gentiles into the temple, which was a capital offense.

10. (21:30-36) What prevented them from killing Paul right then?
    Answer: The tumult reached the garrison and the commander sent soldiers through the tunnel and streets to the temple to see that Roman law was upheld.

11. Did the riotous Jews immediately respect the authority of the Roman soldiers and cease afflicting Paul?
    Answer: No, they continued chasing him until the soldiers had to carry him away to save him.

12. (21:37-40) Who did the commander think Paul was?
    Answer: The commander thought Paul was an Egyptian false prophet who had tried to lead a rebellion of 4000 assassins in the wilderness (Josephus, Wars, ii.13.5).

13. What request did Paul then make of the commander?
    Answer: He asked to speak to the mob.
7. What do we learn about Gallio’s character by comparing verses 14-15 with what happens in verse 17?

Answer: He was very political, claiming only to care about executing Roman law, but ignoring it when Sosthenes was beaten right in front of his judgment seat by the same Jews.

8. (18:18-23) Who became Paul’s new traveling companions? What did they do as they traveled from church to church?

Answer: Aquila and Priscilla began traveling with Paul, who strengthened the disciples in every church.

Lesson 8: Jewish Danger

1. (21:1-6) Where was Paul going and why was he in such a hurry (20:13-16)? Why did Paul’s ship land at Tyre?

Answer: Paul was hurrying to be in Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost. It was to unload its cargo there.

2. What discovery led Paul to remain at Tyre for a week? What was the attitude in his departure from there?

Answer: He found some brethren there. When they parted, all the brethren accompanied him to the edge of the city where they prayed together.

3. (21:7-14) Whom did Paul and his companions meet again in Caesarea? Why is this man noteworthy?

Answer: Philip the evangelist took the gospel to Samaria and converted the Ethiopian eunuch before eventually settling here.

4. What was the prophecy of Agabus? How are Paul’s words here somewhat like those of Christ before the crucifixion (John 12:27-28)?

Answer: Agabus signified that Paul would be arrested in Jerusalem by taking the apostle’s belt and binding himself with it as he spoke. Like Jesus, Paul was ready to suffer indignity and even death if it was the will of God that he do so.

5. (21:15-25) How did the Jerusalem elders react to news that many Gentiles were becoming God’s elect?

Answer: They glorified the Lord.

6. Why then did they express concern to Paul about his work among the Gentiles?
6. What awaited Paul in Jerusalem?
An answer: Not only Pentecost observance, but imprisonment and affliction, according to the Holy Spirit.

7. (20:25-27) How could Paul claim that he was innocent of the blood of all men? What has this to do with his former life as a persecutor?
Answer: Paul was innocent because he had never shunned to declare all of God's will, no matter the dangers or ramifications for himself. His former life of persecution has nothing to do with us, except to the degree that he repented and made up for it to some extent.

8. (20:28-35) What word does Paul use that is evidently interchangeable with elders? How does he compare their work to an occupation involving animals?
Answer: Paul calls them overseers and their work shepherding.

9. What warning did he give these men?
Answer: He warned them about dangers from without and within the church, as grievous wolves would seek to draw away the sheep.

10. (20:36-38) What made these men weep?
Answer: They were sorry that they would see each other no more.

Lesson 6: Ephesus Work


2. How did Priscilla and Aquila handle his deficiency?

3. How did Apollos handle the Jews in Achaia?

4. (19:1-10) Did these disciples receive the miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit when they obeyed the baptism of John? When they obeyed the baptism of Jesus? When?

5. (19:11-20) How did an evil spirit respond to the exorcism attempts of the seven sons of Sceva?

6. How did the magicians bear fruits worthy of repentance?
7. (19:21-27) What was the complaint leveled against the Way by Demetrius? How did the people respond to his speech?

Answer: He objected to the Christians’ anti-idolatry doctrine that threatened to harm his livelihood, making gods for the people. The Ephesians then began to riot and take captive Paul’s companions. They continued to cry, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”.

8. (19:35-41) Who put an end to the riot? How?

Answer: The city clerk calmed down the people by reminding them of the law which they were in danger of breaking.

Lesson 7: The Ephesian Elders

1. (20:1-6) What did Paul do both for the disciples in Corinth and those in Macedonia? Explain.

Answer: He exhorted them – encouraged them to be faithful and to enjoy brotherhood.

2. (20:7-12) What did the disciples do on the first day of the week? Why is this significant?

Answer: The disciples gathered to break bread and listen to Paul’s preaching. This provides a pattern for the worship on Sunday.

3. What happened to Eutychus?

Answer: He fell asleep and then out a third story window, only to be resurrected by Paul.

4. (20:13-16) Why was Paul opposed to spending time in Asia?

Answer: He wanted to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.


Answer: The Ephesian elders came to be exhorted by him.