

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 03 Dec 2017 Acts 13 The Gospel Message
- 2) 10 Dec Acts 14 Misguided Worship
- 3) 17 Dec Acts 15:1-31 Available to ALL
- 4) 24 Dec Luke 2 Christmas – The Promised One
- 5) 31 Dec Acts 15:32-41 | 16:1-5 Strengthened
- 6) 07 Jan 2018 Acts 16 A changed Family
- 7) 14 Jan Acts 17 The Unknown Known
- 8) 21 Jan Ps 139 Sanctity of Life – Value ALL
- 9) 28 Jan Acts 18-19 Incomplete Picture
- 10) 04 Feb Acts 20-21 Delivered
- 11) 11 Feb Acts 22-25 The Testimony**
- 12) 18 Feb Acts 26-27 Answering Critics
- 13) 25 Feb Acts 28 Always on Mission

INTRODUCTION

- Luke spends considerable amount of ink (3 chapters) depicting Paul defending himself before his fellow Jews, before the Jewish Council, before governors Felix and Festus, and before visiting dignitary Agrippa II and his sister, Bernice. It must be important

The Players	Their Role
1. Paul	• He just wanted to do God's will
2. Ananias of Damascus	• Well known disciple of Christ
3. The Way	• Christianity was a cult to many
4. Ephesian Jews	• The instigators of Paul's trouble
5. Pharisees	• They believed in the afterlife, but not in Jesus being the Messiah
6. Sadducees	• They didn't believe in the afterlife; that's why they were sad you see
7. Jewish Council (Sanhedrin)	• Composed of up to 70 Pharisees, Sadducees, Lawyers, & Scribes
8. Centurions	• Military leader of ~100 soldiers
9. Captain Claudius Lysias	• Oversaw several centurions
10. Ananias, Chief Priest	• Herod, king of Chalcis, in AD 48, promoted Ananias to priest
11. Suicide Squad	• Bent on radicalism
12. Paul's nephew	• God used him to rat on others
13. Governor Felix	• Governor of Judea, AD 51-60
14. Governor Festus	• Appointed by Nero to succeed Felix, AD 60.
15. Lawyer Tertullus	• Hired by the Jews for Paul's trial
16. Caesar	• Nero at this time
17. King Agrippa II & Bernice (Looking at Bernice's Bio, why did she chase after men who were in seats of power?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brother & sister of Herod Agrippa I • Bernice was the wife of Herod, King of Chalcis till he died, then she lived with her brother, Agrippa II, incestuously. • Bernice later married Polemon II, king of Pontus or Cilicia; but eventually became mistress of both Roman emperors Vespasian and Titus (70s-80s AD)

Passage	Comments
Acts 22:1-30	<p>Paul's Defense Before the Jews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv1-5. Paul had some impressive credentials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Born a Jew in a prominent Roman city of Tarsus ♦ Educated by Gamaliel, a renowned Pharisee & strict doctor/teacher of the Law of Moses ♦ Persecuted "the Way" – thought to be a perverted cult by most Jews. He imprisoned believers and tortured them till they blasphemed..... Acts 26:11 • vv6-21. Paul thought he was doing God a favor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Would you want to see an ISIS terrorist who beat and beheaded Christians become a Christian?

Passage	Comments
23:1-35	<p>Paul Before the Jewish Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next, Paul was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin, composed of 70 men by tradition (Num 11:16,17) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why couldn't these spiritual leaders, who were knowledgeable in the law of Moses come to grips with Paul's mission? What were they missing? • vv12-22. A conspiracy was formed to kill Paul. Notice how God worked behind the scenes to reveal the plot and move Paul closer and closer to Rome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Does God still work providentially today? . Oh Yeah! ♦ Any recent examples to share?
24:1-27	<p>Paul Before Felix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v12. Notice that Paul knew when to witness and when not to witness. Why was it inappropriate for Paul to witness while he was paying his vows in Jerusalem? Yet, he often visited synagogues to witness. • v16. Principle of maintaining a blameless conscience before God and men. What does this mean? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Is it appropriate to witness while on work time? ♦ What other times is it inappropriate to witness?
25:1-27	<p>Paul Before Festus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v11. Paul appeals to Caesar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Principle of Standing Firm. We may be a vulnerable lot, but we are never commanded to be floor mats ♦ We need to realize when it is appropriate to fight, or flee, stand firm, or surrender & suffer. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fight.....Acts 25:11b 2. Flee.....Mat 10:23 3. Stand Firm.....1Cor 16:13 4. Surrender & Suffer.....Rom 8:36

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Just like the Pharisees and Sadducees, many in the world and even in the church, fail to grasp the teachings and sacrifice of Jesus – but if we love God, teach we must, even if it means loss of freedom, loss of a job, or even the loss of life.
- BUT, keep a clear conscience before God & man. If anyone suffers for Christ, his reward is great and he is not to be ashamed, but it is to glorify God.....[1Peter 4:16](#)

NEXT WEEK: Acts 26-27. Paul is sent to Rome for trial, and suffers shipwreck on Malta.

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



"Its from our church... we've been called up for active duty."