

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

1) 6 March 2016.....	Acts 1 .....	Entrusted
2) 13 March.....	Acts 2 .....	Empowered and Unified
3) 20 March.....	Acts 3 .....	Benevolent
4) 27 March.....	Luke 24 .....	Resurrected!
5) 3 April.....	Acts 4 .....	Courageous
6) 10 April.....	Acts 5 .....	Integrity & Faithful
7) 17 April.....	Acts 6 .....	Selfless
8) 24 April.....	Acts 7 .....	Forgiving
9) 1 May.....	Acts 8 .....	Obedient
10) 8 May.....	Acts 9 .....	Converted & Bold
11) 15 May.....	Acts 10 .....	Accepting
12) 22 May.....	Acts 11 .....	Engaging
13) 29 May.....	Acts 12 .....	Extraordinary

**INTRODUCTION**

- Lifeway opted to bypass Chapters 3, 7, and 11, but since I am a stickler for expository teaching I opted to weave these chapters in.
- In this chapter we see 1) Peter explaining why Gentiles are part of God's Kingdom; 2) Scattered Christians continue to convert many; 3) Even more come to the Lord when God's word is manifested in godly believers; and 4) There are NT prophets prophesying.

Passage	Comments
Acts 11: 1-18	<p><b>Peter Gave Details of Gentile Salvation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v2. Notice that the troublemakers were “they that were of the circumcision” – the legalists of the group</li> <li>• vv4-18. Yet Peter provided sufficient details to quell their concerns and convince them God wanted to save Gentiles along with Jews</li> <li>• Though, circumcision means nothing (1Cor 7:18,19) the issue was not going to die easily in the church's early years                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Paul had to visit Jerusalem because of a dissension over circumcision ..... Acts 15:2</li> <li>♦ False brethren stir up others over the legalistic practice of circumcision ..... Gal 2:3-5</li> <li>♦ Paul, to be a good witness, had Timothy circumcised – and fortunately the church grew ..... Acts 16:1-5</li> <li>♦ Paul, however, did not have Titus circumcised to appease Jews – and the gospel flourished.. Gal 2:3-5</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Principles of Liberty vs Legalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When man's traditions are put on par with Scripture, we will have problems, and going beyond what God intends can be destructive</li> <li>• To save some and reach those with a sensitive conscience we might have to put ourselves on their level as Paul did by not eating meat (1Cor 8:13) and as Timothy did by getting circumcised (Acts 16:3)</li> <li>• BUT, to appease false brethren is ludicrous as Paul showed by not having Titus circumcised ..... Gal 2:4</li> <li>• We are not to be excessively righteous..... Ecc 7:16</li> </ul>
11:19-26	<p><b>Large Numbers Continue to Come to Christ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v19. The dispersed Jews preferred to witness to other Jews at first. After all, that was their comfort zone</li> <li>• v20. But there are always a few God prepares to break through those comfort zones</li> <li>• v21. Either way, God can bless both endeavors to allow “a great number to believe” and turn to Him</li> <li>• vv22-26. And sometimes God uses able-bodied saints to further increase and bless the body of Christ                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ What steps can we take to be like Barnabas, who was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and was willing to take risks?</li> <li>♦ What is stopping us from becoming like Barnabas?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
11:27-28	<p><b>Evidence of New Testament Prophets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many Christians, especially those in the Pentecostal camp, lean toward the existence of NT prophets today who can both forth tell (i.e., preach the Gospel) and foretell (i.e., predict) future events accurately, as Elijah, Elisha, and Agabus did with direct guidance from God</li> <li>• My challenge to them is if we still have Apostles today, men of the same caliber of Peter's and Paul's, who are verifiably hand selected and taught by Christ, Himself, then it is reasonable for Prophets to still exist</li> <li>• BUT, since we do not have Apostles today, as evident by “the whole counsel of God,” the office of a Prophet has thereby ceased, along with other gifts of the Spirit</li> <li>• A key passage to consider is Hebrews 2:3-4. This passage conveys in “aorist” or past tense that supernatural wonders and gifts, once given to those who were directly taught by the Lord (i.e., original Apostles and disciples), were used to “confirm” the Gospel message.</li> <li>• The world will witness supernatural wonders and utterances once again when the two witnesses identified in Revelation 11 come on the world scene</li> </ul>
11:29-30	<p><b>Christians Provide Relief</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The early Christians joined forces to send relief to other believers in and around Jerusalem                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Principle to Live By #1.</b> Notice, they sent relief to other believers. We have to look after family first.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Question 1.</b> Why didn't God provide miraculous relief to those suffering believers in Judea?</li> <li>• <b>Question 2.</b> Why distress other believers?</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ <b>Principle to Live By #2.</b> Notice, they sent relief by the hands of proven disciples, Barnabas and Saul.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Question.</b> Why not send money by deacons?</li> <li>• <b>Answer.</b> They could've used deacons. But, Paul and Barnabas probably wanted to visit Judea</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS**

- To promote church growth and position ourselves and the church body to be blessed, we should always do things God's way.
- Yes, we need to discern when and how to fight, run, or comply

**NEXT WEEK: Acts 12.** We see a stark contrast with Apostles James and Peter. Both are jailed, assuredly the church along with the rest of the Apostles pray for both. Yet, James is killed and Peter is released. But if they prayed in faith, why wasn't James released?

