

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) 01 Jan 2018 Acts 16 A changed Family
- 7) 07 Jan Acts 17 The Unknown Known
- 8) 14 Jan Ps 139 Sanctity of Life – Value ALL
- 9) 21 Jan Acts 18-19 Incomplete Picture
- 10) 28 Jan Acts 20-21 Delivered
- 11) 04 Feb Acts 22-25 The Testimony
- 12) 11 Feb Acts 26-27 Answering Critics
- 13) 18 Feb Acts 28 Always on Mission

INTRODUCTION

- Extreme Legalism is alive and well – and so is extreme Liberalism
- What is the difference between good and bad legalism?
- What is the difference between good and bad liberalism?
- Are we wise enough to know the difference? Does it really matter?

LEGALISM vs LIBERALISM TEST:.....True/False?

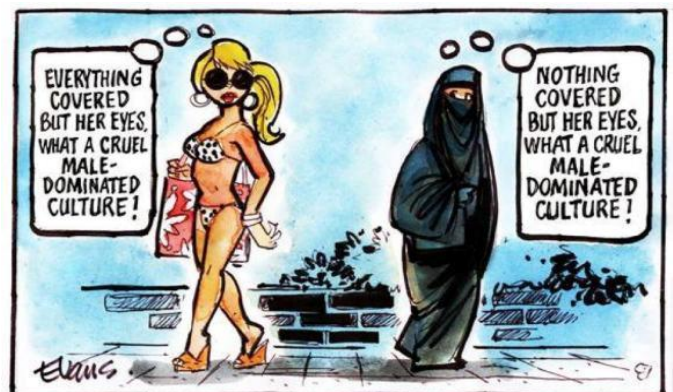
1. Pastors and Deacons must be men..... T / F?
2. Older men can teach younger women how they should love their husbands..... T / F?
3. Exceeding the speed limit is not a sin..... T / F?
4. It's OK to say dag-nab-it, son-of-a-gun, gosh-darn.... T / F?
5. It's OK to watch risqué shows..... T / F?

Passage	Comments
Acts 15:1	<p>What Do's Do We Need To Do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some say we must do the following to be saved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We must be good We must be baptized ♦ We must recite the sinners prayer ♦ We must walk the aisle We must _____?? • Pharisees and Scribes considered their legalistic surgery to be a must thing to do for salvation • The law of God, which has lots of DO's & DON'Ts, has a distinct purpose → to make us aware of our sin and to lead us to Christ Rom 3:20; Gal 3:24 • The one work we need to DO to be saved comes from Jesus, Himself → and that is to BELIEVE on Him (to trust, rely on His atoning work)... Jn 6:28-29 • Any other DO's and DON'T's might mature us & keep us from harm, but they won't save us
15:2	<p>Tough Issues Call for Tough Discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some secondary issues might need to be tackled or worse problems can ensue, such as loss of unity and peace within the church, or even a church split • What are some tough secondary issues today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Calvinism? <input type="checkbox"/> Pentecostalism? <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____? • How do we tackle tough problems today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wait till the congregation dwindles down to half <input type="checkbox"/> Go to another church <input type="checkbox"/> Ignore it <input type="checkbox"/> Seek wise counsel early <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____? • Just remember Titus 3:9, "Avoid the foolish stuff..." This doesn't mean we should avoid tough issues, but we need to discern and avoid energy-sapping, time-wasting arguments that deliver no value and cause more harm than good
15:3	<p>Always Make Time for Encouragement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice, Paul's entourage was "sent on their way by the church" – IOW, everyone was behind getting this problem fixed – and they could not do it alone • Even though Paul was under duress to resolve a major church problem, he took time to encourage others in his travels. He did not mope or complain, but realized everyone was going to mature thru this

Passage	Comments
15:4-21	<p>Tough Problems Call for Tough Leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv4-6. Though the church "received" Paul's entourage with open arms, it was the Apostles and Elders who came together to "look into the matter" • This effort was going to need the most spiritually mature among them to resolve this issue quickly, correctly, decisively, and gently • An ad-hoc church committee composed of nice people of varying levels of spiritual maturity was not going to get this job done the right way or in a timely manner, even with Robert's Rules of Order • Even the elders, themselves, were going to come at this from different sides – BUT they had to be mature enough to come at this in the right Spirit, in gentleness, and for God's ultimate glory • v7. "After there had been much debate..." Presumably, everyone had their say and no one was rudely interrupted without an apology. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ They looked at this issue from every angle, for wisdom often has 2 sides Job 11:6 • Is our church set up to handle such tough conflict? Should it be? How can we get there if we are not there and should be there? Who are the spiritually mature "elders" in our church?
15:22-30	<p>Problem Solved – But Can We Get a Consensus?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, the Elders concluded the matter, and it was not based on culture but on God's word • Now, could they get church acceptance or buy-in? • Notice what they did and how they did it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Decisive – All Elders were in agreement ♦ Definitive – There was no ambiguity what to do ♦ Concrete – They put it in writing for the record ♦ Confirmation – They sent "leading" men with Paul to confirm and substantiate the resolution
15:31	<p>The Result was Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone was encouraged!..... WHY? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Problems can be fixed <input type="checkbox"/> Unity is possible <input type="checkbox"/> Good mature spiritual leaders are available

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / CONSIDERATIONS

- If the Bible is our source of absolute truth, how do we live up to the following passages without being labeled a legalist or a liberal?
 - ♦ Let no unwholesome talk come out of our mouth..... [Eph 4:29](#)
 - ♦ Let no unwholesome thing come before our eyes..... [Ps 101:3](#)
 - ♦ Be subject to the laws of the land..... [Rom 13:1](#)
- There may not be a win-win situation every time. We might have to wear some labels proudly → such as teetotaler, conservative, legalist, homophobic → if we take a holy life seriously.



Sometimes the pendulum swings too far both ways