

**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**

- The early church missionaries made time to teach and preach long and hard and the results were the church grew in numbers daily

Passage	Comments
Acts 15:32	<p><b>They Encouraged Them with a Lengthy Message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long is lengthy? <input type="checkbox"/> 30 minutes? <input type="checkbox"/> 2 hours?</li> <li>Trivia: Longest sermon on record is 53 hours, 18 min.</li> <li>• How long of a message could you listen to without getting bored or tired or falling asleep?</li> <li>• Could you enjoy a long message if the speaker answered tough questions or taught life-changing principles instead of uttering a 1-way monologue?</li> </ul>
15:33-35	<p><b>They Spent Time There...and They Stayed There!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why be intentional in spending time with people? After all, you will see them again in Heaven!</li> <li>• How do you properly send people away after they sacrificed so much to reach you and tell you a message that positively changes you forever?</li> </ul> <p>Give them: <input type="checkbox"/> Food and Drink?   <input type="checkbox"/> Handshake? <input type="checkbox"/> Hugs?   <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Support? <input type="checkbox"/> Other?</p>
15:36-38	<p><b>Trouble in Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The A Team, Paul and Barnabas, were at odds over Mark, who deserted them on a previous missions trip</li> <li>• Who's at fault? <input type="checkbox"/> Paul? <input type="checkbox"/> Barnabas? <input type="checkbox"/> Mark?</li> <li>• If Paul and Barnabas, who were identified as prophets and teachers in <b>Acts 13:1</b>, were spiritual giants, why couldn't they quickly resolve a minor issue such as this? Or was it a minor issue? Were emotions involved?</li> <li>• Mark might have been Barnabas' nephew or cousin, so the tendency is to stick up for family ..... <b>Col 4:10</b></li> <li>• Was Paul prideful or stubborn? Or was he biblical?</li> </ul>
Consider how Paul grew more humbled, it seems, as the years passed by	<p>Paul came across as almost arrogant early in his ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I might be the least of the apostles...but I labored more than all of them" ..... <b>1Cor 15:9-10</b> (AD 57)</li> <li>• "I am not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles" ..... <b>2Cor 11:5</b> (AD 57/58)</li> </ul> <p>About 5 years later Paul seemed to drop a notch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I am less than the least of all saints" ..... <b>Eph 3:8</b> (AD 62)</li> </ul> <p>A few years after that, he dropped another notch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I am the worst of sinners" ..... <b>1Tim 1:15</b> (AD 65/66)</li> </ul>
15:39-41	<p><b>Solution → Split Fellowship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• v39. Barnabas chose Mark – and you never heard of any of their exploits</li> <li>• v40. Paul chose Silas – and they went on to do great things – Strengthening churches (v40); casting out demons (16:18); saving people (16:31); giving the Holy Spirit with evidence of tongues (19:6); healing with his handkerchief (19:11-12); raising the dead (20:9-10); and healing everyone on the island of Malta (28:9)</li> <li>• If Paul was wrong about how he handled the situation with Mark, would the Holy Spirit have blessed his trip so wondrously, or would He have blessed Barnabas more?</li> </ul> <p><b>3 Scenarios were Possible</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Paul was in the wrong and Barnabas was in the right</li> <li>2. Barnabas was in the wrong and Paul was in the right</li> <li>3. Or both men were wrong</li> </ol>

Passage	Comments
Who was in the Wrong? Paul or Barnabas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Luke is silent about who might have been in the wrong, so it must be for our learning</li> <li>• Barnabas came to Paul's defense in <b>Acts 9:27</b>, &amp; now he is an encouragement to Mark. Was Paul being bitter &amp; unforgiving against Mark? Or is there more to the story?</li> <li>• Why didn't the Apostle Paul, who would have been more spiritually-minded, theoretically speaking, in the spirit of gentleness just forgive, forget, and move on with Mark?</li> <li>• Consider some of Paul's teachings on this issue:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ For the sake of unity, someone should willingly chose to be wronged ..... <b>1Cor 6:7</b></li> <li>♦ Let everything be done in love ..... <b>1Cor 16:14</b></li> <li>♦ He who is spiritual should look after the weaker ones and restore them ..... <b>Gal 6:1</b></li> <li>♦ Avoid quarreling, be gentle, and show perfect courtesy toward all people ..... <b>Titus 3:2</b> (ESV)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>BUT consider this.</b> Assuming Paul was in the right, he must have sensed something about young Mark that Barnabas was blind too that could've been disastrous for all if Mark had joined them on another missions trip             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Which meant, Paul was in the right to hold his ground and not to capitulate to have Mark join them</li> <li>♦ Now, it seems more plausible why the Holy Spirit blessed the travels of Paul &amp; Silas so wondrously</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Principle of Being Steadfast.</b> There are times to be immovable, entrenched, unyielding in situations when sin, safety, or the Gospel is at stake (e.g., would you let a 5-year-old play with a loaded hand gun even if another adult said it was OK cause he has to learn) .... <b>1Cor 15:58</b></li> </ul>
Acts 16:1-3	<p><b>Timothy → A Man Well Spoken Of</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you go through a painful surgery just to share the Gospel with someone? Timothy didn't even think twice.</li> <li>• <b>Like Paul, Timothy would do anything to be able to talk to anyone about someone who can save everyone</b></li> <li>• BUT, why did Paul capitulate on this issue to have Tim circumcised knowing it means nothing? ..... <b>1Cor 7:18,19</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ <b>Principle of Not Offending a Weak Conscience.</b> What are we willing to cut off from our lives to further God's kingdom &amp; grow His church? ..... <b>1Cor 8:12-13</b></li> <li>♦ In contrast, Paul did not have Titus circumcised just to appease some false brethren ..... <b>Gal 2:3-5</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
16:4-5	<p><b>Delivering Decrees and Growing the Church</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the "decrees" which were decided upon by the Apostles and elders? ..... <b>Acts 20:27</b></li> <li>• How do you strengthen someone in the faith? In brief, it means sharing God's word and the hearers live it out</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / CONSIDERATIONS**

- **You Can't Keep a Good Christian Down.** Mark went from Zero to Hero with the Apostle Paul in about 10 years. People do grow up ..... **2Tim 4:11**

**NEXT WEEK: Acts 16.** The Holy Spirit directs Paul's travels by a dream; Paul converts the first European to the Lord; Paul also crashes the stock market, gets beaten for it, ends up in jail, and leads his jailer to Christ – all in a day's work for the Lord's anointed.

