

LESSONS THIS QUARTER {10}

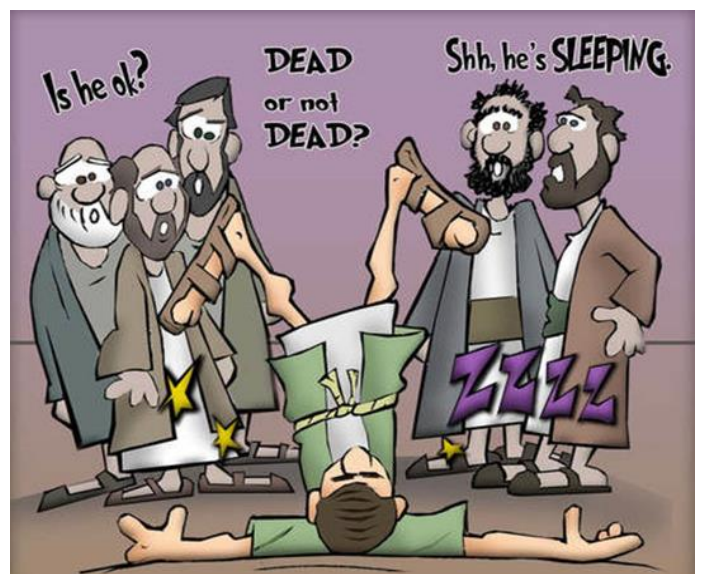
- 1) 01 Sep 2024 Acts 13a Sent
- 2) 08 Sep Acts 13b The Task
- 3) 15 Sep Acts 14 The Truth
- 4) 22 Sep Acts 15a The Gospel
- 5) 29 Sep Acts 15b Kingdom Work
- 6) 06 Oct Acts 16 Every Opportunity
- 7) 13 Oct Acts 17 Believe
- 8) 20 Oct Acts 18 Together
- 9) 27 Oct Acts 19 Motives
- 10) 03 Nov Acts 20-21 **Commit**
- 11) 10 Nov Acts 22-25 Witness
- 12) 17 Nov Acts 26-27 Respond
- 13) 24 Nov Acts 28 Trust

INTRODUCTION

- Life is exciting for those on the front line. Paul is bent on getting to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost (50 days after Passover). While traveling, he makes time to visit some old friends, makes some new friends, he raises the dead, and he gets arrested and beaten again.
- IOW, Paul takes advantage of every moment in every day.

Passage	Comments
Acts 20:1-12	<p>Eutychus Resurrected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wouldn't it be nice to know what Paul preached on for so many hours? Was it on: <input type="checkbox"/> Salvation? <input type="checkbox"/> Do babies go to Heaven? <input type="checkbox"/> Tithing? <input type="checkbox"/> Persecution? <input type="checkbox"/> Miracles? <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking in Tongues? <input type="checkbox"/> Other? • However, Luke thought it was more pertinent to tell about Eutychus falling asleep during Paul's preaching and finding him dead in the street below • We can give Paul credit here for a resurrection since Luke, being an acclaimed historian, recorded the lad was dead and not simply unconscious • Wouldn't it also be great if we had someone like Paul who could say, "Don't be troubled – they live," at the next church or school shooting? • Unfortunately, we must realize the sobering truth. God isn't working such supernatural wonders today • So, what can we glean from this passage? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Long-winded preaching can kill? <input type="checkbox"/> Don't let teenagers hang out by windows? Or <input type="checkbox"/> To live long, focus on God's word Prov 3:1-2 <input type="checkbox"/> ...and God is the same yesterday, today, forever whose mighty works, though performed in the past, need to be told to each generation? Ps 78:6-7
20:13-16; 22; 21:10-14	<p>Paul was Focused on Getting to Jerusalem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was Paul's intent to get to Jerusalem a good thing or a bad thing? Was he being led by God ("bound in the Spirit") or by his own interest ("bound in spirit")? • Assumption: We must assume Paul's intent was of God. This is based on how God continued to unfold the Gospel at the highest places within government through Paul's witness while in prison.
20:17-27	<p>Paul's Approach to Church Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v18. Mature leaders groom younger leaders • vv19, 24. Paul served by example in all humility and tears. He deeply cared for God's church and gave them top priority over his own comfort. • v20. He did not shy away from teaching the whole counsel of God. He taught them in public and in private, in large and small groups, both the easy and the hard topics. • v21. There was no partiality. Salvation & sanctification was made available to every race, class, & gender

Passage	Comments
20:28-38	<p>How to Protect Against Savage Wolves in Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v28a. "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock..." – How is this done? Do we invoke legalistic practices to safeguard people? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe <input type="checkbox"/> Depends <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ What would be some commonsense practices to invoke for elders to be on guard for themselves? ♦ Elder Guards: Should elders maintain their high qualification standards (above reproach, prudent, temperate, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, no harmful addictions, gentle, peaceable, not greedy, husband of one wife, well-managed household, and well-behaved kids)? What should elders do if one of their own fails in one of these areas? <input type="checkbox"/> Ignore warning signs; <input type="checkbox"/> Wait till things get worse; <input type="checkbox"/> Forgive and Forget; <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge and Encourage; <input type="checkbox"/> Excommunicate at first sign of trouble; <input type="checkbox"/> Other? • Church Guards: How are elders on guard for the church? What do they watch for considering the liberties we have in Christ? When does love cover or ignore a multitude of sins before someone needs to take some kind of action? 1 Peter 4:8 Is there a one-size-fits-all solution for every issue, or must wisdom be gently applied for each case? • v28b. "...the Holy Spirit has made you overseers." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ How is this done? <input type="checkbox"/> Church Vote; <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Commissioning; <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer & Fasting; <input type="checkbox"/> Other? ♦ Consideration #1. Based on what we see in Scripture, the Holy Spirit honors the elder selection & commissioning process, initially by the apostles (e.g., Paul & Barnabas in Acts 14:14, 23); then elders selected other elders (e.g., Titus in Titus 1:5) ♦ Consideration #2. There is no precedence in the Bible of elders being selected by non-elders. HOWEVER, Scripture does not explicitly or implicitly prohibit congregational rule where the least mature of the saints, who make up the majority of a typical congregation, determine who leads them by means of a church vote.



EUTYCHUS fell asleep while Paul preached, fell 2 floors to his death...but was resurrected to become THE PATRIOT SAINT of all who sleep in church. Acts 20: 9-12

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v29. Paul gives a dire warning which should not be ignored. He stated that after his departure, "savage wolves" would come into church, not sparing the flock! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do "savage wolves" look like in church? How do they not spare the flock? Are they sly & ruthless? Could some of the selected elders rise up to be wolves? What was it about Paul that kept wolves out? <p>Consider this about Wolves/Dogs: Some constantly 'nip' at you till they wear you down, or 'howl' constantly to scare you or distract you, and they like to go after the weak ones – those who are on the edge of the flock and who avoid being fully engaged with their church.....Phil 3:2</p> <p>Consider this about Paul's character: First, Paul had Apostolic authority. Like Christ, he could crack the whip when needed.</p> <p>BUT elders are to be gentle. Gentle, yet firm & decisive, even when they need to ask unrepentant believers to leave the church to protect the rest of the sheep.....1Cor 5:1-5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a church has good elders they can quickly spot & timely resolve issues for God's glory and for people's edification BUT, if one or more elders are weak or corrupt (i.e., wolves among the sheep), even small issues can have catastrophic consequences → disunity & ineffectivenessRev 2:18-24 Protection of the sheep has high priority for shepherds. Hence the need for elders to be on high alert – and, when needed, ready to make the right timely, tough, yet gentle corrective action with the intent to restore fellowship The 2 biggest church problem areas: Immorality & Idolatry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Related church problem areas: <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy <input type="checkbox"/> Greed <input type="checkbox"/> Selfishness <input type="checkbox"/> Other issues? _____ All issues can be boiled down to the sin that doomed Sodom & Gomorrah → PRIDEEzek 16:49
Legalism vs Liberty in Christ	<p>God designed Judaism based on the Mosaic Law (which has 613 laws → 365 were probations – "Thou shall NOT" and 248 were affirmations – "Thou shall").</p> <p>Yet, God showed through the imperfect Law of Moses that legalism of do's and don'ts did not make the Jews a God-fearing holy people having pure doctrine & morals.</p> <p>Next, God designed His NT Church based on liberties found in Christ. IOW, our behavior is motivated by our love for God and bounded by biblical commands and principles.</p> <p>As Paul told Timothy, laws were not made for the righteous but for the disobedient.....1Tim 1:9</p>
21:1-7	<p>Did Paul Ignore Wise Counsel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vv1-3. Luke seemingly rattles off useless tidbits of information about ports of harbor & sailing practices. BUT these accurate geographical and naval data actually gives credence to Luke being an acclaimed historian. If his secular information is correct, then we can confidently acknowledge his spiritual information is correct as well. v4. The disciples "kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem." Why did Paul ignore sound advice from others? After all, Bible says a wise man hides or protects himself once he sees evil coming his wayProv 22:3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Was Paul being obstinate? <input type="checkbox"/> Was he being tested? <input type="checkbox"/> Was Paul's leading from God better?Acts 19:21 <p>Hermeneutic Consideration. Looking at Acts & the Epistles we can logically deduce Paul was staying true to the Holy Spirit's leading given to him, knowing he would see trouble in Jerusalem; and it also seems the Holy Spirit tested Paul's resolve through the warnings the Spirit gave to others</p>
21:8-14	<p>Philip – a Mover and a Shaker for the Gospel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v8. We see Philip once again, now called "the evangelist," but previously known as "one of the seven" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice, Philip was no longer in Jerusalem where he was once selected to serve the Greek widowsActs 6:1 - Nor was he in Samaria any longer, where he preached and did many signs, healings, and miraclesActs 8:5-8 - Nor was he in Azotus where he "was found" after witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuchActs 8:39-40

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We find Philip raising a family of 4 godly daughters who were also prophetesses, in the Roman city of Caesarea Philip must've been known by many around town for Paul to quickly find him without GPS and social media <p>Principle to Live By. Believers have the liberty to move about as they seek ministry opportunity and work to raise a family, & establishing a strong testimony around town helps</p>
21:15-26	<p>Paul's Approach to Reaching the Lost – Be at their Level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v16. Paul & his entourage lodged at Mnason's house. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice these missionaries did not travel 1st class or stay at 5-star hotels. They lodged in the homes of fellow believers. We might be missing a blessing when we lodge visiting missionaries and preachers away from the homes of local believers. v18. Again, Paul opted to visit his peers, other elders. What is the significance of this? It could have been just a logistics thing. No facility was big enough to accommodate a large gathering of believers vs a smaller gathering of elders, who could then relay information back to their churches. vv21-26. What is the significance of Paul keeping Jewish customs of making vows and sacrifices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider this. To the Jews Paul became a Jew so that he might win Jews → Know your audience1Cor 9:20
21:27-40	<p>Another Mob Ruins the Day – But Not God's Will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christians might suffer imprisonment, beatings, and even beheadings, but God's will is never thwarted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God uses the wicked to accomplish His will.....Pr 16:4 He directs a king's heart wherever He so desires....Pr 21:1 v40. Paul spoke to the mob in their Hebrew dialect, and they listened. Paul, like Christ, sought to reach audiences wherever they were at. If they were poor, he was poor; if they had short hair, he had short hair; if they had a dress code, so did he; if they avoided ham on rye, so did he – with exceptions, of course, where he would not violate God's higher moral code → Know your audience & God's Word

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- Once more, we see Paul being persecuted for boldly proclaiming the Gospel. False believers, weak believers, and unbelievers seem to get quite agitated when truth is expounded.....WHY?

NEXT WEEK: Acts 22-25. 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. It must be important.

