



Acts II

International Alpha Bible Course
by Ralph Vincent Reynolds

International Alpha Bible Course

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

PART II

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INTERNATIONAL ALPHA BIBLE COURSE

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Lesson One

THE BIRTH OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

TEXT: Acts 13:1-4

A. ANTIOCH

Antioch in Syria was founded in 300 BC. It was situated on a bend of the Orontes River, about fifteen miles from the sea. At the mouth of the river was the seaport of Seleucia.

Many Jews had settled at Antioch and had been allowed to have the same political privileges with the Greeks.

When persecution broke out in Jerusalem, many of the Christians found a refuge at Antioch. They immediately began to preach the gospel. At first they preached in the synagogues and only to the Jews, but later they began to preach to the Gentiles. It was in Antioch that the first Gentile church was founded, and it was here that believers were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).

The name *Christian* means "Christ-like" and was derived from the Greek word *Christos*, which is the equivalent of the Hebrew *Messiah*, and means "Anointed One."

The new congregation at Antioch was a daughter of the mother church in Jerusalem, but she rapidly grew until she exceeded the assembly in Jerusalem in vision and strength, becoming a mother church in her own right.

B. BACKGROUND LEADING UP TO THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

When news of the radical development at Antioch reached Jerusalem, there was much concern, for the believers left behind at Jerusalem were all strict Jews. They sent Barnabas to investigate the situation. This showed what great confidence the church had in Barnabas.

Undoubtedly Barnabas was one of the greatest characters of the New Testament. He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith (Acts 11:24). Barnabas was impressed by what he saw, and instead of returning to Jerusalem with complaints, he remained in Antioch to direct the work.

The church at Antioch was young and needed teaching. Barnabas could have attempted to do this himself, but being a dedicated, humble man, he decided to find the best teacher possible. He remembered Saul of Tarsus, whom he had befriended several years before this. Therefore, he left Antioch, went to Tarsus, and persuaded Saul to return with him to teach the new church at Antioch.

Barnabas and Saul labored together at Antioch for one year. The church developed under their ministry to become one of the most important in the early history of the church.

The church that developed under their ministry had the following qualifications:

1. A Benevolent Church

The church sent help back to the poor saints in Jerusalem (Acts 11:29-30).

2. A Spiritual Church

The gifts of the Spirit were in operation at Antioch. God was able to speak to them by prophecy (Acts 11:28; Acts 13:2). It was a church that fasted and prayed, and because of this God was able to speak to them.

3. A Missionary Church

It was here at Antioch that the foreign missionary movement was born. This showed that they had a burden for souls and a vision of the harvest field.

When the Holy Spirit spoke through Agabus by prophecy that there was a need in the mother church, they sent Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with assistance. They delivered their gift and soon

returned to Antioch, bringing with them John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10).

C. THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT BORN IN PRAYER

The missionary movement was born in prayer. It is only when the church is upon her knees that God is able to speak to her, and that she has the dedication necessary to obey the voice of God.

At this particular time there were five prophets and teachers ministering to the church. Although both Barnabas and Saul were later called apostles, at this point they were listed among prophets and teachers. The names of these ministers were:

Barnabas	Manaen
Simeon	Saul
Lucius	

We should note that Barnabas was listed first and probably was looked upon as the leader among them. Also, at this point Saul was listed last. This soon changed, however, as soon as the Lord had called Saul into his life's work.

These ministers were doing three things:

1. Ministering to the Lord
2. Fasting
3. Praying

Undoubtedly the missionary movement would never have been born at Antioch if the church had not been doing these three things. They were in the right attitude for God to speak to them.

What would happen today if the church could be found in this same attitude before the Lord?

D. CHOSEN OF GOD

The will of God is the all important essential in the work of God.

Barnabas and Saul were not called by man but by God. It was the Holy Ghost who said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

God has always called specific men for specific tasks. Saul was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel (Acts 9:15). It had been a number of years since his conversion, and it might have seemed during this long time that the will of God would never be carried out in Saul's life. Just as God has a definite man for a definite work, there is a definite time for the call of God to be fulfilled.

One of the greatest characteristics in Saul's life and ministry was his complete dedication to the will of God. His motto seemed to be: "As much as in me is, I am ready" (Romans 1:15).

E. MISSIONARIES SENT FORTH BY THE CHURCH

God's order in the sending forth of missionaries may be seen here:

1. They were called of God.
2. Their call was recognized by the church.
3. Fasting and prayer must be in evidence.
4. They were sent forth by the Lord in His time and to the places He had chosen.
5. They were sent forth by the church.

This means that the missionary ministry becomes the united effort of the whole church.

Lesson Two

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

TEXT: Acts 13:4-52; Acts 14:1-28

A. THE FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Antioch was the starting point for Paul's first, second, and third missionary journeys.

After God had spoken to the church, Barnabas and Saul went forth on the first missionary journey. They decided to take John Mark with them, but he did not stay very long. It should be noted that they started out as Barnabas and Saul. However, it wasn't very long before it was Paul and Barnabas. In other words, Paul soon became the acknowledged leader.

Saul's name was changed to Paul (Acts 13:9). The name *Paul* means "little." It is the opinion of the writer that Paul himself adopted this name because of his wonderful spirit of humility. He considered himself as being the "less than the least of all saints" (Ephesians 3:8).

Let us consider a brief summary of their travels on this first missionary journey:

1. They left Antioch and went down the Orontes River to the seaport city of Seleucia.
2. Setting sail from Seleucia, they crossed over the arm of the Mediterranean Sea to the island of Cyprus. This island is 140 miles long and fifty miles wide. It lies sixty miles west of Syria and was at that time densely populated. It was the early home of Barnabas.
3. The first stopping place was on the eastern shore at a place called Salamis where they found a Jewish synagogue.
4. Crossing Cyprus from east to west, preaching as they went, they came to Paphos, the capital of the island. The proconsul

resided there. This city had a shrine of Venus which the people worshipped. It was here that a sorcerer, a false Jewish prophet whose name was Bar-jesus, tried to turn away the deputy of the island from the faith and was struck blind by Paul.

5. Leaving Cyprus, they sailed northwesterly 170 miles and reached the province of Pamphylia. Bypassing the seaport city of Attalia, they landed at Perga, seven and a half miles from the sea. This city was populated by Greeks who worshipped Diana. It was here that John Mark turned back.

6. Antioch in Pisidia was the next field of labor. Here Paul preached in the synagogue, as is recorded in the Scriptures. A church was established, but the brethren were driven out by persecuting Jews.

7. Sixty miles east of Antioch was a large city, Iconium, where Paul preached in the synagogue. Many believed, but again the apostles had to flee.

8. Eighteen miles southwest of Iconium was the city of Lystra. Paul found a city of superstitious heathens. Here he healed a man who had been a cripple from his mother's womb. This miracle led the people to try to offer a sacrifice to the two apostles, thinking they were Mercury and Jupiter. Upon the apostles' restraining such acts of the people, Jews from Antioch and Iconium came and stirred the people up against them. They stoned Paul, dragged him out of the city, and left him for dead.

9. Paul and Barnabas then went to Derbe, twenty miles away, where they preached the gospel and many accepted the Lord. They were now quite near the pass in Mount Taurus known as the Cilician Gates and could have easily returned home by a short and safe route. They preferred to return the same way they had come, however, in spite of their enemies.

10. They revisited Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the churches and establishing new ones in nearby towns. At Attalia they took ship and sailed north of Cyprus to Antioch in Syria. They were gladly received by the church which had sent them forth.

B. MAP OF PAUL’S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Total journey: About 1,400 miles



Paul’s First Missionary Journey: AD 48 to 49

C. COMMENTS ON PAUL’S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

1. Bar-jesus (Acts 13:6-11)

Bar-jesus, the false prophet and sorcerer, is a type of the Jewish nation, apostate and trying to turn others away from Christ. Bar-jesus was struck blind as Israel has been spiritually blinded (Romans 11:25). This blindness was only “for a season” (verse 11). This also speaks of Israel’s future restoration, for it is only for a season.

2. John Mark (Acts 13:13)

John Mark was the nephew of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10). He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey as far as Perga. Apparently by this time he had enough of hardships and persecution and he turned back. This failure on the part of John Mark became an issue which parted the apostles as they began the second journey. Barnabas was determined to give John Mark a second chance. This controversy revealed much about the character of both

Paul and Barnabas. In this case Barnabas proved to be correct, for John Mark developed into a fine minister of the gospel, as Paul himself acknowledged, stating "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (II Timothy 4:11).

The Lord chose Mark worthy to be the writer of the second Gospel in the New Testament. This should teach us patience and understanding with those who fail and be willing to give them the second chance to prove good.

3. The Stoning Of Paul (Acts 14:19)

Undoubtedly Paul actually died on this occasion and for a brief time he was caught up to Paradise. The writer is convinced that Paul was referring to this experience when he wrote to the Corinthians (II Corinthians 12:1-5). When Paul said that he knew a man, whether in the body or out of the body, he was writing about himself.

Lesson Three

THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL

TEXT: Acts 15:1-35

A. DISSENSION IN THE CHURCH

When Paul and Barnabas returned from their first missionary journey, they gathered the church together. They had a wonderful story to tell. God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27). God had graciously confirmed His Word and many Gentile churches had been established.

The report of God's remarkable work among the Gentiles was soon known far and near. Certain men in Judea became concerned about those considered in the church before they had been circumcised. A delegation was sent to Antioch to contest the message Paul was preaching. Consequently, they came and began teaching that except a person be circumcised he would never be saved. Confusion filled the minds of the people. The question became so disturbing that even Peter, who also visited Antioch, thought it might be wise to withdraw fellowship from Gentiles and keep the old Jewish traditions of separation.

Paul refused to be moved. He knew that grace superseded law and tradition. Paul used great wisdom in handling the situation. He withstood Peter (Galatians 2:11), but he knew that it was not wise for the leaders of the church to be in disagreement. It was decided that they would take the matter to the headquarters church in Jerusalem.

B. THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Paul and Barnabas and certain others of the brethren journeyed to Jerusalem. As they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, they declared the conversion of the Gentiles. In every place this brought great joy to the brethren. The news of a soul's salvation always thrills a real child of God.

It should be noted that they took with them Titus, a Greek, who had not been circumcised (Galatians 2:3). Since Titus was a test case, it was very important that they did not compel him to be circumcised.

C. THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL

The first church council at Jerusalem was an extremely important one. It was called to settle the question of whether or not a person could be saved without being circumcised. However, although the specific question being settled was whether circumcision was essential to salvation, there was a greater principle being determined. The whole matter of *law* and *grace* was being settled by this issue.

The council was presided over by James, the half-brother of our Lord. Although he was not one of the original twelve apostles, he was the pastor of the church in Jerusalem at this time and was recognized as one of the leaders of the church. Undoubtedly the fact that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also his mother gave him great influence in the church.

Many spoke and there was much disputing. The following were the main speakers: Paul, Peter, Barnabas, and James.

Peter spoke first giving the account of the conversion of Cornelius. He used it as an effective argument here and closed his statement with the gracious words, "We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they." He did not say, "They shall be saved, even as we," but brought his own race down to the level of the Gentiles.

Paul followed with an account of the mighty work done among the Gentiles and how God had performed many wonders and miracles.

James summarized the matter. He reviewed Peter's testimony that God first visited the Gentiles through his ministry. He quoted a prophecy from Amos 9:11-12 as confirming the order of events in God's program:

1. God visits the Gentiles.
2. After this Christ will return.
3. The millennial kingdom will be established.

D. THE DECISION

James pronounced the sentence that he thought just and right. It was put in writing upon the approval of the whole company of the brethren. The decision was as follows:

1. That they not trouble the Gentiles
2. That the Gentiles be instructed to maintain purity by abstaining from:
 - a. Meat offered to idols
 - b. Fornication
 - c. Meat that has been strangled
 - d. Blood

E. THE RESULT

The decision was written in a letter and Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas were delegated to carry this letter to the churches. They reached Antioch where the news was joyously received.

A dangerous schism in the church had been averted and an important doctrinal matter had been clearly settled.

Paul's willingness to take the matter to Jerusalem showed his great wisdom in the handling of the problem.

It should be noted that Titus was not compelled to be circumcised.

F. GOD VISITING THE GENILTES

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name" (Acts 15:14).

This Scripture is a very important one from which many important truths may be developed. Here are a few truths which are stated here in this verse:

1. The Deity of Jesus—God was manifested in flesh and in the incarnation He visited us, came where we are.
2. A Gentile Bride—The church will be mainly Gentile.

3. For His Name—The bride will bear the name of her Lover. This shows us the importance of being baptized in the name of Jesus.
4. Finally this Scripture shows the importance of being baptized in Jesus' name in order to be ready for the coming of our Lord.

Lesson Four

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

TEXT: Acts 15:36-41; Acts 16; Acts 17; Acts 18:1-22

A. THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

When the apostles returned to Antioch from attending the first church council in Jerusalem, they were accompanied by Judas and Silas, two prophets. A few days after their arrival Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord." Because of the controversy over John Mark, they parted company. Barnabas took his nephew and went to Cyprus. Paul chose Silas as his companion and was afterwards joined by Timothy and Luke.

We shall briefly trace the journey taken by Paul and his companions on this second journey:

1. Starting from Antioch, Paul and Silas traveled through Syria visiting the churches (Acts 15:41). They then journeyed into the province of Cilicia, the land of Paul's birth. Derbe was revisited (Acts 16:1).
2. At Lystra, where Paul had previously been stoned, he founded a church and was joined by his life-long companion, Timothy (Acts 16:1-4).
3. They visited the churches at Iconium and Antioch, and from there they went northward to Galatia. On their journey they wanted to turn left and preach in Asia, but they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost (Acts 16:6). Then they wanted to go in a different direction and preach in Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not (Acts 16:7). There was no choice but to continue in the same direction until they came to the end of the road which was Troas.
4. At Troas Paul founded a church and was joined by Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles. It was at Troas that Paul had a

vision of a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

5. Immediately Paul and his companions crossed over to Macedonia. This was the first time that the gospel had been preached in Europe.

6. At Philippi the first European convert, Lydia, was baptized. Here Paul and Silas were miraculously delivered from jail after having been scourged and imprisoned.

7. Finding no synagogue or Jewish population at Amphipolis, Paul journeyed westward after spending only one day.

8. Forty miles distant at Thessalonica was a large Jewish population and a synagogue, in which Paul preached three Sabbaths. He later wrote two epistles to the church which he founded here. The Jews instigated a riot, and the brethren were forced to flee by night.

9. At Berea Paul found a people hungry for the truth. Many of them believed the gospel message. "The Bereans" have furnished a name for sincere students of the Bible everywhere. The Jews of Thessalonica heard about this and came to Berea to stir up the people against the apostles. The brethren sent Paul away to Athens, but Silas and Timothy remained in Berea for a time.

10. Athens was one of the famous cities of the ancient world. it was here Paul preached on Mars' Hill. It does not seem that a church was founded at this time although some believed.

11. At Corinth, where he preached the Word boldly for a year and a half, Paul was rejoined by Luke and Timothy. While here he worked at his trade as a tentmaker. He met Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, who also were tentmakers. Because he worked at the same craft, Paul stayed at their home.

12. At Cenchrea Paul embarked for his return journey. After crossing the Aegean Sea, a voyage of 250 miles, they came to Ephesus. Paul only stayed a short time and then set sail for home. Aquila and Priscilla had accompanied Paul from Corinth, but they remained in Ephesus while the apostles went on home.

13. Paul reached Caesarea after he had sailed some 600 miles. Paul then went on to Jerusalem, and then to Antioch.

B. MAP OF PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY



Paul’s Second Missionary Journey: AD 50 to 54

C. COMMENTS ON PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

1. The Macedonian Call (Acts 16:6-11)

Paul received the Macedonian Call at Troas when he saw a vision of a man from Macedonia saying, “Come over into Macedonia and help us.” Troas was a seaport and was at the end of the road. Paul could travel no farther by land.

The remarkable thing about the dealings of the Lord with Paul was that earlier Paul had tried to turn to the left and then to the right, but each time he was checked by the Holy Ghost. There was no choice but to continue in the same direction until he came to the end of the road (Acts 16:6-7). The will of God was not made clear until he needed to know it.

This has a great lesson for us all. We should be able to be checked by the Holy Spirit and willing to trust God to reveal His will when we need to know it. We should not try to peer into the future, but be willing to be led day by day.

2. The Bereans (Acts 17:10-13)

The story of Paul and Silas at Berea teaches us the great importance of being Bible students—Bible searchers. The Bereans were called noble and honorable.

It is certainly a noble quality to search the Bible and prove everything by the Scriptures.

3. Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)

Corinth stood at the junction of important north and south land routes and east and west sea routes. It had been destroyed by Roman conquest, but Julius Caesar had restored it in 46 BC. It was made capital of the province of Achaia in 27 BC. It was notorious because of widespread immorality.

Paul arrived in Corinth a discouraged man. His ministry in Europe had not been well received. Here he was forced to work at his trade of tentmaking. He met Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had been evicted from Rome under the edict of Claudius in AD 49. However, he was encouraged by being rejoined by his friends, Silas and Timothy, who brought him good news from Thessalonica and material help. Also the Lord appeared to him in a night vision and assured him that he should stay in Corinth and continue his ministry. Paul continued preaching at Corinth for one year and six months.

Paul won Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and Justus, a Gentile who lived next door to the synagogue. The attitude of Gallio, the Roman deputy, is worthy of note. He refused to judge in religious matters.

Lesson Five

CONVERSION OF THE JAILER

TEXT: Acts 16:14-40

A. EUROPE'S FIRST CONVERT

The first European convert was Lydia who lived at Philippi, a city of Macedonia, situated about nine miles from the sea. This was the first city in Europe in which Paul preached. A fine church was raised up here to which Paul wrote his epistle to the Philippians.

The colony of Jews at Philippi was a very small one. As there were not the necessary ten men to build a synagogue, the Jews worshiped each Sabbath in the open air on the banks of the river. Among them was Lydia, a lady proselyte from Thyatira. Thyatira was famous for its dyeing works and Lydia sold dye and dyed goods. Apparently Lydia was a lady of considerable wealth.

On the Sabbath Day Paul joined the group of women at the river side and preached the gospel to them. Although Lydia was a righteous woman, she still needed to be saved. She listened to the Word of God and the Lord opened her heart. Generally, we think of a person opening the doors of their own heart and letting the Savior in. In this case the Lord Himself opened Lydia's heart. She was then baptized along with her household.

We should note the steps in Lydia's conversion:

1. She heard the Word of God.
2. Her heart was opened.
3. She was baptized.

As soon as she was saved, she invited Paul and the missionary party to stay at her home. This they did (Acts 16:15, 40).

B. OPPOSITION FROM SATAN

When the Lord works, the devil generally gets busy too. For many days a demon-possessed woman followed the servants of God, commending them as true ministers of the way of salvation. The devil's commendation is, however, less to be desired than his condemnation. Although the woman spoke the truth, the gospel was damaged by her cries, for it put the gospel message on the same level as her soothsaying.

Finally, Paul wearied with her and commanded the demon to come out of her. This immediately cut off the source of livelihood for her masters who charged the missionaries with speaking treasonous words.

C. SINGING AT MIDNIGHT

Paul and Silas were arrested, cruelly beaten, and thrust into an underground dungeon. The magistrates had made no investigation of the charges against them, but had them beaten and imprisoned.

The inner prison was a dark, damp, windowless, underground hole. The apostles, with their backs raw and bleeding, were thrust into this inner prison and placed in the stocks. The pain distress they suffered must have been beyond description.

Instead of groaning and complaining, or merely suffering in silence, pitying themselves, these preachers prayed and sang praises to God. The darkest hour is supposed to be the midnight hour; it was at this hour that they were still praising and singing when deliverance came.

D. DELIVERED BY AN EARTHQUAKE

God rocked the foundations of the prison with a great earthquake which opened all the doors and loosed every prisoner's chains off his hands and legs. The earthquake awakened the jailer from his sleep. The jailer, seeing the prison doors open, concluded that all the prisoners had escaped.

The jailer drew his sword and was about to commit suicide when he was arrested by a loud voice from the lips of Paul, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." These words brought the jailer

trembling to the feet of those whom he had treated so brutally the night before. He cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The earthquake did not make the jailer tremble, but the voice of Paul did.

E. A WICKED JAILER CONVERTED

There was more than one miracle that took place here. The earthquake which opened the prison doors certainly was a great miracle. The fact that Paul knew the jailer was about to commit suicide was also a miracle. There was no light and they were in the dungeon. This was a manifestation of the Word of Knowledge, one of the gifts of the Spirit. Also it was a miracle that none of the other prisoners escaped. However, the greatest miracle was the conversion of the Philippian jailer.

He was a cruel, hard-hearted, wicked jailer, but in almost a moment of time, he was completely changed. Let us study just what took place:

1. The jailer was desperate and in his extremity was about to commit suicide.
2. The word of hope was brought to him.
3. He recognized his need of salvation and cried out for directions.
4. He called for a light. The first need in his life was light.
5. He was told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. He listened to the gospel preached by the apostles (Acts 16:32).
7. He washed the stripes of the apostles. This is evidence of true repentance and the doing of restitution.
8. He was baptized straightway.
9. He rejoiced, believing in God (Acts 16:34).

F. WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Many people use this story to try to prove that all a person has to do is to believe. This story reveals, however, that there is more to it than just believing.

The faith that saves is not a passive faith, but an active faith that reaches out and appropriates the grace of God, causing it to actually do something in a person's life. Note the Philippian jailer was baptized, he and all his, straightway. They did not wait even until morning.

Jesus said in giving the commission, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

What are we told about how this man was saved?

1. He recognized his need.
2. He cried out for instructions.
3. He was told to believe.
4. He washed the stripes of the apostles, revealing repentance.
5. He was baptized straightway.
6. He rejoiced, believing in God.

Lesson Six

PAUL AT ATHENS

TEXT: Acts 17:15-34

A. ATHENS

Athens is one of the famous cities of the ancient world. It was the acknowledged center of intellect, culture, and religion. It was the seat of the prevailing schools of philosophy. It was “wholly given to idolatry” (verse 16). It was said that there were more gods than men in Athens.

It is no different in the world today. Almost the whole human race is bowing down before idols which men have invented and human hands have made. Some worship idols of wood and stone, pictures and images; others worship the gods of gold and silver, culture and refinement, arts and sciences.

The apostle Paul began his message on Mars' Hill with this statement, “I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious” (verse 22). This may be translated, “Ye are too religious.” They did not lack for religion, but in all of this, they did not know the one true God.

B. TWO SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY

1. Epicureans

The Epicureans were materialists and atheists. They believed that the chief aim of existence is pleasure—that pleasure is the only good and pain the only evil. To them there was no God and no future existence in eternity. Their motto was: “Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.”

There are millions of Epicureans today who have never heard of the name. Men are still lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

2. Stoics

The Stoics believed that God was everything and in everything, which is called Pantheism. They were fatalists and considered apathy the highest moral attainment. To them God was the “soul” of the universe, so that the distinction between the human and the divine ceased to exist. Man became his own god. This is the basic teaching of all spiritualist cults with certain variations as in Christian Science, Unity, Spiritualism, etc.

These philosophers considered the simple Christian truth that Paul preached as being absurd. They said that Paul was a babbling, talking baby talk.

C. PAUL ON MARS’ HILL

The philosophers took Paul to Mars’ Hill in order to hear him further. Mars’ Hill was an Athenian court which met in early times on the Hill of Ares, west of the Acropolis. It had jurisdiction over moral questions and religious matters. Another name for Mars’ Hill was Areopagus.

Paul was very observant. He was quick to use something that was familiar to his hearers to introduce his message. In this he was following the example of our Lord. Paul had seen the religious devotions of the Athenians and had found an altar with this inscription: *To the Unknown God*. It was this unknown God to whom they had erected an altar that Paul was going to declare.

Paul declared Him to be the Creator and the world’s moral Governor, truths which struck at the very heart of materialism, pantheism, atheism, etc. Paul spoke to them of sin as a personal offense against a personal God and Judge, who therefore commanded all men everywhere to repent. He showed the folly of idolatry when we ourselves are the offspring of God.

D. THE RESULT OF PAUL’S MESSAGE

The result of Paul’s sermon to these intellectuals was threefold:

1. Many rejected it.
2. Some procrastinated.
3. A few believed.

Wherever the gospel is preached today, it is followed with this same threefold result. Thank God for the few who believe.

E. THE UNKNOWN GOD

Throughout the world today God is still the "Unknown God." Like the Athenians, men everywhere are very religious, but they are idolatrous. They are given to much learning and knowledge, but they do not know the true and living God.

Many say that God is just an idea, that He may be found in nature, that He may be discovered within man himself. However, God is the personal, living Sovereign of the universe. He is the Creator in whose hands is our very breath; our life and being come from Him.

In order to know Him, one must be born into His family and be a recipient of His Spirit. The only way we may know Him is to have a personal relationship with Him, to be baptized in His name and filled with His Spirit.

F. COMMENTS OF PAUL'S SERMON

This message of the apostle Paul to the Athenians on Mars' Hill should be studied carefully. There are many profound truths stated here. Let us comment briefly on two of them:

1. Of One Blood All Nations (verse 26)

God is the Creator of every race and nation. Every man and woman has descended from Adam and Eve. The human race is one regardless of color, class, and culture.

The bigotry and prejudice that separate mankind today and that erect walls of misunderstanding and suspicion should never be found in the church.

"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Corinthians 12:13).

2. All Men Everywhere to Repent (verse 30)

This statement tells us that salvation is for all men of all races, nationalities, and culture. This statement of Paul refutes once and for

all the false belief that salvation is only for the elect. This is sufficient proof that Calvinism is not correct. Salvation is for every man who will repent, for the “whosoever will.”

Lesson Seven

THE CHURCH AT EPHEBUS

TEXT: Acts, Chapter 19; Acts 20:17-38

A. EPHEBUS

Ephesus was a city of power. It was the capital of proconsular Asia, and the citizens were constantly reminded of the power of Rome.

Ephesus was situated near the mouth of the Cayster River on the main trade route between Rome and the East. It was the greatest commercial center in Asia at that time. It was also a free city with its own senate and assembly.

At Ephesus stood one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Temple of Diana. It was a magnificent structure with its 127 columns, sixty feet high, standing on an area 425 feet in length and 220 feet in width. It was the center of all heathen worship in that area.

One whole chapter is devoted to the account of the founding of the church at Ephesus. The importance of this church may be noted by the fact that one of Paul's epistles was written to this church. Likewise, the first of the letters written to the churches of Asia (Revelation 2) was addressed to this church.

The apostle Paul ministered in Ephesus longer than at any other place. He spent three years at Ephesus (Acts 20:31). Another fact that reveals the importance of this church is that a record is given in the Bible of Paul's exhortation to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38).

B. APOLLOS

Apollos was a Jew who was born at Alexandria. He is described as being "an eloquent man and mighty in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24). The statement that he was "mighty in the Scriptures" means

that he was learned in the Old Testament. About all he knew of the New Testament message was the message of repentance preached by John the Baptist.

Apollos came to Ephesus and eloquently spoke the elementary truth of repentance in the synagogue.

We see something of the character of Apollos when he was willing to have two poor tentmakers instruct him in the things of God “more perfectly.” This revealed a great quality of humility. When Apollos left Ephesus to go to Corinth, the saints commended him, sending a letter that he might be received elsewhere. This letter of commendation was that he might be received as a minister of the gospel. This example teaches us that ministers should not be permitted on our church platforms unless they are known and proven, or they carry with them letters of commendation from responsible brethren. Much church trouble would be avoided if all ministers had to be known or carry letters of commendation.

C. DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS

The Ephesian Diana is to be identified with Astarte and other female divinities of the East. This idol was regarded as an object of special sanctity and was believed to have fallen down from Heaven (Acts 19:35).

Diana was recognized as being “great,” but greater is the power of the gospel. Idolatry has no message, but it can shout for two hours trying to make itself, believe something which is false. Although Diana of the Ephesians vanished long ago, the church still stands. Great may be any philosophy, religion, or idolatry, but greater is He whose name is Jesus.

D. THE ONE EXAMPLE OF REBAPTISM

When Paul came to Ephesus he discovered twelve disciples of John the Baptist, who, like Apollos, knew only the baptism of John. He inquired if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. Paul explained the gospel, pointing them to Jesus. When they understood the truth, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and received the Spirit.

This is the only recorded instance of rebaptism in the New Testament. However, it clearly teaches that one must be baptized correctly according to the Bible or he is not yet baptized. There is only one baptism, and that one baptism is correct according to the Scriptures. Otherwise it is not considered as being baptism. To be correctly baptized, it must be by immersion in water, administered in the name of Jesus.

E. REVIVAL AT EPHEBUS

God worked mightily at Ephesus. The following results followed the preaching of the gospel in this Asian capital:

1. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (verse 5).
2. They received the Holy Ghost, and they spoke in tongues.
3. They bore bold testimony to the Jews (verse 8).
4. The multitudes received the gospel.
5. The power of the gospel transformed lives (verses 17-19).
6. Miracles accompanied the gospel (verses 11-12).

F. THE MINISTRY OF PAUL AT EPHEBUS

Paul had desired to preach in Asia on his second missionary journey, but he had been forbidden to do so by the Holy Ghost (Acts 16:6). God has a right time for everything. If Paul had gone to Ephesus at that time, he would never have had the revival that he had when he went in the will of God.

Paul went to the synagogue and witnessed to the Jews for three months. When some of the Jews became hardened and obstinate, Paul separated the Christians and taught them in the lecture hall of Tyrannus for two years. During this time Paul worked at tentmaking and supported himself (Acts 20:34). One ancient manuscript states that Paul taught from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. If this be true, then Paul undoubtedly worked with his hands in the early morning while Tyrannus was teaching, and then began to teach when Tyrannus finished his lectures.

Under Paul's ministry there are three events recorded that we should note:

1. There were signs and miracles and many sick were healed. The power of the name of Jesus was manifested. Seven exorcists

from one family, sons of Sceva, who attempted to cast out a demon by using the name of Jesus, were attacked by the demon. The demon wounded them and caused them to flee from the house naked. This misuse of the name of Jesus brought fear and conviction. This lesson teaches us that the name of Jesus must be used only in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Great conviction came upon the church. They gathered all their books of magic and had a bonfire. The cost of the books destroyed amounted to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

3. While the Christians were surrendering their wealth by cleansing their homes from idolatry, there were others who were angry because the revival was costing them money. The business of those who made small silver shrines to be offered to Diana was being hurt. Demetrius and the other silversmiths stirred up the entire city. The people ran to the amphitheatre and for two hours cried, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." They captured Gaius and Aristarchus, Eventually the town clerk, an Ephesian, who was responsible for the good conduct of such a meeting, was able to quiet the crowd.

G. PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO THE EPHESIANS ELDERS

Every Bible student should study carefully Paul's exhortation to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:13-38). On his return journey he arrived at Miletus, about thirty miles from Ephesus, and sent for the elders. He gave them a charge which showed the love and concern he had for them. The ministry of the true pastor is shown here.

Lesson Eight

PAUL ARRESTED AT JERUSALEM

TEXT: Acts 18:23-28; Chapters 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

A. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

This third journey occupied about four years, much of which was spent at Ephesus. We shall briefly trace the journey:

1. Paul left Antioch and passed through Galatia and Phrygia en route to Ephesus.
2. At Ephesus, preparation for Paul's labors had been made by Apollos who had been instructed by Aquila and Priscilla. Paul remained there for three years. Through his labors the seven churches of Asia were established.
3. Paul went to Troas to await Titus with news from the church at Corinth. As the news did not come, Paul took ship and sailed to Europe.
4. Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea were again visited.
5. He visited Corinth to take care of troubles which had arisen.
6. Paul returned by way of Philippi, Troas, Assos, and Mitylene. He briefly visited Chios, Samos, and Trogyllium.
7. He arrived at Miletus and sent for the Ephesian elders. He gave them a farewell address and charge.
8. At Patara Paul took another ship for Phoenicia.
9. Reaching the coast of Phoenicia, the ship remained a week at Tyre to unload its cargo. Here Paul found a church.
10. He sailed along the coast to Ptolemais where Paul spent a day with the church.

11. Arriving at Caesarea, Paul met Philip who had lived there for twenty years.

12. For the last time Paul entered the city of Jerusalem where he soon became the “prisoner of the Lord.”

B. PAUL’S URGE TO GO TO JERUSALEM

Except for the three years spent at Ephesus, Paul seemed to be in a hurry on his third journey. He had a strong urge to hasten to Jerusalem. Apparently he had a burden to preach to Hebrew Christians there. It has been suggested that it was his burden that caused him to write the Epistle to the Hebrews while a prisoner in Rome.

At both Tyre and Caesarea Paul was warned about what was going to happen at Jerusalem. Agabus prophesied that he was going to be bound in Jerusalem. In spite of this, Paul was determined to do God’s will.

C. MAP OF PAUL’S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY



Paul's Third Missionary Journey: AD 54 to 58

D. ARRESTED AT JERUSALEM

In Jerusalem, some of the Jewish believers were accusing Paul of forbidding the Gentile believers to be circumcised. The leaders in the church felt that something had to be done to appease these Jewish Christians and to assure them that Paul was not against the Mosaic law. They felt that they had the answer. It was that Paul would go to the Temple with four men who had taken a vow. They had to be purified and to offer a number of offerings. It was suggested that Paul would purify himself and pay for these offerings. Paul, in his desire to be all things to all men, agreed.

His conduct was misunderstood. He was recognized by certain of the orthodox Jews who leaped to the conclusion that Paul was trying to desecrate the holy shrine by bringing Gentiles into the Inner Court. A mob fell upon him and would have beaten him to death had not the Roman sentries interfered.

Rescued out of the hands of the mob by the Roman captain, Paul begged leave to speak to his nation and was granted permission. After a great silence descended on the multitude, Paul spoke to them in the Hebrew tongue.

E. PAUL'S FIVE DEFENSES

As a result of his imprisonment Paul was given five opportunities to preach Christ to audiences of ever-increasing importance.

1. He spoke to Israel as a nation (chapter 22).
2. He spoke to the Sanhedrin, the religious leaders of the Jewish people (chapter 23).
3. He spoke before Felix, the Roman governor (chapter 24).
4. He spoke before Governor Festus (chapter 25).
5. He spoke before King Agrippa (chapter 26).

From the common people to the king, Paul was able to witness to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

F. PAUL DEFENDS HIMSELF

Paul elaborated on his condition as a true Jew. He referred to the facts of his birth, his education, his zeal for the traditions of the law, and his persecution of the Christians. He then told about his conversion and what happened to him on the road to Damascus. He spoke of being commissioned to preach to the Gentiles.

When he spoke about preaching to the Gentiles, there was a storm of protest from the mob. As the captain did not understand, he prepared to have Paul scourged to make him confess. Paul appealed to his Roman citizenship which exempted him from such treatment.

The next day the captain had Paul taken before the Sanhedrin. Paul divided the group by stating that he was being called in question concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead. The meeting was thrown into such uproar that the captain had to rescue Paul by force or he would have been killed.

The next day forty Jews banded together under an oath not to eat anything until they had killed Paul. They made their plan known to some of the Sanhedrin and Paul's nephew heard about it. As a result, Paul was sent that very night under heavy escort to Felix, the governor in Caesarea. The captain also sent a letter stating his belief in Paul's innocence and exalting his own part in the entire matter.

Lesson Nine

PAUL DEFENDS HIMSELF AT CAESAREA

TEXT: Acts, Chapters 24, 25, 26

A. STANDING BEFORE KINGS

The Lord had told Ananias that Paul was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. In this lesson we study about Paul bearing the name of Jesus before two governors and one king. Later he stood before the emperor at Rome.

1. Felix

Felix was liberated from slavery by Claudius, who appointed him procurator of Judea. He ruled the province in a mean, cruel, and profligate manner. His period of office was full of troubles and seditions. The wife of Felix was Drusilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa I.

2. Festus

Festus was Felix's successor as governor of Judea. He was appointed by Nero probably in the autumn of the year AD 60. He died probably in the summer of AD 62, having ruled the province less than two years.

3. King Agrippa

Herod Agrippa II was the son of Herod Agrippa I. He was in Rome at the time of the death of his father in AD 44. The relation in which he stood to his sister, Bernice, was the cause of much suspicion. The pomp with which the king came into the audience chamber and the cold irony with which he met the impassioned words of the apostle are both characteristic traits of this man.

B. PAUL DEFENDS HIMSELF BEFORE FELIX

1. Paul Sent To Felix

At Jerusalem a plot was discovered that forty men had conspired to kill Paul. The captain, Claudius Kysias, wrote a letter to Governor Felix at Caesarea and sent Paul to him, guarded by two centurions, two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. Paul was allowed to ride all the way.

Felix sent to Jerusalem for the accusers of Paul and after five days they arrived at Caesarea.

2. The Accusation Against Paul

Ananias took the elders and a certain orator named Tertullus with him to Caesarea. Tertullus was to be the spokesman. The name *Tertullus* meant “triple-hardened” and certainly could typify the condition of Israel. After paying due courtesy and flattery about the nobility of the ignoble Felix, Tertullus presented the accusation against Paul. It must be remembered that the Jews hated Felix like poison.

The charges were:

- a. Paul was a pestilent fellow.
- b. He was a mover of sedition among the Jews throughout the world.
- c. He was a ring leader of the Nazarenes.
- d. He profaned the Temple.

All Paul’s accusers affirmed the things Tertullus said about Paul.

3. Paul’s Personal Defense

Paul stated that his accusers could not prove the things they had said, although he did confess that he worshipped God after the way that they thought was heresy, He stated:

- a. He believed all things which are written in the law and the prophets.
- b. He had hope in God concerning the resurrection of the just and the unjust.
- c. He kept a clear conscience toward God and man.

- d. He brought alms to his nation.
- e. He only entered the Temple to worship.
- f. He caused no tumult.
- g. He was confident that no evil could be found in him by any or all of his accusers.

4. Paul Left Bound

Felix dismissed the case, promising to hear the matter again after Lysias should come down. He put off judgment until later, just as he did his soul's salvation. He hoped that he might receive money as a bribe to set Paul free.

Paul was placed in the keeping of a centurion and was given liberty. His acquaintances were allowed to visit and minister to him. He was left a prisoner for two full years.

During this period of time, Felix often heard Paul. On one occasion when his wife Drusilla, a Jewess, was present, Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Felix was known for his unrighteous rule and his utter lack of temperance in his personal life. The governor was violently shaken, but he only procrastinated.

The term of Felix expired with him still making no decision concerning his soul's salvation or Paul.

C. PAUL DEFENDS HIMSELF BEFORE FESTUS

When the new governor, Festus, went to Jerusalem, the Jews assailed him with requests to bring Paul back to Jerusalem. They intended to kill him as he was being transferred. Festus refused, but told them that they could come down to Caesarea and lay charges against the apostle. They did so, and although they laid many complaints against Paul, they could prove none of them.

Festus asked Paul, "Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?" Paul knew the regulations of the law, and he knew that he had fulfilled his ministry at Jerusalem. Therefore he answered boldly, "I appeal to Caesar." Festus conferred with his council and then announced that Paul would be sent to Caesar as he requested.

D. PAUL DEFENDS HIMSELF BEFORE AGRIPPA

When King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea, Festus told Agrippa about Paul. Festus confessed surprise at the type of accusation brought against Paul.

King Agrippa desired to hear Paul himself. Consequently, the court was set. Festus introduced all present with the purpose of the gathering. He set Paul forth in their midst and proceeded to tell them that he had found no guilt in him and that he did not see any reasonableness in sending to Rome a prisoner who was evidently an innocent man. He asked them to listen to Paul and assist him in framing a charge to send to Caesar Augustus.

Paul was happy to speak to the rulers and the king because he had a message for them. He addressed his remarks to the king whom he acknowledged as being expert in all customs and questions among the Jews. He proceeded to tell the king why he was held a prisoner. Paul told the real reason the Jews had become so embittered against him because of his stand regarding the resurrection. Paul did not hesitate to testify before these skeptical persons regarding his personal conversion and the miraculous element that is involved in Holy Ghost salvation.

Festus interrupted with an outburst that revealed the power of Paul's preaching. He moved both demons and men. Festus cried, "Paul, you are mad." Agrippa confessed that he was profoundly moved. Through the centuries his words, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," have been quoted by soulwinners.

Those who listened were convinced of Paul's innocence, and they tried to ease their consciences by shifting the responsibility. Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Lesson Ten

THE JOURNEY TO ROME

TEXT: Acts, Chapters 27 and 28

A. DEPORTATION TO ROME

A sea voyage was not something to look forward to in Paul's day. Paul left Palestine in August or September and did not arrive in Rome until March, having lost his ship and his belongings in the meantime.

Paul was delivered over to Julius, a centurion, for the trip to Rome. Luke again joined him (Note we in verse 2). At Sidon Paul was allowed to visit his friends. They sailed to the east and north of Cyprus to Myra on the southern coast of Asia Minor where Paul and the others were transferred to a vessel from Egypt.

At Myra the party found a ship coming from Alexandria and bound for Rome. They embarked and sailed with difficulty to Fair Havens, a small bay on the southern coast of Crete. Paul warned Julius about the danger of sailing farther. Julius preferred, however, to believe the captain of the ship, and they set sail, hoping to spend the winter in Phenice, a good harbor on the south coast of Crete. Nevertheless, as they sailed along the coast, a wind caught them and they had to let the ship run with it. They undergirded the ship with cables to strengthen it and lowered the mainsail. They lightened the ship and eventually even the cargo was thrown overboard.

On the fourteenth night of the storm they were cast up on the island of Malta. They ran aground in a narrow channel and the ship began to break up. The sailors wanted to kill the prisoners, but Julius would not permit it. Those who could swim were ordered to jump overboard while the others followed, using planks from the ship to help them. In this way all were saved, but the ship was lost.

The second miracle was the healing of Publius' father. Publius was the chief man in the island. His father was very ill. After prayer and the laying on of Paul's hands, he was healed.

After three months the group boarded another ship sailing from Alexandria for Rome.

E. PAUL REACHES ROME

From Malta they sailed to Syracuse in Sicily, then to Rhegium on the toe of Italy, and finally to Puteoli in the Bay of Naples. This was a principal port in southern Italy and a chief port for unloading grain from Egypt. Here Paul found some Christians with whom he stayed a week.

The brethren in Rome heard of his arrival and traveled forty-three miles from Rome to Appii Forum to meet him. This was a great encouragement of the apostle.

When Paul arrived in Rome, he was given relative freedom. He was permitted to live in his own hired house for two years with one soldier to guard him. He called the elders of the Jews and told them why he was a Roman prisoner and gave them the gospel. Some of them believed, but many of them rejected his message.

It is acknowledged that Paul's death took place in Rome about AD 64.

F. WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING

Signs followed the ministry of the apostle Paul. When the serpent's bite did not harm him, and when he laid hands on the father of Publius, we see evident the signs of Mark 16 (Mark 16:17-18). When he warned Julius of the danger of leaving Fair Havens, we see the gift of the word of knowledge (I Corinthians 12:8).

Unquestionably, the reason Paul's ministry was so fruitful is the fact that he was filled with the Holy Ghost and always ministered in the power of the Spirit.

Lesson Eleven

SUMMARY OF SALVATION

A. HOW DID THEY RECEIVE SALVATION IN THE EARLY CHURCH?

How did the early Christians receive salvation? What was the experience that they received?

The only place that we may find the true answer to these questions is in the Acts of the Apostles. The Book of Acts is the one historical book of the New Testament. The four Gospels give the record of the life and ministry of our Lord. The Epistles were written to individuals or churches that were already saved. It is in the Book of Acts where we find the record of how salvation was received in the early church.

It is extremely important that we examine carefully and prayerfully this record.

B. THE JEWS ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST (Acts 2)

1. The Word was preached to them. Acts 2:14-36
 - a. They heard the Word. Acts 2:37
 - b. They received the Word. Acts 2:41
2. They were convicted and saw their need. Acts 2:37
3. They cried out for instruction. Acts 2:37
4. They were told to repent. Acts 2:38
5. They were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41
6. They received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 2:4; Acts 2:38
7. They spoke with other tongues. Acts 2:4
8. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Acts 2:42

C. THE SAMARITANS (Acts 8:4-25)

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Christ was preached to them. | Acts 8:5 |
| 2. Philip preached the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. | Acts 8:12 |
| 3. They believed the gospel. | Acts 8:12 |
| 4. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. | Acts 8:16 |
| 5. They received the Holy Ghost. | Acts 8:17 |

(It is evident that they spoke in tongues, for Simon would never have offered money for a gift unless it was a supernatural or miraculous one. He had either heard or saw something which was supernatural.)

D. THE ETHIOPIAN (Acts 8:26-39)

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|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. He was reading the Word . | Acts 8:28 |
| 2. Philip preached Jesus unto him. | Acts 8:35 |
| 3. He believed. | Acts 8:37 |
| 4. He was baptized. | Acts 8:38 |
| 5. He went on his way rejoicing. | Acts 8:39 |

E. SAUL OF TARSUS (Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:3-21)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. He began to pray. | Acts 9:11 |
| 2. His eyes were opened. | Acts 9:18; 22:13 |
| 3. He was baptized, calling on the name of the Lord. | Acts 9:18;
Acts 22:16 |
| 4. He was filled with the Holy Ghost. | Acts 9:17 |
| 5. He spoke in tongues. | I Corinthians 14:18 |

F. CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD (Acts, Chapter 10)

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. He prayed to God always. | Acts 10:2 |
| 2. He heard the Word of God. | Acts 10:34-43 |
| 3. He received the gift of the Holy Ghost. | Acts 10:44-45 |
| 4. They spoke with tongues and magnified God. | Acts 10:46 |
| 5. They were baptized in the name of the Lord. | Acts 10:48 |

G. LYDIA (Acts 16:14-15)

1. She heard Paul preach the gospel. Acts 16:14
2. The Lord opened her heart. Acts 16:14
3. She was baptized. Acts 16:15

H. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER (Acts 16:25-34)

1. He realized his hopeless condition. Acts 16:27
2. He called for a light. Acts 16:29
3. He cried out for instruction. Acts 16:30
4. He listened to the gospel preached by Paul Acts 16:32
5. He believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 16:31
6. He showed repentance by making restitution. Acts 16:33
7. He was baptized straightway Acts 16:33
8. He rejoiced. Acts 16:34

I. THE EPHESIANS (Acts 19:1-6)

1. They had repented. Acts 19:4
2. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts 19:5
3. They received the Holy Ghost. Acts 19:6
4. They spoke with tongues and prophesied. Acts 19:6

J. SUMMARY OF THE RECORD OF SALVATION BEING RECEIVED

Here is given the record of eight instances where salvation was received in the early church. In four cases it is the story of individuals being saved; in four instances it is the story of groups of people being saved.

Let us look at the summary:

1. They heard the Word preached. Seven times
(Saul was the one exception, and the Lord Jesus spoke to him.)

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 2. They believed. | Three times |
| 3. They repented.
(Although repentance is not mentioned,
it is evident in most of these instances.) | Three times |
| 4. They were baptized. | Eight times |
| 5. They were baptized in Jesus' name. | Five times |
| 6. They received the Holy Ghost. | Five times |
| 7. They spoke in tongues.
(Although it doesn't state that the
Samaritans spoke in tongues, yet it
is quite evident that they did.) | Four times |

Now what is the proper conclusion to make? Everyone agrees that faith is necessary. But if it was only mentioned three times, we must conclude that all these steps are essential. If we leave any of these steps out, we are doing violence to the Word of God.

Lesson Twelve

CHARACTER STUDIES

Although Peter and Paul are the two main characters in the history of the early church as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, students of this book should be well acquainted with the main characters, the part they took in this history, and where to find the references. He should be so familiar with this book that he can turn immediately to the story involving them. Some of the main characters are listed in this lesson:

AGABUS Acts 11:28; Acts 21:10, 11

Agabus was a prophet of Jerusalem. A famine predicted by him occurred in the reign of Claudius. He warned Paul about what would happen to him in Jerusalem.

AGRIPPA Acts 25:13-27; Acts 26:1-32

Agrippa was Herod Agrippa II, the last of the Herods. Paul preached to King Agrippa, almost persuading him to become a Christian.

ANANIAS Acts 5:1-11

Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, were Christian Jews of Jerusalem. They lied to the Holy Ghost and were smitten with death. This showed that Ananias was hypocritical.

ANANIAS Acts 9:10-18

Ananias was a Jewish Christian who lived at Damascus. God used him in laying hands upon Saul of Tarsus. He undoubtedly was the one who baptized Saul. He was a devout man with a good reputation (Acts 22:12). He showed some caution in approaching the persecutor, but he obeyed God, showing dedication to the will of God, obedience, and courage.

APOLLOS Acts 18:24-28

Apollos was a learned and eloquent Jew of Alexandria. He was a disciple of John the Baptist. He showed humility in being taught by Aquila. Afterwards his ministry had great success in Corinth and throughout Achaia.

AQUILA Acts 18:1-3, 18, 19, 26

Aquila was a Christian Jew and tentmaker who, with his wife, Priscilla, entertained Paul at Corinth. He accompanied Paul to Ephesus where he instructed Apollos in the true gospel.

BARNABAS Acts 4:36, 37; 9:27; 11:22-26; 15:1, 2,12

Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus. He revealed a beautiful Christian character by selling his property, by helping Paul by bringing him to Antioch, by being the first missionary sent out by the church, and by giving John Mark a second chance. His whole life and ministry was dedicated to the preaching of the gospel and the encouragement of others.

BERNICE Acts 25:23; 26:30

Bernice was the sister of Agrippa II. She had a notorious reputation and was with Agrippa when Paul preached to him.

CLAUDIUS LYSIAS Acts 22:24; 23:22-35

Claudius Lysias was a Roman officer at Jerusalem who protected Paul from the Jewish mob and sent him to Caesarea under guard.

CORNELIUS Acts 10:148

Cornelius was a devout Roman centurion at Caesarea. He and his household were the first Gentile converts to Christ.

CRISPUS Acts 18:8

Crispus was the ruler of the synagogue at Corinth who was saved through the preaching of Paul.

DEMETRIUS Acts 19:24-41

Demetrius was a silversmith at Ephesus who stirred up a riot because his business was being hurt by Paul's preaching.

ELYMAS Acts 13:6-12

Elymas was a Jew, Bar-jesus, who tried to prevent the conversion of the Roman deputy at Paphos. He was smitten with blindness for a time.

FELIX Acts 24:24-27

Felix was the governor of Judea who had married a Jewish wife, Drusilla. He trembled under the preaching of Paul. He showed his weakness of character by wanting to please the Jews and to receive a bribe. He left Paul in prison.

FESTUS Acts, Chapters 25 and 26

Festus was the successor of Felix. He listened to Paul's defense and was satisfied that Paul was innocent.

GALLIO Acts 18:12-17

Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia. He refused to listen to the accusations of the Jews against Paul.

GAMALIEL Acts 5:34-39

Gamaliel was a doctor of the law, a Pharisee, and a member of the Sanhedrin. He was Paul's teacher. He showed his wisdom by opposing the persecution of the apostles.

JAMES Acts 12:2

James was one of the twelve apostles and a brother of the apostle John. He was the first apostle to be martyred under the persecution of Herod.

JAMES Acts 15:13

James was the son of Joseph and Mary, a half brother of Jesus. He became the bishop of Jerusalem and presided over the first church council. He wrote the Epistle of James.

JASON Acts 17:5-9

Jason was a Christian at Thessalonica who entertained Paul and, because of this, was persecuted.

JULIUS Acts 27:1, 42, 43

Julius was the centurion who took Paul as a prisoner to Rome.

JUSTUS Acts 1:23

Justus was also called Barsabas. He was one of the men considered to fill the place of Judas Iscariot.

LUKE Acts 16:10

Luke was the author of the Acts of the Apostles. He was the beloved physician and companion of Paul. He joined Paul's company at Troas.

LYDIA Acts 16:14-15

Lydia was a woman of Thyatira who lived in Philippi. She sold the dyed garments of Thyatira. She was the first European convert and entertained Paul in her home.

MARK Acts 13:5, 13; 15:37-39

John Mark was the son of Mary, the sister of Barnabas. He accompanied the apostles on their first missionary journey but turned back at Perga. Later Barnabas parted company with Paul in order to give him a second chance. Mark became a profitable minister and wrote the second Gospel.

MARY Acts 12:12

Mary was Mark's mother. The Christians met for prayer at her home during the imprisonment of Peter. It is believed that her home was one of the meeting places for the early Christians. She apparently was a prosperous woman.

MATTHIAS Acts 1:21-26

Matthias was chosen to take the place of Judas as one of the twelve apostles.

PAUL Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9-28

Paul was the great apostle to the Gentiles. His Hebrew name was Saul, and he was a native of Tarsus. He was highly educated. His greatest characteristic was his complete dedication to the will of God. "As much as in me is, I am ready" (Romans 1:15) expresses this dedication. He showed this in his ministry on many occasions.

PETER Acts 1-12

Peter was the apostle that Jesus chose to be the first preacher of the gospel and, thus, to unlock the door of the kingdom. He was a man of great earnestness, impulsiveness, and qualities of leadership.

PHILIP Acts 6:5; 8:4-8; 26-39; 21:8, 9

Philip was one of the first deacons and became a powerful evangelist. He was the first to preach the gospel in Samaria. He baptized the eunuch and went on to Caesarea. He had four daughters who had the gift of prophecy.

RHODA Acts 12:13-16

Rhoda was a servant of Mary, Mark's mother, and identified Peter knocking at the gate.

SCEVA Acts 19:14-16

Sceva was a Jewish chief priest whose seven sons tried to use the name of Jesus in casting out a demon.

SERGIUS PAULUS Acts 13:7-12

Sergius Paulus was the Roman proconsul of Cyprus.

SILAS Acts 15:22, 27, 32; 15:40; 16:19, 25; 18:5

Silas was a member of the church at Jerusalem and was commissioned to report the decision of the church council to Antioch. He became Paul's companion on the second journey. In the epistles he is called Silvanus.

SIMON Acts 8:9-24

Simon was a magician of Samaria who was severely rebuked by Peter when he tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit.

SOSTHENES Acts 18:17

Sosthenes was the ruler of the synagogue at Corinth. He was seized and beaten by the Greeks.

STEPHEN Acts 6-7

Stephen was one of the first deacons and became the first Christian martyr. He was a man of great faith and was a very powerful preacher.

TERTULLUS Acts 24:1-8

Tertullus was an orator employed by the Jews to make the accusation against Paul.

TIMOTHY Acts 16:1, 3

Timothy was a native of Lystra. His mother was Jewish and his father was Greek. To avoid criticism from the Jews, Paul caused him to be circumcised. He was a companion of Paul and became a very successful minister of the Gospel.

TITUS Acts 15:2; Galatians 2:1-3

Titus accompanied Paul to Jerusalem to attend the first church council, which considered whether or not circumcision was

necessary for the Gentiles. Titus was a Greek but was not required to be circumcised. He became a minister of the gospel and companion of Paul.

TYRANNUS Acts 19:9

Tyrannus had a school in Ephesus which he permitted Paul to use after Paul no longer had the use of the synagogue.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Two

1. Mark each statement as true or false.
 - a. _____ Antioch was the starting point for Paul's three missionary journeys.
 - b. _____ The seaport for Antioch was Seleucia.
 - c. _____ Antioch was located on the Tiber River.
 - d. _____ Paul was stoned at Derbe.
 - e. _____ There was a shrine of Venus in the city of Paphos.
 - f. _____ The people at Paphos thought the apostles were Mercury and Jupiter.
 - g. _____ John Mark turned back at Iconium.
 - h. _____ The name Paul means "little."
 - i. _____ When Paul was stoned, he was caught up to Paradise.
 - j. _____ The apostles crossed the island of Crete from east to west.

2. Write a paragraph on the life of John Mark.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Four



On the map above, indicate the following places:

Antioch
Athens
Berea
Caesarea
Corinth

Cyprus
Ephesus
Philippi
Tarsus
Troas

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Seven

Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

Alexandria	Miletus	Tyrannus
Aquila	Sceva	Diana
Demeterius	fifty thousand	three
	twelve	

1. At Ephesus stood the Temple of _____.
2. Apollo was born at _____.
3. _____ was a tent maker.
4. Paul spent _____ years at Ephesus.
5. The saints burned books valued at _____ pieces of silver.
6. The sons of _____ tried to cast out a demon.
7. There were _____ disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus.
8. Paul taught in the school of _____.
9. _____, a silversmith, stirred up trouble.
10. Paul exhorted the Ephesian elders at _____.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Eight

1. List the five defenses of Paul:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

2. Why did Paul still go to Jerusalem in spite of the fact that he had been warned twice?

3. What was the plot to kill Paul in Jerusalem?

4. How did Paul throw the Sanhedrin into confusion?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Ten

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct words:

Fair Haven	Myra
forty-three	Paul
fourteen	Phenice
Julius	Publius
Malta	three

- a. Paul was delivered over to _____, a centurion.
- b. Paul and the others changed ships at _____.
- c. Melitia is the island of _____.
- d. The storm lasted for _____ days.
- e. Paul spent _____ months on Malta.
- f. The father of _____ was healed.
- g. _____ said, "I believe God."
- h. The brethren at Rome traveled _____ miles to meet Paul.
- i. The ship's captain wanted to winter _____.
- j. Paul said that they should remain at _____.

2. What evidence shows that Paul had a Spirit-filled ministry with signs following?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Acts II

Lesson Twelve

Place the correct name in the blanks

Aquila	James	Lysias	Stephen
Bernice	Jason	Mark	Tertullus
Crispus	Julius	Matthias	Timothy
Demetrius	Luke	Philip	Titus
Gallio	Lydia	Rhoda	Tyrannus

- _____ A half-brother of Jesus
- _____ A tent maker
- _____ A ruler of the synagogue at Corinth
- _____ Took the place of Judas
- _____ His mother was a Jew, his father a Greek
- _____ The proconsul of Achaia
- _____ King Agrippa's sister
- _____ Had four daughters who prophesied
- _____ Had a school at Ephesus
- _____ A young uncircumcised Greek
- _____ Turned back at Perga
- _____ A silversmith at Ephesus
- _____ The captain who rescued Paul
- _____ The first European convert
- _____ The author of Acts of the Apostles
- _____ The centurion who took Paul to Rome
- _____ A Christian at Thessalonica
- _____ The orator who accused Paul
- _____ Mark's mother servant girl
- _____ The church's first martyr