

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

LESSON 19: CHAPTER 15-16

9 October 2015

CHAPTER 15

Acts 15:16: “This I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down.”

Cross-references: Isaiah 2:2, Isaiah 11:10-12, Isaiah 60:1-5, Isaiah 66:23, Luke 1:32

Acts 15 gives the official account of the dispute that arose in Antioch concerning Gentile believers. Paul gives a personal account of this in Galatians 2:11-16

Vss. 30-33 At the close of the meeting in Jerusalem, the leaders (including Paul and Barnabas) travelled to Antioch to deliver the epistle concerning the Gentile believers. The letter was received with joy and was a great comfort. The apostles and prophets exhorted and confirmed the brethren. Those men who were from Jerusalem returned after “a space.”

Confirmed: to make sure a saved person knows the basic fundamental, necessary truths of the Christian faith, including how to live according to the precepts of biblical Christianity.

Vss. 34-35 Silas, Paul, and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord.

Vs. 36 Paul decides that he would like to visit all the brethren in the cities where they preached before. Notice there was no prayer and no sending out by the church.

Vss. 37-41 Preparing for the journey, a dispute arises between Paul and Barnabas over the bringing of John Mark (because he had quit on the first missionary journey), and they go their separate ways. Barnabas and Mark “**sailed unto Cyprus.**” Paul and Silas “**went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches.**” This was not a lasting dispute (1 Cor. 9:6, Col. 4:10, 2 Tim. 4:11).

CHAPTER 16

Vss. 1-3 In Lystra Paul met Timothy, whose mother was a Jew, but his father was a Greek. Paul circumcised Timothy because the people in that area knew that his father was a Greek. Paul’s position on circumcision is found in Galatians 2:3-5. Titus wasn’t circumcised because both his parents were Greek. Timothy had a Jewish mother, so his lack of circumcision was going to hinder his ability to minister; therefore he consented to it for the gospel’s sake (see 1 Cor. 9:19-21).

Vs. 4 They delivered the church decrees in all the cities. These were to be received as being authoritative since they were “**ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.**”

Vs. 5 The church increased in number daily. This is the eighth progress report of the growth of the church. (2:41, 4:4, 5:14, 6:1, 6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5).

Vss. 6-7 The Holy Spirit forbid Paul and Silas from going to preach the word in Asia and Bithynia, most likely because there was somebody already ministering in that field. (Paul and Silas weren't the only ones ministering the gospel). God didn't close that door to prevent those people from getting the gospel (2 Peter 3:9). He had it covered.

Vss. 8-9 As Paul came to Troas, he received a vision of a man saying, "**Come over into Macedonia, and help us.**" God has different ways of giving you direction.

Vs. 10 Notice in this verse, the use of the words "**we**" and "**us.**" This means that Luke (the writer of Acts) has joined the missionary journey. Luke stayed in Philippi in 17:1, but rejoins Paul in 20:5 and stays with him to the end.

Vss. 11-15 In response to Paul's vision, they journey to Macedonia and arrive in the city of Philippi by a riverside where a prayer meeting is taking place. As they spoke to the women there, a certain woman named Lydia responded to the preaching as the Lord opened her heart. She and her family believed and were baptized. She persuaded the apostles to stay in her house.

When you respond to the light that God gives you, you'll receive more light:

Who Acts 2: People at Pentecost who had come to worship God.

Received Acts 8: Samaritans who gave heed to Philip's preaching and the woman at the well.

The Gospel? Acts 8: The Ethiopian eunuch who went to Jerusalem to worship God and read the Scriptures.

Acts 9: Saul of Tarsus, who studied the Law and served God according to the Law.

Acts 10: Cornelius, a devout man who feared God and prayed to God.

Acts 13: the people of Antioch who feared God.

Acts 16: Lydia, a woman who is worshipping God.

Vss. 16-18 A young girl possessed with an unclean spirit interfered with the Gospel preaching for many days. Though she spoke true words, her words would cause more harm than good. Her reputation as a public soothsayer would make people disregard the important words that Paul was preaching. Finally, Paul cast out the unclean spirit, ending his grief.

The girl was a slave. The money she earned for practicing her "gift" brought her masters much gain (vs. 16). They took advantage of her.

Vss. 19-24 The girl's masters sought "*justice*" against Paul and Silas for disabling their source of income. The few times when Gentiles cause trouble for the Apostles, it's because of money, not religion.

Paul and Silas are accused before the magistrates of teaching unlawful Jewish customs to Romans. The masters make it a race issue and stir up the crowd against them (vs. 22).

Their clothes are ripped off, they are beaten with "**many stripes**" (See 2 Cor. 6:5, 11:23-24), and they are cast into the inner prison with their feet secured in the stocks.
