

EXPLORING GOD'S WORD TEACHER'S GUIDE: LESSON 10

*[Assigned Reading: Acts 3-13]
[Themes to Teach: The Church]*

I. THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH GREW EXPONENTIALLY:

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament Church grew rapidly! 3000 converts (Acts 2:41), 5000 converts (Acts 4:4), multitudes added (Acts 5:14), and a great many priests were converted (Acts 6:7).

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH: (Read Acts 2:36-47)

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| 1. <u>Doctrine</u> | 4. The <u>Supernatural</u> |
| 2. <u>Fellowship</u> | 5. <u>Sacrificial Giving</u> |
| 3. <u>Prayer</u> | |

III. AS THE CHURCH GREW IT FACED INTENSE PERSECUTION: (Read Acts 7:54-60)

1. Stephen was the first martyr of the church.
2. Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church. (Read Acts 8:1-4)
3. The church was scattered, but not defeated. They went everywhere preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
4. Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus. (Read Acts 9:1-6 & 17-19)
 - a. Saul was a chosen vessel and would become one of the greatest missionaries of the church.
 - b. After his conversion, his name was changed from Saul to Paul.

IV. THE GENTILES RECEIVED THE GOSPEL: (Read Acts 10:1-16)

1. Peter received the revelation that God's plan of salvation included everyone, not just the Jews. (Read Acts 10:34-35)
2. The Gentiles received the gift of the Holy Spirit and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. (Read Acts 10:44-48)
3. Peter explained to the leaders of the church in Jerusalem that God had received the Gentiles into the church. (Read Acts 11:15-17)
4. Their experience was just like the experience of the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost.

V. PAUL'S MISSIONS TRIPS:

After the Gentiles were received into the church, Antioch became an important center of missions' activity. Paul was sent out from Antioch as a missionary. He traveled throughout the Mediterranean coasts and planted many churches.

Acts 13:1–3 (KJV 1900)

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

1. First missionary trip: (Account found in Acts 13-14)
 - a. Traveling Companions: Barnabas & John Mark
 - b. Destinations: The regions of Cyprus, Pamphylia, & Galatia
2. Second missionary trip: (Account found in Acts 15:36 – Acts 17)
 - a. Traveling Companion: Silas
 - b. Destination: Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth
3. Third missionary trip: (Account found in Acts 18:23-21:17)
 - a. Traveling Companion: Luke
 - b. Destinations: Galatia, Western Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. His base of operations appears to have been Ephesus.

Acts 19:10 (NKJV)

10 And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

VI. PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME: (Account found in Acts 21-28)

1. Paul was arrested for preaching in Jerusalem: (Read Acts 21:30-33)
2. Paul avoids execution by using his Roman citizenship and appealing to Caesar: (Read Acts 25:11)
3. Yet, God had already determined for Paul to preach in Rome:

Acts 23:11 (NKJV)

11 But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

4. After much travel and hardship, Paul arrived in Rome and lived there for two years while awaiting his trial before Caesar. (Read Acts 28:30-31)
 - a. During this time Paul converted many people, even members of Caesar's household. (Read Acts 4:22)
 - b. During this time, Paul wrote many letters to the churches he had established during his missionary trips. Many of these letters are viewed as scripture and are an important part of the New Testament today.