

## EXPLORING GOD'S WORD LESSON 10

### I. The New Testament Church Grows:

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament Church grew exponentially!

3000 converts (Acts 2:41), 5000 converts (Acts 4:4), Multitudes (Acts 5:14), Great company of Priests (Acts 6:7)

### II. Characteristics of the New Testament Church: [Read Acts 2:41-47]

- a. Doctrinal
- b. Fellowship
- c. Prayer
- d. Supernatural
- e. Sacrificial Giving

### III. The Persecution of the Church:

- a. Stephen is the first martyr of the church: [Read Acts 7:54-60]
- b. Saul of Tarsus leads a great persecution against the New Testament Church: [Read Acts 8:1-4]
- c. The church is scattered, but not defeated.
- d. Saul's conversion [Read Acts 9:1-6 & 17-19]

### IV. The Gentiles Receive the Gospel:

- a. Peter visits Cornelius. [Read Acts 10:1-16]
- b. Peter receives the revelation that God's plan for salvation includes the Gentiles. [Read Acts 10:34-35]

#### **Acts 10:34–35 (NKJV)**

**34** Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.

**35** But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

- c. The Gentiles receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. [Read Acts 10:44-48]
- d. Peter explains to those in Jerusalem that God has received the Gentiles into the church. [Read Acts 11:15-17]

### V. Paul's Missionary Trips:

#### **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.

- a. Paul First missionary trip (Acts 13-14)
  1. Traveling Companions: Barnabas & John Mark
  2. Destinations: The regions of Cyprus, Pamphylia, & Galatia
- b. Second missionary trip (Acts 15:36 – Acts 17)
  1. Traveling Companion: Silas
  2. Destination: Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth
- c. Third missionary trip (Acts 18:23-21:17) circa AD 53-57
  1. Traveling Companion: Luke
  2. Destinations: Galatia, Western Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia. The 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.

- d. Arrest & Imprisonment in Rome (Acts 21:30 – 28:3)
  1. Paul returns to Jerusalem and is arrested.

#### **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."

2. Paul is a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar.
3. After much travel and hardship, Paul arrived in Rome and lived in a hired house while awaiting an audience with the Emperor.

#### **Acts 28:30–31 (NKJV)**

**30** Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him,

**31** preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

- e. Letters from Rome: Many of Paul's letters to the church were written while he was in prison, and were considered by the early church to be scripture and would comprise much of our New Testament today.