

Acts 1 Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Four: Paul's First Missionary Journey and the Jerusalem Council – Acts 13-15, Galatians

Read Acts 13-14 after scanning the questions below.

- 1) Begin tracing Paul's first missionary journey on the map provided with this lesson (you will use this map again in Lessons Five and Six). In order to distinguish Paul's first journey from his second and third journeys, either use a different color pencil or pen to trace each journey or mark one with a solid line, one with a dotted line, and one with dashes. Acts 13-14 describes only Paul's first journey.

- 2) While reading these two chapters, list:
 - a) the ways that Satan opposed the advancement of the Gospel message (either stated or implied).

 - b) the words, phrases, or events that show the power and effect of the Gospel.

 - c) the ways Paul and Barnabas suffered in order to spread the Gospel message in obedience to the Lord.

- 3) How will your discoveries about the presentation of the Gospel in Acts 13-14 change the way you respond to the commission you have received to be Jesus' witness (Acts 1:8)?

Read Acts 15.

- 4) What concern brought Paul and Barnabas into dispute with some Jews from Jerusalem who were stirring up controversy (see also Galatians 1:7, 2:4, 6, 12; 4:17; 5:12)?

- 5) Briefly summarize:
 - a) the essence of Peter, Barnabas (with Paul), and James' message with regard to this question.

b) how these men determined God's will in the matter.

6) Describe the outcome of the Jerusalem Council.

7) How have you determined God's will for your life in the past and how does this compare to the manner in which the disciples determined God's will (Question 5b)?

Read Galatians 1-2.

8) Apparently, Paul felt compelled to correct two accusations that had been leveled against him, one regarding his person (see especially Galatians 1:1, 11-12, 20; 2:7-9) and one regarding his message (see especially 2:15-16 [further elaborated in chapters 3 and 4]). Try to determine the nature of these two accusations.

9) Why was it important for Paul to defend himself on these matters? What does this teach you about when it is appropriate to defend yourself?

Read Galatians 3:1-5:12.

10) The following statements and questions will help you trace Paul's reasoning in Galatians 3.

a) According to Galatians 3:8, what promise did God give Abraham (first given in Genesis 12:3)?

b) Reread Galatians 3:17, in which Paul reminds us that the Law of Moses was not given to Israel until 430 years *after* God gave His promise to Abraham. Now, examine Galatians 3:6. What was Abraham's response to God's promise, a response that "was credited to him as righteousness" (in other words, a response that resulted in Abraham's salvation)?

c) Reread Galatians 3:16. In whom did God fulfill the promise He gave Abraham?

d) We could summarize this teaching of Paul by saying that:

- Just as Abraham was saved when he _____ God's promise concerning the blessing of all _____ through His Seed (descendant), who is _____, up to the day in which Paul wrote, and still today, a person is considered righteous by God on the basis of their genuine, life-altering _____.
- According to Galatians 3:19, the Law of Moses was put into effect to keep _____ (sin) in check (verse 25 says the Law was our *paidagōgos* [strict governess]).
- The practice of circumcision, like every work of the _____ (3:10), would never help a person acquire salvation. Jews and Gentiles alike are children of God by _____ (3:26).

11) What terms does Paul repeatedly contrast to clarify the doctrinal issue he was addressing:

- Galatians 3:18, 21; 5:4 G _____ (or P _____) *versus* L _____
- Galatians 3:2-3, 6-9, 11, 23 B _____ (or F _____) *versus* L _____ (flesh; striving)
- Galatians 4:22-26, 31; 5:1 F _____ *versus* S _____

12) Examine the contrasting terms in Question 11. How does it feel to you to live the Christian life each day? More like the first term in each group or more like the last term? Can you identify something specific that pulls you toward living under the second set of terms?

Read Galatians 5:13-6:18.

13) What important principles are taught in Galatians 5:13-18, and why would Paul have wanted to follow up his lessons with these exhortations?

14) Make a list of the phrases between Galatians 5:16 and 6:10 that summarize the way Paul encourages "free," faith-filled believers to live.

15) Which verse in Galatians 5:13-6:18 exhorts you with regard to a particular situation you are currently facing? How does it help?