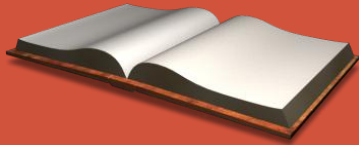


## Notes From The Textbook



Clifton H Carpenter  
Pastor/Teacher

# Book of Acts

The Book of Acts, often called Acts of the Apostles is the second volume work by Doctor Luke.

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The Aim of our study is to encourage faithfulness to the Lord; and to look for opportunities to participate in the Great Commission.  
Matthew 28:18-20

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
June 23, 2013

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Listen to Acts Background  
7:08 minutes [click here](#)

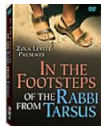
The Book of Acts

Introduction  
Acts 1:1-3

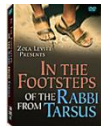
- The Book Title
- The Author
- The Audience
- The Main Divisions
- The Holy Spirit

The following videos add visual effects to certain parts of the Book of Acts. The file size of each video (158 MB) and runtime (28 minutes) presented by Zola Levitt Ministries.

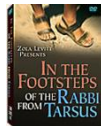
Although the videos can be watched at any time, I recommend that you first read the study notes in sequence and then watch the video that correlates with the chapter.



[Paul's Conversion Experience](#)  
Chapter 9



[Official Ministry](#)  
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[Apostolic Ordination](#)  
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[Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Journeys](#)  
Chapter 16



[Arrest and Trial](#)  
Chapter 21

The Book of Acts is to encourage faithfulness to the Lord, and to look for opportunities to participate in the Great Commission. [Matthew 28:18-20](#)

1. The Book Title: The Acts of the Apostles. This title is open to speculation. Acts records only sermons and speeches by Peter (chps.1-15) and Paul (chps.13-28). Perhaps, a title could be *“Certain Acts of Certain Apostles”* Others speakers include Gamaliel, Stephen, Barnabas, James, Demetrius and a Town clerk.
2. The Author: [Acts 1:1-2](#) looks back to Luke’s first gospel. [Luke 1:1-4](#) Therefore, Luke was a historian who gave details about the spread of the Kingdom of God.
3. The Audience: Theophilus, a believer and Luke’s patron who probably financed the writing of Luke and Acts. The book was written for believers throughout church history.
4. The Main Divisions: They are *“chronological”* and *“geographical”* divisions.
  - Acts Chapter 1-7 *“being a witness to Christ in Jerusalem”*
  - Acts 8-11 *“being a witness to Christ in Samaria”*
  - Acts 13-2 *“being a witness to Christ in the World”*
5. Ministry aspects of the Holy Spirit: *“Acts of the Holy Spirit”* would be a more descriptive title for the Book of Acts:
  - Acts 8:36; Acts 13 *“directing the activities of the Church”*
  - Acts 16:25-27 *“giving life to those who believe”*
  - Acts 5:1-11 *“preserving the purity of the Church”*
  - Acts 2:14 *“imparting boldness to Christians”*

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
June 30, 2013

Lesson No.2

The Book of Acts

- The Number 40
- The Infallible Proofs
- The Post-Resurrection

Key Verse: Acts 1:1-3 To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

Introduction: Luke is the author of the Book of Acts and the Gospel of Luke. The Book of Acts picks up where the Gospel of Luke ends in chapter 24.

- Luke the Historian: give an orderly account of all that Jesus began to do and teach concerning the Kingdom of God.
- Luke the Apologist: The branch of theology that is concerned with the defense of Christian doctrines.

I. Inspiration of Scripture: The Holy Spirit guided the writers to choose what narratives, materials, speeches of others, letters, state papers or historical matters He found necessary for the recording of the divine message.

II. Plenary Verbal Inspiration: Therefore, it means that “*every word*” in “*every part*” of the original manuscripts of the Bible “*is given by inspiration of God*” Inspiration has to do only with the writing of the Bible, and even these writers were “*not inspired at any other time*” BI Series: What is the Bible Lesson No.2

1. The Number 40: This number 40 appears throughout the Bible

- A period of temptation: Matthew 4:1-1
- A period of judgment: Hebrews 3:9
- A period of probation: Acts 1:3

2. The Infallible Proofs: The word infallible appears only in Acts 1:3 and means “*a sure sign*” a positive proof.

- Many scholars interpret “*infallible proofs*” as it relates to the sense of sight.
- Other scholars interpret “*infallible proofs*” as it relates to the scriptures.

3. The Post-Resurrection: Luke 24:1-32 and John 20:19-31 The “*eye witness accounts*” of Jesus after his resurrection. Jesus predicted his death and resurrection [John 2:18-25](#)

- Luke 24:13-24 the physical sight of the two men did not recognize Jesus in his resurrection form.
- Luke 24:25-31 the eyes of the men were opened after they believed the scriptures concerning Jesus.

Application: The rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16:22-31; 2 Corinthians 5:7

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
July 7, 2013

Lesson No.3

The Book of Acts  
Acts 1:6-14



The Ascension



Pillar of Cloud

- The Wait
- The Twelve

Key Verse: Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Introduction: The Great Commission is both “*a divine commission*” and a “*divinely empowered commission*” **Matthew 28:18-20** It is a Trinitarian Mission: (1) God willed it; (2) Jesus directed it and (3) the Holy Spirit carried it out.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ: **Luke 24:50-53** The Apostle’s Creed:

- ✦ The third day he rose again from the dead.
- ✦ He ascended into heaven
- ✦ And is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

The Shekinah Glory: verse 9 a cloud is often the expression of God’s Power and Glory. **Exodus 13:21-22** Pillar of Cloud and **Exodus 40:34-35** the Tabernacle

1. The Wait: **Luke 24:49** Wait on the Lord is a common expression in Scriptures: Psalms 27:14 “*wait on the Lord*” Psalms 37:7-9; 34 “*rest in the Lord*” “*wait on the Lord*” Waiting does not mean doing nothing, during the interim we may be instructed to pray, witness, etc. **2 Thessalonians 3:1-6**

2. The Twelve: Luke 6:13 Jesus chose the disciple: 1) Peter; 2) Andrew; 3) James; 4) John; 5) Philip; 6) Bartholomew; 7) Matthew; 8) Thomas; 9) James; 10) Simon; 11) Judas “*brother of James*” and 12) Judas Iscariot

Acts 1:13 The Eleven Disciples: The defection and death of Judas Iscariot was a fulfillment of the Scriptures Psalms 41:9 and Zechariah 11:13

Predictions about Judas: Judas was “*a thief*” and “*a traitor*” John 12:6 and Luke 6:16 John 17:12 “*son of perdition*” and Matthew 26:24 “*one who betrays Jesus*”

- The Blood Money: 30 pieces of silver Zechariah 11:13; Matthew 26:14-6 30
- Exodus 21:32 “*the price paid for a person gored by an ox*”
- Judas Commits Suicide: Matthew 27:1-10 and Acts 1:18-19
- The Field of Blood: lit. Potter’s Field, clay dirt for making pottery. Greek “Aceldama”

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
July 21, 2013

Lesson No.4

The Book of Acts  
Acts 2:1-13



- The Day of Pentecost
- Tongues, Wind and Fire

Key Verse: Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with *“one accord”* in *“one place”*



Exodus from Egypt



Crossing the Red Sea



Worship in the Wilderness



Ministry of Jesus

**I**ntroduction: The Twelfth Disciple: **Acts 1:26** Matthias. Casting of lots was an Old Testament selection process i.e. *“common priest”* for daily services and *“the scapegoat”* The Disciples *“learners or followers”* became the Apostles *“sent ones”* They were Pioneers, Proclaimers and Patterns for the Church. Ephesians 4:11-13

1. The Day of Pentecost: Pentecost means 50, the day following the 49th day of the Feasts of Weeks. **Deuteronomy 16:9-12**

The Age of the Holy Spirit: In the work of any member of the Trinity, the other two are always intimately involved. Click [Theology Proper](#) to read more about the Holy Spirit.

- The number one is an essential element that represents both the nature of the Trinity and the nature of the Church. The church was anticipated in **Matthew 16:18**.
- The glory of this unity: 1) sharing in the same Truth; 2) sharing in the same Power; and 3) sharing in the same Life.
- Events leading up to Pentecost: The Death of Jesus (God’s Passover) the burial, resurrection, 40 days with his disciples and the ascension.
- How many days did the Apostles have to wait before the coming of the Holy Spirit?

2. Tongues, Wind and Fire: Acts 2:16 but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. **Joel 2:28-29** The inception of the Church: Ecclesia *“the called out assembly”* A building and a body are symbols representing the Church: Ephesians 1:17-23; 2:19-22.

- Incidental Elements: **Acts 2:2-3** The Wind: John 3:8 a symbol of Power; The Fire: Psalms 39:3 a symbol of Passion and The Tongues: John 1:18 a symbol of Proclamation.
- The tongues were *“living languages”* spoken by Jews who had returned to Jerusalem for the feast days. Jews representing the East, North, West and South. **vv.8-11**
- They were Amazed and Astonished *“to push out of their senses”* *“it blew their minds”* Bewildered *“hit hard and stunned”* **v.12**
- Others mocked and accused the mass with being influenced by wine. **v.13**

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
July 28, 2013

Lesson No.5

The Book of Acts

Telling God a Lie  
Acts 5:1-11

- Great Power
- Great Grace
- Great Fear

Key Verse: Acts 4:32 And the multitude of them that believed were of *“one heart”* and *“one soul”* neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Introduction: Luke has been telling us about the many things which the disciples of Jesus were enabled to do and teach after the ascension of the Lord. [Acts 4:33](#)

1. Great Power: Acts 4: 33 The secret to our effectiveness as a Church is that we maintain the *“proper attitude”* and *“proper actions”* toward one another: i.e. our conscious experiences of choice, feeling, thought and reasoning should reflect the one heart (spirit) *“unity of Spirit”* [Ephesians 4:3](#) and one soul *“unity of faith”* [Ephesians 4:13](#)
2. Great Grace: Acts 4:33 Grace defined *“Unmerited Favor”* *“God’s Righteousness At Christ’s Expense”* *“What God Does Within You, Without You”* [Ephesians 1:7; 3:8](#) Grace is not something we can demand from the Lord. It is not something we can earn. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#)
  - The church is a wonderful community of God’s people; it is a place where we share the same Truth, Power and Life. BUT what happens when a believer (s) displays the wrong attitudes and wrong actions before the Lord? The whole church is affected. [1Corinthians 5:1-8](#)
  - Life in the early church included learning truth, fellowship, breaking bread together and prayer. [Acts 2:42-47](#) many sold their land and houses and gave the proceeds to the Apostles for distribution among the needy. [Acts 4:34-37](#) their actions were voluntary! Click [When We Rob God](#) to read about Grace Giving.

The death of Ananias and Sapphira: Acts 5:1 BUT denotes *“a contrast of ideas”* between Barnabas *“Son of Encouragement”* and Ananias. [Acts 4:36-37](#).

3. Great Fear: Acts 5:11 Ananias was influenced by a *“different spirit”* *“an unholy spirit”* There was no sin in giving the gift to the church; there was no sin in the amount given; the sin was in the lie.

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira brought immediate judgment upon them; and fear came upon all the church. The Lord is watching each of us, and He is listening to what’s going on in our heart. *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* [Galatians 6:7](#) and the sin of Achan. [Joshua 7:16-26](#)

## The Lie of Ananias and Sapphira Acts 5:1-2

After they saw the great generosity of Barnabas, and how well he was respected, Ananias and Sapphira decided they wanted some of the same respect.

1. He kept back part of the proceeds: They sold the possession, and gave “*only a portion*” to the church, while “*implying*” that they had sacrificially given it all to the church.
  - Kept back, means “*to misappropriate*” the same word was used of Achan’s theft in Joshua 7:21
  - Both husband and wife were in on the deception. There may indeed implied that they had vowed to give the whole proceeds of the sale to God, but then changed their mind and handed over only part.
  - Once the love of money takes possession of a person, there is no evil he cannot or will not do.
2. Peter’s knowledge: God apparently gave Peter supernatural knowledge of what Ananias had done. A spiritual gift, “*the word of knowledge*” 1Corinthians 12:8
3. Satan’s input in the sin: Satan can influence the life of a believer, but he cannot do your sinning for you.
  - When Peter asked Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart, he must have been crushed. Expecting praise, he was rebuked instead.
  - Peter did not accuse Ananias of lying to the church, or to the apostles, but to the Holy Spirit Himself. Click [The Word of God](#) and read about “*having the proper attitude toward trials and temptations*”
4. Ananias’ Sin: The sin was unnecessary. Ananias was free to use the money for whatever he wanted, except as a means to inflate his own spiritual pride.
  - Ananias had to conceive in his heart to defraud God.
  - Peter did not pronounce a death sentence on anyone; but it was God who struck Ananias and Sapphira dead from their sin.
  - Perhaps, Ananias and Sapphira died from a heart-attack or stroke. Perhaps, the shock of being exposed was too much to bear. The greatest fear is not in sinning itself, but in being found out.

Application: Many times we presume greatly on God when we assume that there is always time to repent.

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
August 4, 2013

Lesson No.6

The Book of Acts

A Witness in Jerusalem  
Acts 6:1-8

- Satan Influences Deceit
- Satan Influences Dissension

Key Verse: Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Introduction: The attempts by Satan to discredit the church can be seen in many Christian congregations today. Christians need to walk circumspectly. [Ephesians 5:15](#)

Satan understands the importance of the church being of “*one accord*” in “*one place*” Acts 2:1; of “*one heart*” and “*one soul*” Acts 4:32 Therefore, Satan will do whatever he can to disrupt this oneness. Many Christians fail to understand the importance of “*spiritual oneness*” Satan’s strategy is to disrupt things. Acts 5:1-11; 6:1-8

1. The First Attempt: Satan filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphria to “*misappropriate*” their proceeds when they sold their land and property. Their sin was unnecessary.

Six detestable sins that God hates: [Proverbs 6:17-19](#)

- **Haughty eyes:** v. 17 a haughty spirit looks upon others in a condescending way or thinking more highly of yourself than you should. [Romans 12:3](#)
- **A lying tongue:** v.17 one lie can destroy so much. Pride is behind all lies because it tends to make the liar appear better than they really are; the person might be covering up something that would make them appear much worse.
- **Hands that shed innocent blood:** v.17 killing is sometimes necessary in times of national war or in cases of defending oneself. The taking of innocent life is sinful.
- **A heart that devises wicked schemes:** v.18 a “*premeditated decision*” devising to do evil is wrong. It is a “*universal moral*” that it is wrong to kill. Someone that commits “*premeditated murder*” has schemed ahead of time to commit murder even though their own conscience tells them it is wrong. [Romans 2:15](#)
- **Feet that are quick to rush into evil:** v.18 this may be one of the most common sins “*flaring tempers*” *raging anger*” “*uncontrollable emotions*”: “*short fuses*” these are those whose feet are quick to join in a riot, to loot homes and businesses after a disaster or break into a fist fight over the most trivial things.
- **A false witness who pours out lies:** v.19 committing perjury is a very serious crime.
- **A person that stirs up dissension among brothers or sister:** v.19 a person that causes divisions can split churches; cause divorces, break up friendships, ruin relationships.

2. The Second Attempt: The inequity of distributions in the Church. Murmuring is the “*mark of an unhappy spirit*” click [Administration in the Church](#) to read more.

The Holy Spirit “*preserving the purity of the Church*”

- The Word of God Increased “*abound*”
- The number of believers increased
- The number of believing priests increased



BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
August 11, 2013



Lesson No.7

The Book of Acts

Standing for the Truth  
Acts 6:9-15

- Stephen's Signs
- Stephen's Speech
- Stephen Seized

Key Verse: 2Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Introduction: Jesus' last words to His disciples were; that in this world, *"they will face tribulation"* *"they will face persecution"* [John 16:33](#); and second, that the world will hate them because it hated Him first. [John 15:18](#) Jesus was telling His disciples that *"if"* they live for Him as they should, the world will cause trouble for them.

Satan Influences Doctrine: Satan continues his attack upon the church by influencing heterodoxy *"a false doctrine"* a turning to another of *"a different kind"* resulting in the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Click the [Study of Galatians](#) (Lesson No.2) and read more about the departure and danger of *"turning renegade"*

1. Stephen's Signs: vv.8 Stephen is *"full of faith and power"* This is faith in God and the power of God. Signs and wonders by Stephen were empowered by the Holy Spirit. Signs and wonders among the Jews were the signature of a prophet of God. Today, we rely on the *"infallible proofs"* of Scripture to determine truth from error.

The Synagogue of Libertines: v.9 (Freedmen) Hellenistic Jews from (Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia) who were slaves and had been set free.

- Stephen attended and taught at this synagogue, and it was the place of the debates.
  - Years later John mentions the *"synagogue of Satan"* in [Revelation 2:9; 3:9](#)
2. Stephen's Speech: v.10 they *"resisted"* the Holy Spirit. Stephen had studied the Bible and knew the Bible. He understood the concepts and teachings of the Bible.
    - He had sat under the teaching of the Apostles; he knew the arguments of the world, and the argument of the legalistic Jews and how to refute them.
    - He was wise in the Word, and the Holy Spirit used Stephen's knowledge of the Scriptures to answer every question and refute every argument they threw his way.
    - If you haven't read the Bible and studied it, and haven't memorized Scripture, there is nothing there for the Holy Spirit to cause you to remember.
    - Sometimes people use [Luke 12:11-12](#); [John 14:26](#) to justify their lack of Bible Study.
  3. Stephen Seized: vv.11-12 The Libertines *"secretly induced men"* *"stirred up the people"* and by force *"seized"* Stephen to put him on trial. Similar to the trial of Jesus:
    - They both were put on trial before the ruling council. [Mark 14:53](#)
    - There were false witnesses to tell lies about them. [Mark 14:56- 58](#)
    - There was testimony about the destruction of the temple. [Matthew 26:61](#)
    - There was the charge of blasphemy. [Mark 14:16](#)

## Persevering Through Persecution



Stephen Facing His Accusers

1. Preparation: The only way to prepare is by getting as close to God as possible and gaining as much knowledge of His Word as possible. **James 4:8**
  - The Word of God feeds our soul. It encourages us when we are depressed. There are promises contained within it that push us on when we feel like giving up.
  - We can face any problem if we keep eternity in view.
2. Purity: This key is to ask God to remove sin from our life. **1John 1:9**
  - Sin in our life is a chink in your armor which Satan will use to cause you to stumble and fall when facing persecution. **Hebrew 12:1-4**
3. Perseverance: Persecution will help us persevere more in the future. **Romans 5:3-5**
4. Persecution: Like fire it will burn away the dross and the impurities so that only the pure, refined gold comes out. Click [His Plan](#) to read Sharon's Inspirational Poem.
5. Patience: We must be patient in times of suffering. We must stand with confidence, by "*pursuing*" "*perceiving*" and "*practicing*" the Word of God.
  - Trials from without and temptations from within are common to all. **1Corinthians 10:13**
6. Purpose: Remember that no matter what, your ultimate purpose in life is to glorify God.
  - Whatever the trial may be, look around for opportunities to praise God, to witness to others, to remain steadfast and strong.
  - Recognize that it is a battle. Satan is trying to get you to bring shame to the cause of Christ.
7. Power: God will glorify Himself through your perseverance under trial.
  - When you have prepared, when you are holy, when you are persevering, when you are patient in the face of suffering, when your purpose is to glorify God;
  - No matter what, God will show up and will make your face like the face of an angel.

**A**pplication: Persecution is a part of being a Christian. Some of us face more than others, but we must all be prepared to face whatever God sends our way, so that we can stand firm under the trial.

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
August 18, 2013



Lesson No.8

The Book of Acts

The Speech of Stephen  
Acts 7:2-53

Key Verse: Acts 7:1-2 then said the high priest, are these things so? And he said, men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran.

**I**ntroduction: Stephen's speech is the most extensive speech in the Book of Acts. It is a panorama of Old Testament history. The speech includes 15 Old Testament quotes: 13 quotes from the Pentateuch; and 2 quotes from the Prophets. Click [Synagogue Rolls BI Series, Lesson No.4](#) to read about the sacred copies and common copies.



**Jewish Prayer Book:** 9<sup>th</sup> century 50 page book (4.3 in. tall X 4 in. wide)

This was a liturgical set of prayers, hymns and poems for various occasions; It predates the oldest known Torah scroll (12<sup>th</sup> century). Article in the Huffington Post 10/03/2013

1. The High Priest: The High Priest mentioned here was probably still Caiaphas (High Priest for 18 years) the same one who presided over the trial of Jesus. [Matthew 26:57](#)
2. The Charges: Stephen was accused of speaking "*blasphemous words*" against Moses and God, and against this holy place (the temple) and the law.
3. The Speech: Stephen wasn't interested in defending himself. He simply wanted to proclaim the truth about Jesus in a way people could understand.
  - The speech is a defense of Christianity as God's appointed way of worship. Three main ideas run through this discourse: (1) there is progress and change in God's program; (2) the blessings of God are not limited to the land of Israel and the temple area; (3) Israel in its past has always evidenced a pattern of opposition to God's Plans and His Prophets.

The Panorama of Old Testament History: The glory of God is the focus of Stephen's speech Acts 7:2; 55 Click [Day of the Lord](#) to read about the Old and New Covenant.

- **Abraham:** God's promise to Abraham vv.2-8; God warned Abraham and gave him the covenant vv.6-8 Click [Life of Abraham](#) to read about "*God's Covenant Blessings*"
- **Joseph:** God's faithfulness through Joseph vv.9-16
- **Moses:** History of Israel from the time of Moses vv.17-22; Israel rejects Moses vv.23-29; God appeared to Moses at Mount Sinai vv.30-34; Moses was Israel's deliverer, despite Israel's previous rejection vv.35-36; repeated rejection of Moses vv.37-41
- God's response to the repeated rejection of His messengers vv.42-44
- Even as Israel rejected God, they still had the tabernacle, later the temple vv.44-50
- Stephen applies the speech to the listeners vv.51-53 "*stiff-necked*" 20'xs in scripture.
- The council's reaction to the speech of Stephen v.54 they "*were cut to the heart*" "*filled with rage*" "*they gnashed on him with their teeth*" (gnash) "*sounds of animals*"
- The execution of Stephen vv.57-60 a hole was dug twice his height. Stephen pushed from the back by a witness, then stoned by those attending. Stephen's last words.

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
August 25, 2013

 [Listen to Message](#)  
[Allow to Download](#)

Lesson No.9

The Book of Acts

Saul of Tarsus  
Acts 9:1-22



- His Background
- His Conversion
- His Spiritual Strength

**Key Verses:** Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

**I**ntroduction: Acts 8 is closely linked with chapters 6 and 7. The subject of persecution begun in chp.5 is continued in chp.8; great persecution followed Stephen's martyrdom. Jewish leaders approved of Stephen's execution. Israel was in the process of confirming its tragic choice to reject Jesus as their Messiah.

**The Personality of Saul:** The persecutor of the church who became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

1. His Background: Saul was native of Tarsus, and his father was a Roman.
  - He was a Pharisee by birth, and a Pharisee by belief.
  - He was a freeborn citizen of Rome; it had great significance.
  - He had a strict religious training; memorized Scripture, familiar with Jewish history.
  - He was a tent maker by trade; a father's command *"to teach him a trade"*
2. His Conversion: The conversion of Paul is the great turning-point in God's dealings with Israel. The whole program for the evangelization of the world depended on this unusual man. Click [Study of Galatians](#) to read more: Lessons No.1 Paul's Calling and his Missionary Journeys; Lesson No.3 Paul's Conversion.
3. His Spiritual Strength: Scripture reveals only about 5% of the Pre-Christian activities of Paul. Saul the persecutor became Paul the preacher.
  - He became a *"new creature"* in Christ Jesus. Paul never got tired of telling the story of his Damascus Road Experience. Acts 9:3-9; 22:6-11; 26:12-18
  - He was a great church builder. In all his travels, trials and triumphs, Paul was motivate by the incentive *"for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* [Philippians 1:21](#)
  - He wrote 13 New Testament books: subjects related to *"doctrinal and practical living"*

## Saul of Tarsus



**I** made my own independent evaluation of this man called Jesus of Nazareth: I investigated into his life to see if this leader of the Nazarene cult was worth following or not. I made my own independent evaluation of what He was worth. I was not unfair, I was not unkind; I applied to him all the normal, natural standards by which any life is evaluated, in any age. I used the normal standards for determining the worth of any individual at any time.

**I** looked into his ancestry and discovered there was a cloud over his birthright from the start. As I investigated it, it became quite clear that he was the illegitimate son of a faithless woman, who had been taken in by a kind-hearted carpenter and raised as his own son. But he was an outcast from the beginning, and socially he was worth absolutely nothing. I investigated his professional standing, and I discovered that he was born of peasant stock and had attended no schools. He was raised as a simple carpenter in a village of no standing in Israel, and professionally he was worth absolutely nothing.

**A**s Saul of Tarsus, I investigated his theological and ecclesiastical background. I found that he had sat at nobody's feet; he had been to no seminary; he had had no ecclesiastical or theological training. In fact, he was repudiated by all the ecclesiastical authorities of his day. He was nothing but a street preacher and a rabble-rouser, and as far as his professional ecclesiastical and theological standing was concerned he was worth absolutely nothing.

**F**urthermore, I looked into his standing financially. I found he had no bank account; that he was born in a cave and laid in a borrowed manger and that he lived in other peoples' homes. He was a scrounger; he was always borrowing things. He borrowed money to pay his taxes, he borrowed his clothes from other people, he rode around on a borrowed donkey; he died on a borrowed cross, and was buried in a borrowed tomb. Financially, from the standpoint of accumulation of this world's goods, he was worth absolutely nothing. So as I investigated and applied to him the normal standards by which any life is evaluated, I discovered that this man, Jesus of Nazareth, was not worth following. He was worth nothing.

**B**ut on the Damascus road something happened. There, in the blinding flash of a moment, I looked into the face of a man, and I saw God. I discovered that he whom I thought to be worth nothing was the Lord of everything; that he was the God of glory, that everything that is made is upheld by the word of his power; that he is behind all things, and he is the very imprint and image of God. There I found that he, whom I thought to be nothing, was everything. In that moment I came to a tremendous reversal of all the values of my life. Later I learned that I, who was nothing, could be filled with him who was everything, and that would make my life something.

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
September 1, 2013

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Lesson No.10

The Book of Acts

Middle Wall of Partition  
Acts 10:1-48

- The Vision of Cornelius
- The Vision of Peter



Paul Escapes Damascus  
Acts 9:22-25



Paul and Barnabas  
Acts 9:26-30



Believers  
Acts 9:31



Aeneas is Healed  
Acts 9:32-43



Peter's Vision  
Acts 10:9-18

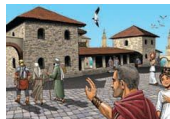
Key Verse: Ephesians 2:14 for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

**I**ntroduction: Luke concludes the first section of his book chapters 1-9 with the church “*enjoying a time of peace*” Acts 9:31. Paul had gone to Damascus to persecute the church; he ended up preaching Jesus. Saul’s plans for persecuting Christians in Damascus took a strange turn; he had entered the city blind and left in a basket. What a contrast! What grace!

Peter and Cornelius: The importance of this event is recorded three times by Luke, chp.10; chp.11 and chp.15:6-9. The geographic extension of the gospel in Acts is an initial fulfillment of Jesus’ words in **Matthew 8:11** See the “*Jew and Gentile Connection*” [click here](#) (29.0 MB allow to download)

1. The Vision of Cornelius: vv.1-8 Cornelius means “*the beam of the sun*” Cornelius was a devout man, benevolent, prayerful, obedience and possessing spiritual insight. Through Peter’s ministry Cornelius became a believer and was received into the fellowship of the Church.
2. The Vision of Peter: vv.9-18 the sheet with four corners came down from heaven: four-footed animals, reptiles and birds of the air. The vision denotes a change in God’s economy. No longer was there to be a difference between Jews and Gentiles.

Peter the Apostle, a strict separatist began to preach, “*What God has called clean, let no man call unclean*” v.15



Three Men Sent to Joppa  
Acts 10:5



Simon the Tanner  
Acts 10:6



Peter Preaching to Cornelius  
Acts 10:34-48

Peter’s dream happened about 40-41 AD. 7-8 years after the start of the book of Acts.



BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
September 8, 2013



Lesson No.11

The Book of Acts  
Acts 12:1-25

Attacks Upon The Church

- Herod the Great
- Death of James
- Miraculous Jail Release
- Death of Herod Agrippa I



Herod the Great



Court of Prayer



City of Herodium



Western Wall



Wailing Wall

Key Verse: Acts 12:24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

**I**ntroduction: The Salvation of Cornelius and his household was evidence of equality with Gentiles and Jewish believers. The reality of Cornelius' conversion was confirmed by Peter's staying with him several days, probably to instruct him in his newfound faith.

This relationship of Peter and Cornelius could have caused a series break in the church. The response on the part of Jewish believers was mixed. However, resolving this important matter prepared the Apostles for a universal gospel. Click [Woman of Samaria](#)

- The Holy Spirit was *"directing the activities of the church"* [Acts 11:1-18](#)
- Peter Recounts: The accusation: vv. 1-3; The answer: vv. 4-7; The acquittal: v. 18
- Christian: v. 26 *"ian"* ending denote *"belonging to the party of Christ"* [1Peter 4:16](#)

1. Herod the Great: King of Judah, [Luke 1:5](#) saw Jesus as a threat and wanted to murder him. [Matthew 2:1](#) Herod blended creativity and cruelty with harmony and chaos.

- He was a brutal man who killed his father-in-law, several of his ten wives, and two of his sons. *"It is better to be Herod's dog than one of his children"*
- He ignored the laws of God to suit himself and chose the favor of Rome over his own people.
- Herod's Temple was the world's largest functioning religious site and until today it remains the largest man-made platform in the world.
- City of Herodium included amphitheaters, a port, markets, temples, housing, palaces

I. Herod (Antipas) a nickname: Son of Herod the Great, responsible for death of John the Baptist [Mark 6:18-29](#) and the death of Jesus [Luke 23:8-17](#)

II. Herod Agrippa I: *"Agrippa the Great"* grandson of Herod the Great. [Acts 12](#)

III. Herod Agrippa II: *"Marcus Julius Agrippa"* seventh and last king in the dynasty.

2. Death of James: vv. 1-2 the son of Zebedee, elder brother of John. The cup and the baptism of pain and death were his, predicted in [Mark 10:35-39](#)

3. Miraculous Jail Release: vv. 5-19 The miracle of answered prayer

4. Death of Herod Agrippa I: vv. 20-23 *"vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord"* [Romans 12:19](#)

The Book of Acts

The Church at Antioch

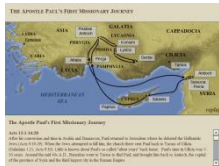
Acts 13: 1-3

- Ministry of Peter
- Ministry of Paul

Key Verse: Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**I**ntroduction: The book of Acts is divided into three sections: The first section include chapters 1-9; the second section include chapters 10-12; and the third section include chapters 13-28. In the first and second sections, Jerusalem “*the mother church*” was the base of operation; but, now beginning in section three the base of operation is the church in Antioch, Syria.

1. Ministry of Peter: Chapter 12 is the last instances of Peter’s ministry among the early believers. The transition when the message of the kingdom is replaced by the Gospel of the grace of God.
2. Ministry of Paul: In chapter 13 Paul assumes center stage and the leader of God’s work. Paul claims that his call was of “*heavenly origin*” from God the Father and the risen Lord Jesus Christ.
  - The Damascus Road Experience: **Acts 9:3-7** Paul’s conversion experience is summarized by three important events: (1) He saw a light; (2) He heard a voice; (3) He obeyed a call.
  - Paul an Apostle, he is “*a sent, a commissioned one*” **John 20:21** an apostle in the deepest, richest sense, fully clothed with the authority of the One who sent him. His apostleship is equal to that of the Twelve.
  - Paul’s ministry was primarily to the Gentiles: Acts 13:46-47; 18:6; 22:21. Click the following links to see “*flash videos*” of the three Missionary Journeys of Paul.



Paul's Conversion Experience  
158 MB – 28 minutes



Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Journeys  
158 MB – 28 minutes

I. Pattern for Missions: (1) God calls those whom He chooses. God called Barnabas and Saul, the first and last names of the list in **Acts 13:1**; (2) the church certifies this call; (3) the church and the Holy Spirit send the missionaries forth, backing them with prayer and support.

II. Missionary Reports: It is important that missionaries report back to their respective churches. **Acts 14:26-28**



The Book of Acts

Paul in the Synagogues  
Acts 13:13-52



Barnabas and Saul

- The Setting
- The Sermon

Key Verse: Romans 10:1-2 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

**I**ntroduction: The transitional nature of the Book of Acts is two-fold: First, Gentiles became the primary object of the gospel; and second, God temporarily turned from the Jews and thus judged them.

Timeline of Events: (1) Paul's Conversion, 36 A.D. (2) Paul in Damascus and Arabia, 37-39 A.D. (3) Paul in Syria, 39-43 A.D. (4) Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, Syria 44-45 A.D. (5) Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, Pisidia, 45-49 A.D.

1. The Setting: Paul's custom was to first visit the local synagogue. **Acts 13:5** why did Paul go to the Jewish synagogue when his special commission was to the Gentiles?

- He knew he would have a listening audience; and this was the logical place to start.
- He had a personal burden for his people. **Romans 9:1-3**
- He wanted his nation to hear God's Word and so be without excuse.

2. The Sermon: Paul's sermon echoes the same themes preached by Stephen and Peter **Acts 7:2-53; 2:22-36**

- He reviews God's dealings with Israel. Acts 13:17-22
- He proclaims that Jesus is the promised Savior. Acts 13:23-26
- He reviews Jesus' death and evidence for His resurrection. Acts 13:27-37
- He proclaims that forgiveness is now offered through Jesus. This is Paul's first time using the word **Justified**, a legal term: lit. "*pronounced righteous*" Acts 13:38-39
- He warns them not to fulfill prophecy by rejecting God's work in Christ. Acts 13:40-41

I. On that Sabbath Day: The Gentiles begged for more on the following Sabbath, and many Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas. Acts 13:42-43

II. The Next Sabbath Day: The whole city came to hear the Word of God. Acts 13:44

- The Jews were envious of the large crowd, and began to **resist** Paul. Acts 13:45
- Paul and Barnabas grew bold. Acts 13:46-47 the Holy Spirit "*imparting boldness*"
- Disciples were filled by the Spirit with joy, peace and hope in their faith. Acts 13:52

The Work of Missions  
Acts 14:1-28

- The Ministry at Iconium
- The Ministry at Lystra
- The Ministry at Derbe



Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey [click here](#)

Key Verse: Acts 14:27-28 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples.

**I**ntroduction: In chapter 13 we read about Paul and Barnabas at Antioch of Pisidia, where they experienced both success and conflict. Act 13:42-45. Paul and Barnabas were eventually expelled, though leaving joyful disciples behind. Acts 13:49-52

1. The Ministry at Iconium: vv.1-6 Again the procedure was to start with the local synagogue. Circumstances surrounding the visit to Iconium:

- Unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles against the brethren. v.2
- Paul and Barnabas stayed “a long time” speaking boldly, with signs and wonders. v.3
- It may have been during this time that Paul referred to in [Galatians. 4:13-15](#)
- The city eventually became divided between the Jews and the Apostles. v.4
- After being stoned Paul and Barnabas recovers and flees to Lystra and Derbe. v.5-6


2. The Ministry at Lystra: vv. 7-19 Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel throughout the region. Circumstances surrounding the visit to Lystra:

- Paul healed a lame man, whom he saw had faith to be healed. vv.8-10
- The Gentiles assumed Paul to be Hermes and Barnabas to be Zeus. vv.11-13
- Paul and Barnabas reacted strongly against being considered gods. vv.14-18
- They then proclaimed the one living God, the Creator of all things who bore witness of Himself through the blessings of nature.
- Jews from Antioch and iconium persuaded the multitude to stone Paul. v.19

3. The Ministry at Derbe: vv. 20-22 the next day Paul and Barnabas departed to Derbe. Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel. Circumstances surrounding the visit to Derbe:

- They ordained Elders in every church and commended them to the Lord vv.22-23
- They then retraced their steps, returning to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. vv.24-28
- They gave a missionary report to the “*sending church*” at Antioch, Syria. [chp.13:1-3](#)

Believers Bible Fellowship  
October 13, 2013

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[Listen to Special Music](#)  
"In Christ Alone"

Lesson No.15

## The Book of Acts

### Conflict over Circumcision Acts 15:1-35

- The Conflict
- The Conference
- The Conclusion



[Jew and Gentile Connection](#) [click here](#)  
"Allow to download"

Key Verse: Acts 15:1 And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.



Sunday Service



10 Commandments



Teaching Ministry



Right Hand of Fellowship


**I**ntroduction: During his first missionary journey, Paul saw that God "*opened a door*" of faith to the Gentiles. [Acts 14:27](#) after a "*long time*" (2 yrs. 48-49 A.D.) in Antioch of Syria, Paul and the church were faced with a crisis regarding the issue of the Gentiles:



Read Galatians Lesson No.4 to see how it relates to the issues: [click here](#)

- Should the Gentiles be accepted without first converting to Judaism?
  - Should they be required to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses?
1. The Conflict: vv.1-3 Men came from Judea (Judaizers) teaching that Gentiles could not be saved without circumcision. Paul and Barnabas disagreed. [Romans 3:24](#)
    - This conflict might have involved Peter. [Galatians 2:11-16](#)
    - Since the men causing disturbance came from Judea it was necessary that Paul, Barnabas, Titus and others travel to Jerusalem to locate the origin of this problem.
  2. The Conference: The Jerusalem Council conducted a "*private meeting*" with Paul and his party. The meeting involved discussion about the three aspects of the Law of Moses: Ceremonial Law; Judicial Law and Moral Law.
    - Paul explained the gospel which he preached [Galatians 2:1-2](#)
    - Paul refused to circumcise Titus. [Galatians 2:3-6](#)
  3. The Conclusion: The Jerusalem Council commended Paul for his work among the Gentiles. Peter, James and John "*the pillars*" extended the Right Hand of Fellowship.
    - The speech of Peter [Acts 15:6-11](#). This is the last time Peter is mentioned in Acts.

Believers Bible Fellowship  
October 20, 2013

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"A Song of Praise"

Lesson No.16

## The Book of Acts

### A True Son in The Faith Acts 16:1-5

#### Timothy "Honoring God"

- Before Meeting Paul
- After Meeting Paul



Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey [click here](#)

Key Verse: Acts 16:1-2 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

**I**ntroduction: Paul's second missionary journey began when he and Silas left Antioch of Syria. Coming to Derbe and then Lystra they added a third companion to their party, a young disciple named Timothy. Read how the following lessons support Acts 16.

1. Timothy, Before Meeting Paul: v.1-2 a certain disciple named Timotheus, son of Eunice, a Jewess, by a Greek father. Perhaps, his father had died before Paul visited their home.
  - 1Timothy Lesson No.1 read about Timothy as a person and disciple: [click here](#)
  - Why Study The Bible? read about Timothy as a learner of scripture: [click here](#)
2. Timothy, After Meeting Paul: Timothy was encouraged by Paul to be circumcised v.3.
  - Galatians Lesson No.3 read about Paul being accused as a "time-server" [click here](#)


Why did Paul have Timothy circumcised? The issue surrounding circumcision as a prerequisite for salvation had been resolved during Paul's meeting with the Jerusalem council. Letters supporting their decision was sent to the churches. **Acts 15:22-31**

- Paul's custom was to visit the synagogues first. **Acts 13:5**
- His evangelistic method was Jews first, then Gentiles. **Romans 1:16**
- Timothy, as an uncircumcised Jew would hinder his effectiveness among other Jews.
- Jews in the region knew Timothy's father was a Greek v.2
- It was expedient "a means of achieving a particular end" **1Corinthians 6:12**

The Testimony of Timothy demonstrates what it means to be "A True Son in The Faith"

- He was dedicated as a disciple to serve the Lord and Paul his chosen Apostle.
- He was faithful in carrying out tasks assigned to him.
- He was courageous in the face of persecution, imprisonment and death.

Believers Bible Fellowship  
October 27, 2013

 [Listen to Message](#)  
[Listen to Special Music](#)  
"There is a Balm"

Lesson No.17

The Book of Acts

The Guidance of God  
Acts 16:6-40



Ms. Emma Anderson

**Key Verse:** Acts 16:9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

**I**ntroduction: The extension of the church into the western province of Asia was forbidden "a *hindering or restraining*" by the Holy Spirit.

The Guidance of God: The restraint may have been circumstances, a word of prophecy, a vision, or some other phenomenon. Nevertheless, the people in Ephesus and Bithynia would eventually hear the gospel at a later time chaps. 18:19-21; 24:19-41

Seeking the Guidance of God: God has made known His will: by sending inspired prophets in the past, by sending His son and by giving us the Bible. Hebrews 1:1-2.

**Making Biblical Decisions** [video clip](#) Follow these steps in making your decision:

- Study to learn what God has revealed: **2 Timothy 3:16-17** "*wisdom literature*" i.e. Ecclesiastes and Proverbs. If you don't embrace and practice the revealed will of God; what difference does it make to seek areas of God's will unknown to you?
  - Seek advice from others: **Proverbs 11:14** i.e. older and mature Christians.
  - Ask God for wisdom: **James 1:5-8** pray diligently for the ability to discern wisely. Wisdom is the spiritual insight that enables you to evaluate situations clearly, and helps utilize what options and abilities you have; God's wisdom will lead you to eliminate what appears less acceptable.
1. The Call to Macedonia: v.10 the first of the "we" sections in the Book of Acts, indicating that Luke joined the party of Paul, Silas and Timothy. Luke displayed pride in the city of Macedonia. He grew up and attended medical school there.
    - Salvation of Lydia: vv.14-15 The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. Luke stresses the sovereignty of God in salvation. **Acts 13:48**
    - Salvation of the Philippian Jailer: vv.23-40 Paul and Silas were accused of disrupting the city when they commanded the demon from the possessed woman. They were beaten and placed into prison. The mid-night supernatural deliverance: the earth "*quaking*" the prison "*shaking*" the doors "*flying*" the chains "*falling*" and the guard "*trembling*" v.31 a key passage for justification: "*believe in the Lord Jesus*"

02/20/2013: Ms. Emma Anderson (82 yrs. old) was thrown off train for "*beating little beads with a bottle and singing and preaching to the Lord*" Miami-Dade Transit Policy: singing, dancing, playing an instrument is prohibited without a permit.

The Book of Acts

The Church in Thessalonica  
Acts 17:1-4

- Work of Faith
- Labor of Love
- Patience of Hope



Toga



Stola



Statue of Liberty

Key Verse: 1 Thessalonians 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

**I**ntroduction: The first "we" section ends with vv.37-40 indicating that Luke stayed on at Philippi. In only two places in Acts was Paul harmed or threatened by Gentiles, in Philippi and Ephesus. In both instances people were losing money in vested interests.

No Roman citizen was supposed to be scourged. Paul was a "freeborn citizen" of Rome "he was a native of Tarsus, and his father was a Roman" reference: [Lesson No.9](#)

- A Freeborn Citizen: Tarsus was a Roman colony and this was of great significance. [Acts 22:28](#). As a "freeborn citizen" Paul could not vote, but he had legal protection; granted opportunities for economic, social and political advancement. [Acts 16:12](#)

Why did Paul wait so long to mention his Roman citizenship? It was expedient "a means of achieving a particular end" (1) after the Jailer placed Paul and Silas back into prison; Paul then, demands the magistrates to escort them back out the doors. (2) This public display was designed to spare the young church in Philippi further harassment; it placed the believers in a far more secure position before the officials. Paul was familiar with the customs and cultures of his day as seen in his letters: [1Timothy 2:9](#) "modest apparel"

- Roman Dress: (1) Toga for men: "dress robe" was worn only by Roman men; it was considered decent attire worn outside the home. (2) Stola for women: "a long pleated dress worn over the tunic, an undergarment" Roman women were expected to wear the stola "as respectable woman" distinguishing them from prostitutes.
- A well-known image of the Stola is worn by the Statue of Liberty.

Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia (Northern Greece) and one of two important commercial centers; the other being Corinth. As was his manner, Paul spent three Sabbath days in a synagogue of the Jews before turning to the Gentiles.

Read Tract No.7 "Being an Effective Sounding Board" and see how it relates to the Church in Thessalonica [click here](#)



The Book of Acts

The Opposition in Thessalonica  
Acts 17:5-15

- Opposition from the Judaizers
- Opposition from the Devil

Key Verses: 1Thessalonians 2:17-18 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Introduction: Wherever the Gospel is preached and people willingly accept its message, not even Satan with all his forces can prevent the establishment and spread of the Church. **Matthew 16:18**

1. Opposition from the Judaizers: The Jews were constantly interfering, hindering the progress of the Gospel, but they could not prevent it from going forth. The same old story was being repeated, *"the story of rebellion against God"*
  - **Acts 7:57-60** the Jews *"stopped their ears"*
  - **Acts 9:23-25** the Jews *"took counsel to kill Paul"* *"he was let down by the wall in a basket"* (1<sup>st</sup> under cover of night escape)
  - **Acts 13:45** the Jews *"were filled with envy, and spoke against those things"* (1<sup>st</sup> time)
  - **Acts 14:19** the Jews persuasion *"to stone Paul and throw him out of the city"*
  - **Acts 15:1** the Jews taught *"except a man be circumcised they cannot be saved"*
2. Opposition from the Devil: Satan exerts powerful influence over the affairs of men.
  - **Acts 5:3** Ananias and Sapphira, Satan filled their heart to lie to the Holy Spirit.
  - **Acts 12:1** Herod Agrippa I *"stretched forth his hands to vex the church and he killed James the brother of John"*


The Opposition in Thessalonica: **Acts 17:5** the Jews *"were moved with envy and caused the uproar and assaulted the house of Jason"* (2<sup>nd</sup> time)

- **Acts 17:10** the brethren *"sent Paul and Silas to Berea"* (2<sup>nd</sup> under cover of night escape)

Paul, in **1Thessalonians 2:17-18** speaks about this episode: He and Silas *"had been torn away"* from the believers and had made attempts to be reunited; but Satan stopped us. How did Satan do this? **Acts 17:5-9** Satan used the Jews and rulers of the city. When the Jews could not find Paul and Silas, they brought Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city. Jason was forced to put up a *"bond of security"* to be released. If Paul and Silas would ever return to the city of Thessalonica, Jason would *"lose out"*

Application: Even when the devil tries to *"chop up"* the road that lies ahead, thus apparently blocking our advance, God's hidden plan is never wrecked.

Believers Bible Fellowship  
November 24, 2013

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[Listen to Special Music](#)  
"Bless His Holy Name"

Lesson No.20

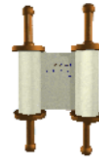
## The Book of Acts

### The God They Did Not Know

Acts 17:16-34



Round Altar



Scriptures

Key Verse: Acts 17:23 for as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

**I**ntroduction: Before leaving Berea I want to look again at verse 11 to point out three important things we need to remember about the believers: (1) They were More Noble (lit "to excel or exceeded") than those in Thessalonica (2) Their reception of Paul's message: they received his words with all readiness "with all eagerness" (3) Their study of God's Word: they searched the Scriptures daily; they were ready to let the Scriptures be their authority; they studied the Bible for themselves to determine what is true.

Luke gives us several examples of gospel teaching/preaching: three by Peter **Acts 2,3,10**; one by Stephen **Acts 7**; and two by Paul **Acts 13;17** Pedagogy: "the art of teaching" Sitting rather than standing before the audience was more common v.22

- Opening and Alleging **Acts 17:2-3** "reasoned with them out of the scriptures"
- Disputed **Acts 17:17** "reasoned with them out of the scriptures"

While waiting for Silas and Timothy to join him, Paul takes a sightseeing tour of Athens. When Paul arrived in Athens he was stirred within "like a storm within" Athens was a city given wholly to Idolatry (more than 30,000 gods) v.16

- Athens was the God capital of the world, a place so full of gods that Athenians needed something like the yellow pages to keep tab

Athens was the University Center of the world. Philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle established "patterns of thought" that affected human learning. Corinth was the Commercial and Political Center of Greece.

1. Paul's initial contact with the Athenian: As was his method he visited the Jewish synagogue vv.17-18; then in the marketplace devout people of influence: business, commercial and tradesmen. They accused Paul of being a babler "seed-pecker" a collector of fragments of truth.

- Epicureans: Atheists, those who denied the existence of God; life after death, materialists.
- Stoics: Pantheists, everything is god; rocks, trees, birds.



2. Paul's reasoning with the Philosophers at Mars Hill: vv.19-31 Paul recognized that people have the capacity to know God. The voice in the human heart cried for a God they knew exists, but who they cannot find.
  - Read how The Wrath of God relate to our lesson [click here](#) **Romans 1:18-32**
3. Paul's message focuses on the words TO THE UNKNOWN GOD: (1) Paul gives them a new message (about Jesus and his resurrection) something they had never heard; and (2) a new kind of message (one devised not by men)
  - God is the Maker and not the one who was made vv.24-27
  - In God we live, we move and have our being vv.28
  - Offspring of God, made in his image "*likeness*" Intellect, Emotion and Will v.29
  - Command to repent "*to change your mind*" from ignorance to reality of truth vv.30-31
  - If a person does not worship the true God, then there is no end to their search.
4. Paul's message and its response: Ignorant worship is inexcusable after being confronted with the truth vv. 32-34
  - Some mocked; the defense of pride when confronted with truth.
  - Others wanted to hear again at a later time "*Procrastinators*"
  - Some accepted the gospel: Dionysius, a woman named Damaris and others

BELIEVERS BIBLE FELLOWSHIP  
January 12, 2014



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*"Freely Freely"*

Lesson No. 21

Paul's Second Missionary Journey  
Acts 18:18-23

- Paul's Ministry at Corinth
- Paul's Return to Antioch



1<sup>st</sup> Journey [click here](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> Journey [click here](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> Journey [click here](#)

**I**ntroduction: Following his limited time at Athens, Paul went to nearby Corinth. The city was an economic center of Greece and it became an important focus of Paul's ministry which lasted a year and a half.

1. Paul's Ministry at Corinth: **Acts 18:1-17** While in Corinth, Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, a husband and wife who shared the same trade (tentmakers) as Paul. Although Paul had received support from churches in Philippi, he worked to support himself as a matter of principle. vv. 2-3 and **2 Corinthians 11:7-9**
  - As was his custom, Paul reasons with the people as with those at Thessalonica and Athens. v.4 and **Acts 17:2-3**
  - Following the arrival of Timothy and Silas from Macedonia with good news regarding the church at Thessalonica, Paul responds with his first letter to the Thessalonians. v.5 and **1 Thessalonians 1:1**
  - During his eighteen months at Corinth, Paul met opposition from some Jews who blasphemed, just like those in Antioch of Pisidia. vv. 6-7 and **Acts 13:46**
  - In a vision, the LORD spoke to Paul: *"be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city"* vv. 9-10
2. Paul's Return to Antioch: **Acts 18:23** After a long and successful ministry in Corinth, he began the last leg of his Second Missionary Journey. Luke's closing description of Paul's second journey is brief, containing only six verses.
  - Paul gets a haircut after fulfilling his Nazarite vow. v.18 and **Numbers 6:1-2**
  - Aquila and Priscilla hosted a house church in Ephesus. **1 Corinthians 16:19**

A Summary of Paul's Second Missionary Journey:

- Paul was able to encourage churches: In Syria and Cilicia: **Acts 15:41**. In Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia: **Acts 16:1-5**
- Paul was able to establish churches: In Philippi: **Acts 16:11-40**. In Thessalonica: **Acts 17:1-4**. In Berea: **Acts 17:10-12**. In Athens: **Acts 17:34**. In Corinth: **Acts 18:1-8**
- Paul began lasting relations with co-workers: Silas: **Acts 15:40**; Timothy: **Acts 16:1**; Luke: **Acts 16:10**; Aquila and Priscilla: **Acts 18:1-3**
- Churches to whom letters "*epistles*" were written: Antioch of Pisidia, Lystra, Iconium, Derbe (Galatians). Philippi (Philippians). Thessalonica (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians). Corinth (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians).

**A**pplication: The Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians provide valuable instructions for us today. See video clip (18.5 MB) allow sufficient time to download. [click here](#)



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*"Jesus is Tenderly Calling"*

Believers Bible Fellowship

January 19, 2014

Lesson No.22

The Subject of Re-Baptism  
Acts 19:1-7

- Doctrine of Salvation
- Disciples of John the Baptist

Key Verse: Romans 6:4 therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**I**ntroduction: In our study of the Acts Overview we have seen many examples of conversions. The 3000 on the day of Pentecost: [Acts 2:1-41](#); The 2000 at Solomon's Porch: [Acts 3:1-4](#); The Samaritans: [Acts 8:4-25](#); The Ethiopian Eunuch: [Acts 8:26-40](#); Saul of Tarsus: [Acts 9:1-19](#); Cornelius and his household: [Acts 10:1-48](#); Lydia of Thyatira: [Acts 16:6-15](#); The Philippian jailor: [Acts 16:25-34](#); The Athenians: [Acts 17:16-34](#); The Corinthians: [Acts 18:1-11](#)

- The response of those who heard involved: (1) Faith in Jesus for salvation; (2) Repentance *"a change of mind"* toward one's sins; (3) Baptism for the remission of sins. [1Corinthians 15:1-3](#)
1. Doctrine of Salvation: In our study of Galatians we learned about salvation and the importance of how it is received: Grace alone; Faith alone; Christ alone.
    - Jesus shares important information with Nicodemus about salvation. [read more](#)
    - Is baptism necessary for salvation? [read more](#)

There are a few denominations who teach that water baptism is required for salvation: i.e. Church of Christ and Christian Church. They include a list of four items: Faith, Repentance, Confession and Water Baptism.



Baptism Ceremony The word baptism means *"to place into"* i.e. the Spirit, Fire or Water baptism: [1Corinthians 12:12](#); [Matthew 3:11](#) and [Romans 6:1-4](#). The context determines how the word is to be applied. God has not ordained water baptism to be a magical ritual by which a person may obtain salvation; rather, water baptism is an outward show and it is to follow the experience of salvation. [John 3:16](#)

2. Disciples of John the Baptist: v.5 this is the only place in the New Testament that refers to anyone being re-baptized. Being re-baptized raises some interesting questions: When is re-baptism appropriate? Is re-baptism ever necessary?
  - When is re-baptism appropriate? There are four essential elements of Baptism:(1) the Proper Mode: *"by immersion"* (2) the Proper Authority: *"in the name of Christ"* (3) the Proper Purpose: *"identifying with Christ"* (4) the Proper Subject: *"dying to sin"* The 12 Disciples of John had been previously baptized *"by immersion"* but their first baptism lacked an essential element: the Proper Authority, *"in the name of Christ"* John's baptism was a sign of repentance toward God.
  - Is re-baptism ever necessary? Re-baptism is appropriate whenever any of the four essential elements are misinterpreted, misunderstood or misapplied.

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"In Christ Alone"

Believers Bible Fellowship  
January 26, 2014

Lesson No.23

The Hall of Tyrannus  
Acts 19:8-10

- Paul's Method in Missions
- Paul's Strategy in Missions

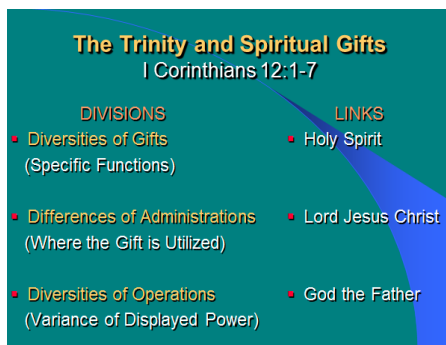


SIUE Lecture Hall

Key Verse: Acts 19:10 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

Introduction: Paul begins his Third Missionary Journey after returning to the city of Ephesus. He had promised the church in Ephesus that he would return. Acts 18:21

- Paul's Method in Missions: The basic elements of his ministry included: First, reaching the the sinner with the Gospel of Grace; and second, teaching the saints what it meant to live for Christ.
- Paul's Strategy in Missions: (1) encouraged house meetings; (2) encouraged believers to develop their spiritual gift; and (3) encouraged believers to live life in the community. 1Corinthians 12:1-3 Aquila and Priscilla hosted the church in their home in Ephesus. 1Corinthians 16:19




The Ministry in Ephesus: Paul spent three years in Ephesus, following the method used in other cities; "reasoning and disputing" from the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

- Acts 17:2-3 the Thessalonians; Acts 17:17 the Athenians; Acts 18:4 the Corinthians; Acts 19:8 the Ephesians.

The Hall of Tyrannus: Paul teaches "discipleship training through discussion" three months in the synagogue before renting space in the School of Tyrannus for two years. Acts 19:8-10

- Paul taught daily between the hours of 11am and 4pm; "during afternoon mealtime"
- Paul then worked during the evening hours to support himself. Acts 20:34

Believers Bible Fellowship  
February 2, 2014

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*"He Touched Me"*

Lesson No.24

Acts of God  
Acts 19:11-20

- Miracle Wrought by Peter
- Miracle Wrought by Paul

Key Verse: Acts 19:11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.

**I**ntroduction: As we approach today's lesson it is important to remind ourselves of what was said in **Lesson No.1** concerning the Ministry aspects of the Holy Spirit: (1) *"directs the activities of the Church"* (2) *"gives life to those who believe"* (3) *"preserves the purity of the Church"* (4) *"imparts boldness to Christians"*

Acts of God: In **Lesson No.4** we mentioned that we are living in The Age of the Holy Spirit. In the work of any member of the Trinity the other two are always intimately involved. **1 Corinthians 12:1-7** Divisions and Links:

- Holy Spirit: Diversities of Gifts *"specific functions"*
- The Son: Differences of Administrations *"where the gift is utilized"*
- The Father: Diversities of Operations *"variance of displayed power"*

Definition of Miracles: Works wrought by a divine power for a divine purpose by means beyond the reach of man; an unusual event, experience or discovery i.e. If a friend escapes death in a car accident, we say, *"it was a miracle that he/she was not killed"*

- The Miracle of a Woman with blood Issue: Matthew 9:20-22 *"hem of Jesus' garment"*
- The Miracle at Cana: John 2:1-11 *"water to wine"*
- The Miracle of the Man Born Blind: John 9:6 *"clay made of spittle"*
- The Miracle of Malchus' Ear: John 18:10-11 *"attachment of his ear"*

The Apostles' divinely given power to heal and to exorcise demons was *"administered"* by Jesus **Matthew 10:5-8**. The parallel miracles of Peter and Paul:

1. Miracle Wrought by Peter: **Acts 5:15** the healing *"shadow"* of Peter

2. Miracle Wrought by Paul: **Acts 19:11-12** *"hands, handkerchiefs and healings"*

God worked *"unusual miracles"* through the Apostles. God's *"variance of power"* was displayed in the *"shadow"* of Peter. In the case of Paul it was through the handkerchiefs or aprons *"sweat-bands"*

- The pieces of material were presumably those which Paul used in his tent-making or leather-working.
- We are not told that Paul did these *"unusual miracle"* but God worked them by the hands of Paul.

**A**pplication: Are faith healers for real? Does a faith healer heal with the same power as Jesus? There is no doubt that God has the power to heal anyone at any time. The question is whether God chooses to do so through those who are called *"faith healers"* These individuals typically convince their audiences that God wants them to be well and that through their faith and usually *"a financial offering"* God will reward their faith by healing them through the power of Jesus. [read more](#)



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*"Like a River Glorious"*

Lesson No.25

The Lord Who Heals  
Acts 19:13-20

- The Holy Spirit
- The Evil Spirit

Key Verse: Luke 18:27 the things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

**I**ntroduction: Miracles have a threefold purpose: (1) Accredited a Message; (2) Accredited the Messenger (3) A Sign *"characterize something"* The *"unusual miracles"* wrought by Peter and Paul were administered by Jesus, and accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. [Matthew 10:5-8](#)

I. Personal Names of God: Jehovah *"Yahweh"* [Exodus 6:3](#) Jehovahistic Combinations: (Jehovah-Elohim) *"LORD, GOD"* [Genesis 2:4](#); (Jehovah-Jireh) *"the Lord will provide"* [Genesis 22:14](#); (Jehovah-Nissi) *"the Lord our banner"* [Exodus 17:15](#); (Jehovah-Kaddesh) *"the Lord who sanctifies"* [Leviticus 20:8](#); (Jehovah-Tsidekenu) *"the Lord our righteousness"* [Jeremiah 33:16](#); (Jehovah-Rapha) *"the Lord who heals"* [Exodus 17:15](#)

II. The Healing Ministry of Jesus: There was never a time when Jesus experienced a failed attempt to heal someone. Jesus was 100% successful when it came to healing people. [Matthew 4:22-25](#); *"all manner of sickness and diseases"* [Matthew 8:14-17](#); *"healing Peter's mother n' law"* [Matthew 8:28-34](#) *"two men possessed with demons"*

1. The Holy Spirit: Remember, that the Book of Acts is a second volume work of all that Jesus began both to do and teach. [Acts 1:1](#) The Holy Spirit represents the Trinity and He is involved in every aspect of the Great Commission, even in our day.

2. The Evil Spirit: Wherever there is truth, not too far away you will find a lie. [John 8:44](#)

- One of the themes of Acts is the victory of Christ over occultism. Jesus demonstrated his power over demons; and he gave the *"original"* Apostles the same authority.
- The sons of Sceva: [Acts 19:13-16](#) Attempted to exorcise the demon from a possessed man; the man became supernaturally strong and overcame them. The seven ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

Are modern day faith-healers for real? Do modern day faith-healers heal with the same power as Jesus? What about Larry Maxwell, Peter Popoff or Benny Hinn? Are they real or imposters? Are they *"faith-healers"* or *"fake-healers"*


III. To Mesmerize: means *"to hypnotize"* *"to throw into a trance"* Language of the fake-healers *"slain in the spirit"* *"fall under God's power"*

- Benny Hinn: In 25 years of ministry, he has never cured one single leper; or raised a person from the dead. Benny regularly tells his followers: *"they can lose their healing; they must read verses to remain healed"* he says, It is their fault if they do not stay healed.

**A**pplication: Once a person is mesmerized they can no longer analyze.



Believers Bible Fellowship  
February 16, 2014

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*"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"*  
[Inspirational Poem – "Where"](#)

Lesson No.26

## The Confusion in Ephesus Acts 19:21-41

- The Silversmith
- The Town Clerk

Key Verse: Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the ruler of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

**I**ntroduction: When Paul came to Ephesus he found the city locked into pagan superstition, the people miserable and depraved, practicing black magic, voodoo, and the occult; ridden by fear, by demonism, by darkness. Paul attacked that stronghold with the most powerful weapons ever known, the weapons of truth, love, righteous behavior and faith expressed in prayer. [2 Corinthians 10:4](#)

I. The Great Bonfire in Ephesus: Those who believed the Gospel brought their books on black magic, astrological charts and horoscopes, and burned them in a public square in the city. Read BI Lesson No.1 about *"man's moral and spiritual hunger"* [click here](#)

II. Paul's Three Concerns: [Acts 19:21-22](#) (1) care for the new Christians in Athens and Corinth; (2) an intense desire to preach in Rome; (3) food aid for the famine-stricken saints in Jerusalem. [1 Corinthians 16:1-5](#) Read AHFG Lesson No.4 about *"grace giving"* [click here](#)

III. The Goddess Artemis: *"a mythical goddess of fertility"* Her image was believed to have been constructed in heaven and fallen from the sky.

1. The Silversmith: vv.21-29 *"a certain man"* named Demetrius represented the silversmith guild in Ephesus. The silversmiths made little silver souvenirs of the goddess Artemis and their businesses were being affected because of so many people becoming Christians. Demetrius appealed to the crowd on the basis of *"financial self-interest"*

- The Charge: the religion of the city was threatened; and Artemis, the goddess was insulted by this loss of income and was in danger of losing her stature in the world.
- The Evidence: Paul had never said anything against the religion of Ephesus.
- Mob Psychology: Excited over an emotional issue *"Great is Diana of the Ephesians"*

2. The Town Clerk: vv.30-41 Friends of Paul *"in high places"* gave him advice not to venture into the Amphitheatre. The Town Clerk appealed on the basis of *"civil-pride"* Artemis is great; there is no need to shout; No one can overthrow a great goddess like ours; they had not blasphemed the goddess; they had not robbed the temple.



Amphitheatre in Istanbul




Artemis



Artemis Temple Replica



Lincoln Memorial

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"Whispering Hope"

Believers Bible Fellowship  
February 23, 2014

Lesson No.27

The Road to Rome  
Acts 20-23

- Paul and the Local Church
- Paul and the Local Pastors

"click either the picture or hyperlink to watch video clips"



[Return to Jerusalem](#)  
Acts 20-21:17



[Famine Relief](#)  
1 Corinthians 16:1-2



[An Ungrateful Spirit](#)  
Acts 21:18-19



[Facing the Accusations](#)  
Acts 21:20-40; 23:1-11

Key Verse: Acts 23:11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou has testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

**I**ntroduction: Soon after the riot in Ephesus, Paul left the city and made his way toward Macedonia, just as he had planned. [Acts 19:21](#)

1. Paul and the Local Church: [Acts 20:1-12](#) At Troas Paul expected to meet Titus and get a firsthand report of the situation in Corinth. He had sent Titus there to help correct some problems. When Titus did not arrive, Paul continued to Macedonia visiting the churches. [2 Corinthians 2:12-13](#)

- First Day of the Week: Christian worship took place every Sunday evening at the end of the work day.
- Weekly Gatherings: Included "preaching scripture" "worship of God" "breaking of bread" "prayer time" and "gift giving" [Acts 4:42-47](#); [20:7-12](#) and [1 Corinthians 16:1-2](#)
- The idea of "breaking bread" takes on different meanings: (1) Communion or the Lord's Table; (2) A Meal to refuel the body; and (3) a Love Feast [Galatians 2:10-12](#)

2. Paul and the Local Pastors: [Acts 20:13-38](#) While at Miletus Paul called for the Ephesian Elders "overseers" Paul's address to the Ephesian pastors reveals the way he ministered to the local church. All the churches knew Paul's message and his methods:

- Paul served the Lord, not man.
- Paul was a humble leader, not a proud dictator.
- Paul knew what it was to water the seed of the Word of God with tears.
- Paul preached the whole counsel of God publicly and house to house.
- Paul preached to all classes of people and exalted Jesus Christ.

I. Paul's Present Burden: vv.22-24 Paul was bound in his spirit (not the Holy Spirit) to go to Jerusalem. [Acts 19:21](#) and [Romans 10:1-4](#)

II. Paul's Warning of Future Danger: vv.25-35 Paul was not concerned about himself; he was concerned about the church and its future.

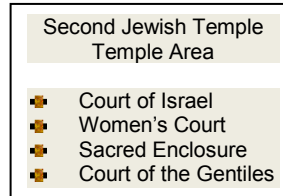
III. Paul's Farewell Blessing: vv.36-38 Paul knelt down and prayed with the Elders. They wept, knowing that this would be their last time seeing Paul this "side-of-eternity"



Jesus is The Way  
Acts 21:17-26

- An Ungrateful Spirit
- Facing the Accusations

*"click the slides to open in browser"*



Key Verse: John 14:6 Jesus saith unto them, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

**I**ntroduction: When Paul and his disciples arrived at Jerusalem, they experienced a warm welcome from James and all the elders. *"When words become difficult to express our thanks, gratitude will do"* because gratitude is the spirit of being grateful. [Luke 17:11-19](#)

1. An Ungrateful Spirit: vv. 18-21 The next day, a grateful spirit changed into an ungrateful spirit. James and the elders were more concerned about how the thousands of Christian zealous would respond to Paul and his ministry to the Gentiles.

I. The Elders' Proposal: Paul should participate in a vow with four Jewish Christians to demonstrate to all: (1) that what they heard about Paul was not true; (2) that Paul also walked orderly and kept the law; (3) that it was Gentile believers who were told they did not have to keep the law; (4) They should keep themselves from things offered to idols, blood, things strangled, and sexual immorality. [Acts 15:19-29](#) Refer to Lesson No.15

Nazirite Vow: [Numbers 6:1-12](#)

- Consecration *"separate themselves to the Lord"* vv.1-2
- Abstain from wine, vinegar, grape juice, fresh grapes, raisins vv.3-4
- Let no razor come upon their head v.5
- Not to go near a dead body, even if members of their family vv.6-8
- If defiled by a dead body, undergo an eight day purification vv.9-12

Temple Expenses: [Numbers 6:13-21](#)

- Pay all the *"temple expenses"* so they can shave their heads: one year old male lamb each: as a *"burnt offering"* *"sin offering"*; one ram as a *"peace offering"* a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and a grain offering with their *"drink offerings"*

2. Facing the Accusations: The action on Paul's part only confirmed one of the principles of his ministry: become like one under the Law to win those under it. [1 Corinthians 9: 20](#)

**A**pplication: Paul's goals for the Jerusalem trip, along with famine relief for the poor, was the unifying of Jews and Gentiles. [Colossians 3:15](#)

Paul Facing His Accusers  
Acts 23:1-13

- The Mob
- The Commander
- The Sanhedrin



Castle Chamber



Middle Wall



Warning Inscription

Key Verses: Acts 23:12-13 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

**I**ntroduction: God's will is not only accomplished by doing right thing, for all the right reasons; His will can also be accomplished by evil men, acting out of evil motives.

1. The Mob: vv.27-30 most likely the riot took place during the Feast of Pentecost. The Jewish men who instigated the riot were from the province Asia Minor.

- This is the sixth time that Luke records a crowd being incited because of Paul's ministry: [Acts 14:19](#); [16:19-22](#); [17:5-8](#), [13](#); [19:25-34](#)
- The false charges were similar to those raised against Stephen. [Acts 6:11](#), [13-14](#)
- They accused Paul of bringing Trophimus, "an Ephesian" into the Temple area.

Warning Inscription: Foreigners must not enter inside the balustrade or into the forecourt around the sanctuary. Whoever is caught will have himself to blame for his ensuing death. The Middle Wall of Partition [Act 10:1-48](#) see Lesson No.10

2. The Commander: vv.31-40 Hearing of a disturbance in the city of Jerusalem, the commander rushed to the scene, hoping that he would find and capture an Egyptian revolutionary. The commander found Paul, who would have been beaten to death by the Jews, except that they drew back when they saw the commander and his troops arriving.

- Paul was granted permission to speak in his own defense: [Acts 22:1-22](#); [Acts 7:2-53](#)
- The Mob's response was similar to what had happened to Stephen. vv. 23-24
- Paul reveals himself as "a freeborn" citizen of Rome. vv.25-30 see Lesson No.18

3. The Sanhedrin: [Acts 23:1-13](#) 70 member council, confronted by the gospel on five other occasions: [Acts 4:1-22](#); [5:17-42](#); [6:8-7:60](#) They dealt with religious matters.

- Pharisees: "hope in the resurrection" Sadducees: "no resurrection of the dead"
- High Priest: Ananias, hot-tempered, profane, greedy; stirred up political strife; took tithes that belonged to the priests. Ananias had authority to cast a tie-breaker vote.
- Paul's response to being "hit in the mouth" and calling Ananias a "whitewashed wall"
- Paul's outburst was triggered by Ananias' presumption that he was already guilty.
- God judged Ananias and he was violently killed a few years later. [Ezekiel 13:10-16](#)

Paul's Defense Before Felix  
Acts 24:1-27

- The Letter
- The Lie
- The Liberty



Acts 23:23-31



Acts 23:32-35



Acts 24:10-21



Acts 24:22-27

Key Verse: Acts 24:27 but after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

**I**ntroduction: Have you ever stopped to think how much of our time, as Christians is spent waiting on God? Waiting has become an accepted part of life. In our lesson today we will find Paul waiting for a decision from Felix. An immediate "not guilty" verdict should have been pronounced, but Felix had other plans.

The nephew of Paul: chp.23:16-24, nothing is known about Paul's sister or his nephew. But God used them to reveal information about the Jews conspiracy. Paul escaped the city of Jerusalem "at night" (9 PM). Paul's security included 200 soldiers, 200 spearmen and 70 horsemen.

1. The Letter: chp.23:25-30 the letter from Claudius Lysias presents the essentials of the case. The importance of this document declared Paul to be innocent. Felix held a preliminary interrogation chp.23:34-35.

The summary of Paul's activities: **Day 1** – arrived in Jerusalem, 21:17; **Day 2** – visited James, 21:18; **Day 3** – visited the temple, 21:26; **Day 4, 5, 6** – in the temple with the vow; **Day 7** – arrested in the temple, 21:27; **Day 8** – before the Council, 22:30-23:10; **Day 9** – the Jews' plot and Paul's trip to Caesarea, 23:12-31; **Day 10** – presented to Felix, 23:32-35; **Days 11, 12** – waiting at Caesarea; **Day 13** – the hearing before Felix.

2. The Lie: chp.24:1-9 "and after five days" There were five days (Day 8 – Day 12) between Paul's arrest and the trial. Tertullus began his introduction with "false praise" to Felix. The "flattery" was to gain favor with Felix. **Romans 16:18** and **John 8:44** "Those who flatter you today will tomorrow lie about you when your back is turned"

The charges against Paul: chp.24:5-6 (1) he was "a pest" or "a plague" (2) he has caused dissension among all the Jews throughout the world; (3) he was a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, **John 1:46**; (4) he tried to profane the temple.

3. The Liberty: chp.24:10-21 Paul acknowledged Felix after receiving "a nod" He then reviewed the events; he confessed his faith; and concluded his defense.

Paul witnessed to Felix and Drusilla: chp.24:22-27 Paul reasoned about "righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come" **John 16:7-11**. Felix was afraid, and sent Paul away until "a convenient time" Felix hoped for a bride from Paul to release him. Felix made his decision in Paul's case: To Wait (two years) See Lesson No.3

Paul's Defense Before Festus  
Acts 25-26

- Paul's Appeal to Caesar
- Paul's Hearing before Agrippa



Acts 25:9-12



Acts 25:13-23



Acts 26:1-23



Acts 26:24-25



Acts 26:30-32

Key Verse: Acts 26:32. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

**I**ntroduction: This section is crucial because in it Paul appealed to Caesar. It set the direction for the remainder of the book and also shows how the apostle reached Rome.

1. Paul's Appeal to Caesar: After three days in office, Festus travels to Jerusalem to meet with the high priest to gather information about Paul's case. Felix and Festus "showed the Jews a pleasure" a sense of favor received, thanks.chp.24:27; 25:9

- Tertullus the Lawyer: "eloquence is the gift of God, but the eloquence of the bad man is like poison in a golden cup"
- Paul defends himself: (1) The Jewish Mob, chp.22:1-21; (2) The Sanhedrin, chp.23:1-10; (3) Governor Felix, chp.24:1-27; (4) Governor Festus, chp.25:1-12

2. Paul's Hearing before Agrippa: Identify this king, see Lesson No.11 Paul shares his testimony with King Agrippa and he responded: "Paul, almost thou persuades me to be a Christian" chp.26:26-29. Why Share the Bible – Your Personal Testimony: [read more](#)

**T**he Wait: Mary Virginia Jones was convicted of first-degree murder, kidnapping and robbery in 1981. After sitting through four trials and one appeal, she was finally handed the life sentence with no possibility of parole for a killing committed alongside, then-boyfriend and abuser Mose Willis.



1982 Convicted



Active Church Member



Mother Mary, Age 74



USC Law Students


March 24, 2014: The Law students at USC's Post-Conviction Justice Project recently challenged her case. After serving 32 years (11,875 days) in prison, Mary Virginia Jones was granted a release by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge William Rayan.

On Tuesday, Mary was greeted by friends and family outside the Century Regional Detention Facility in Lynwood. The atmosphere was filled with tears of joy and laughter.

"It feels great. I'm just so thankful and so grateful, words can never express how I feel right now to be with my little grandbabies" She plans to join a ministry and spend lots of time with her grandchildren.

Believers Bible Fellowship  
April 6, 2014

Lesson No.32

 [Listen to Message](#)  
[Listen to Special Music](#)  
"All The Way  
My Savior Leads Me"

The Voyage to Rome  
Acts 27:1-44

- The Providence of God
- The Persistence of Paul
- The Protection of Passengers



Acts 27:1-3



Acts 27:4-5



Acts 27:6-13



Acts 27:14-28



Acts 27:29-38



Acts 27:39-44

Key Verse: Acts 27:22 And Now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

**I**ntroduction: Luke gives a lengthy account of Paul's voyage from Caesarea to Rome. There is no easy answer as to why Luke shares so many details. However, there are at least three important principles that can be drawn from this account: Providence, Persistence and Protection.

- Certain Other Prisoners: vv.1-2 How many other prisoners accompanied Paul to Rome is an unanswered question. The "we" indicates that Luke and Aristarchus accompanied Paul to be his helper. The first "we" section: Lesson No.17. [Acts 16:10](#)
- Julius the Centurion: Julius belonged to the Imperial Regiment "an honorary title" A centurion commanded 100 soldiers. Julius and Lysias showed kindness to Paul.

1. The Providence of God: God's hand over nature, individuals and nations of the world. It is God's care for each part in relation to the whole. [Ephesians 1:11](#)

- The Decrees of God: His eternal plan by which He has rendered certain, all the events of the universe, past, present and future.
- The nature of God's Decrees: [Romans 11:36](#) (1) Of Him: "everything came from God" (2) Through Him: "everything that happens is by His agency and instrumentality" (3) For Him: "to His glory is the ultimate aim"

2. The Persistence of Paul: vv.3-5 God's sovereign protection and direction in Paul's ministry. It was God's will for the apostle to minister the gospel in Rome. Sidon was the ship's first port of call after leaving Caesarea. Julius gave Paul liberty to visit with his friends and to refresh.

3. The Protection of Passengers: vv.6-13 The Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy. This was a "grain ship" large enough to carry 276 passengers.

- Hurricane Euroclydon: vv.14-21 Paul was permitted to advise the sailors because of his experience in travel "three times I was shipwrecked" [2 Corinthians 11:25](#)
- Be of Good Cheer: vv.22-32 "to keep up courage" and "be of good cheer" "be not afraid" [Acts 23:11](#); [Matthew 14:27](#) Paul made known his faith in God during the storm
- Breaking Bread: vv.33-38 "a meal to refuel the body" see Lesson No.27

APPLICATION: The Voyage to Capernaum. SSS Series, Lesson No.8 [read more](#)



The Stop Over at Melita  
Acts 28:1-11

- The Islanders
- The Healings
- The Leaving



Acts 28:1-2



Acts 28:3-9



Acts 28:10-11

Key Verse: Acts 28:11 and after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux.

**I**ntroduction: The previous section of Acts vindicates the truth of God's promise. The life of 276 passengers was spared because of Paul, Luke and Aristarcus. [chp.27:22-24](#)

- God was willing to spare Sodom and Gomorrah for 10 righteous people; and He did not send His wrath until Lot and his family had safely escaped. [Genesis 18:20-33](#)
- God holds back His judgment on this wicked world because the church is still in the world; but when we are taken away, His judgments will fall. [2 Thessalonians 2:7](#)

1 The Islanders: vv.1-2 to the Greeks "*barbarians*" was any people who did not speak Greek. The islanders were not savages or uncultured, but that their civilization was not Greek-oriented. Melita or Malta (lit "*refuge*") in this case lived up to its name. For three months the islanders showed hospitality to the victims of the shipwreck, building them a fire and welcoming them v.11

2. The Healings: vv.3-9 not the customary word for "*a miraculous healing*" The word healing means "*to receive medical treatment*" see Lesson No.25 The Lord Who Heals.

- Paul's Snake Bite vv.3-6 Paul had no swelling or fever, God divinely protected him.
- The father of Publius lay sick of a Malta fever. The virus comes from a microorganism found in the milk of Maltese goats. Symptoms lasted for 4 months.
- Luke was functioning as a "*medical missionary*" read EJ Series, Lesson No.7 The Elder and the Doctor: [read more](#)

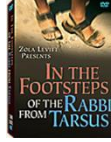
I. Memorial Services: Dawn Allison Duncan, April 17, 1984. A cartoon strip called: Scenes We'd Like To See, had a heart shattering scene in it:

- There was a girl in a canoe without paddles going down the rapids. She was swirling toward a waterfall and certain destruction. The hero was on the bank. He saw her and shouted; "*I'll save you*" As he ran to a point near the waterfall to save her. He climbed a tree right near the water and inched his way out to the end of a low branch. She looked up, saw him there, and knew that at the last minute she would be saved. She breathed a sigh of relief. At last she reached up to be saved and he reached to save her, and he missed.

II. More Than Conquerors: [Romans 8:38-39](#) Four couplets of thing which we conquer: Human Events: "*life and death*" – Supernatural Powers: "*angels and demons*" – Time: "*present and future*" – Space: "*height and depth*"

3. The Leaving: vv.10-11 Paul and others board a second "*grain ship*" to Rome.

Book of Acts Conclusion  
Acts 28:12-31



Prison Release Travel and Death  
159 MB – 28 minutes

- Arrival at Rome
- Imprisonment in Rome
- Summary of Paul's Ministry

Key Verse: Acts 28:28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

**I**ntroduction: The climax of the Book of Acts is found in chp.28:17-20 which speaks of another rejection of the gospel by Jewish leaders, and of Paul taking the message to the Gentiles. From Jerusalem to Rome most Jews rejected the gospel in city after city. Now in the capital of the Roman world the same thing occurred; so it will be until the fullness of the Gentiles comes.

**Romans 11:19-26**

1. Arrival at Rome: v.15 the Christians at Rome soon heard of Paul's coming and travelled to Three Taverns (33 miles from Rome) "to meet him" this phrase is used in Greek literature of "an entourage coming out of a city to meet an official going to the city" **1 Thessalonians 4:17**

- Paul was encouraged: The word describes "a person in distress who was then encouraged"

2. Imprisonment in Rome: vv.16-25 Because Paul was a trusted prisoner, he was allowed to live by himself in a rented house with a soldier to guard him.

3. Summary of Paul's Ministry: vv.30-31 As Paul waited two years to appear before Caesar, he stayed busy for the Lord. He preached The Kingdom of God. This "eschatological" expression indicates that Jews and Gentiles alike are "justified" by faith and that both Gentiles and Jews will participate in the millennium; commonly used to describe the thousand year reign of the saints.

Paul's Ministry Experiences

✦ Paul at Damascus: 37-40 AD	✦ Imprisonment in Judea: 58-60 AD
✦ 1 <sup>st</sup> Missionary Journey: 45-47 AD	✦ Voyage to Rome: 60-61 AD
✦ 2 <sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey: 51-53 AD	✦ Imprisonment in Rome: 61-63 AD
✦ 3 <sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey: 54-58 AD	✦ Post-Imprisonment: 63-67

Paul's Circulated Epistles

✦ 1 and 2 Thessalonians: 52 AD	✦ Colossians: 62 AD
✦ 1 and 2 Corinthians: 57 AD	✦ Philemon: 62 AD
✦ Galatians: 55-57 AD	✦ Hebrews: 64-65 AD
✦ Romans: 57-58 AD	✦ Titus: 64-65 AD
✦ Ephesians: 62 AD	✦ 1 Timothy: 64-65 AD
✦ Philippians: 62 AD	✦ 2 Timothy: 66-67 AD