

Acts

LESSONS FROM OUR BACKSTORY

JIM DALRYMPLE • 14 SESSIONS

**NEXT
LEVEL** 
ONLINE
OZARK CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Backstory: All That Jesus Began

Acts 1:1-26 | Session 1

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Backstory: How did WE get here?

- History→Identity→Activity

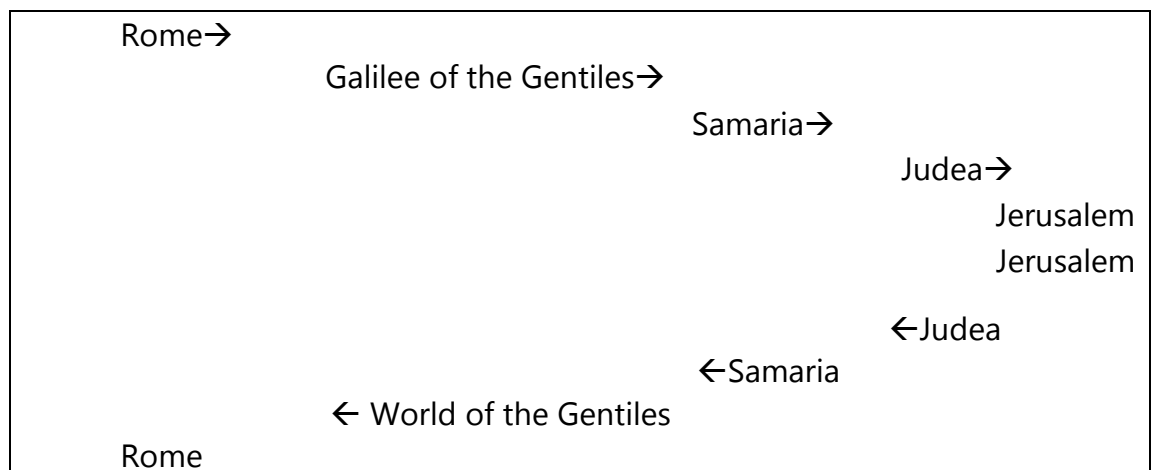
The Prologues of Luke & Acts

The disciples and the church in Acts are a **reflection** and an **extension** of Jesus' ministry and mission—and therefore they also experience his opposition. Acts is part-two of the story.

Luke 1:1–4 — Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Acts 1:1–5 — In the first book, Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God...

Quest narrative (multiple scholars point to this geographic movement):



Echoes that show the continuation of Jesus' ministry and mission in Acts:

- Anticipation & Birth Narrative Holy Spirit, Temple, Piety, Prayer
- "In the name" of Jesus example: Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10, 12, 17, 18
- Mirrored miracles example: Luke 5:17-26 & Acts 3:1-10
- Discipleship journeys example: Luke 24:14-35 & Acts 8:26-40
- Gentile inclusion example: Luke 4:16-30 & Acts 10
- Opposition & trials example: Acts 4 & Acts 21-28

Reflection Questions:

1. How has the story of "all that Jesus began" shaped your story?
2. How has the historical resurrection of Jesus validated all that he said and did?
How should that shape our story?
3. Acts teaches that Jesus continues his mission and ministry to all people through us. How is this true in your life? Your church?

Backstory: The Holy Spirit Empowers

Acts 2:1-41 | Session 2

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The Ascension & Coming of the Holy Spirit = Transitional Fade Effect in the Story:

- The ascension effectively concludes the resurrection appearances (Lk 24:36-53 & Acts 1:1-11).
- The ascension creates an anticipation for the promised coming of the Holy Spirit (Jesus said – “to your advantage” Jn 16:7).
- The ascension pictures the glorification of Jesus (see Dan 7:13; Ps 110:1).
- The ascension enacts the passing of responsibility (Moses/Joshua & Elijah/Elisha).
- The ascension foreshadows the return of Jesus.

Backstory of Pentecost

1. Timing

- Pentecost is celebrated on the 7th Sunday (50 days) after Passover.
- 40 days of convincing proofs + 10 days of waiting.

2. Strategic

- Popular Feast (especially for those who had to travel further)
- 3 pilgrimage feasts
 - Passover (Mar/Apr)
 - Pentecost (May/June) [warmer & better for travel]
 - Tabernacles (Sep/Oct)

3. Symbolic

- Celebrated first harvest (Ex 23:16, Lv 23:15; Dt 16:9). God-Wink
- Undoes the Language Division
 - Reversal of Babel? (Gen 11) [Lks backstory]
 - Fulfilled Promises [to Abraham & David]
 - Fulfilled Prophecies [Joel 2]

Backstory: Luke-Acts start in a similar way!

1. Waiting

- In Luke, people are waiting on the coming of the promised Messiah.
- In Acts, people are waiting on the coming of the promised Holy Spirit.

2. Descending

- In Luke, the Spirit descends on Jesus like a dove (Lk 3:21-22; 4:14, 18).
- In Acts, the Spirit descends on the disciples like tongues of fire.

3. Dwelling

- In Luke, at Jesus' birth and beginning of his ministry.
- In Acts, at the birth of the church and the beginning of our ministry.
- God's desire to dwell with us is our story from Genesis to Revelation!
 - The Garden
 - The Tabernacle
 - The Temple
 - Jesus came and "tabernacled" among us (Jn 1)
 - The Holy Spirit dwells within us (Acts 2)
 - God will dwell with his people (Rev 20-22)

4. Empowering

- The Holy Spirit empowers **COMMUNICATION**
- The Holy Spirit empowers **RE-CREATION**
- The Holy Spirit empowers **VALIDATION**

Peter's Sermon

1. Peter gives our backstory in his sermon (OT->John->Jesus->Disciples)

2. What should we do?

- Repent = shift our allegiance to follow and dwell with God.

Reflection Questions:

1. Jesus said, "It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you..."(Jn 16:7). Do you believe Jesus when he says this? Why/Why not?
2. How does the Holy Spirit empower you to communicate the gospel to all people?
3. How are you still calling people to remember their backstory so that they are convicted to, as Peter says in Acts 2, "Repent and save themselves from this crooked generation"?

Backstory: A Church Like Jesus (pt. 1)

Acts 2:42-4:31 | Session 3

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Christian Community

Review:

- The Holy Spirit empowers **Communication**
- The Holy Spirit empowers **Re-Creation**
- The Holy Spirit empowers **Validation**

The church looks like Jesus as we live like him:

1. Christian Community
2. Christian Renewal
3. Christian Opposition

Christian Community

1. They were a **DEVOTED** community:

- Apostles Teaching
- Fellowship (vs. 44-45)
- Breaking of Bread (vs. 46b)
- Prayer (Watch how important prayer is in Jesus' ministry and in the ministry of the church!)

2. They were a **GATHERED** community:

- In the public spaces (temple, synagogues, theaters, rivers, etc.)
- In homes

Christian Renewal

1. Physical Renewal:

- Peter & John look like Jesus
 - Acts 3:6 — Peter said, "...rise up and walk!"
 - Luke 5:24 — "Rise up, pick up your mat, and walk".
- Question: What was the purpose of Jesus' miracles? Did he heal everyone?
 - Miracles are signs of an eventual ultimate renewal.

2. Relational Renewal (with God and others):

- The healed man is able to enter the temple/community.
- Acts 3:19–21 — “Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus...until the time comes for restoring all things...”

Question: How is the church involved in bringing renewal to those around you?

Christian Opposition

1. External opposition (later we will see internal opposition)

- Silence – the pressure to not speak or act in response to Jesus.
- Suffering – a physical, financial, or social threat due to affiliation with Jesus.

2. This scene looks familiar!

- Same cast of characters as we come to a trial.
- Peter gets a second chance!
 - Acts 4:10 By the name of Jesus Christ, whom you crucified...
 - Acts 4:12 There is no other name...by which we must be saved...
 - Acts 4:18 They charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus...

Acts 4:13 — “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.”

Acts 4:19-20 — “But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.”

The church looks like Jesus as we live like him. How does your backstory shape how you live your life out in community and in our world?

Backstory: A Church Like Jesus (pt. 2)

Acts 4:32-6:7 | Session 4

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Review

When we look like Jesus we are called to live in:

- Christian Community
- Christian Mission (Jerusalem→Rome)

Threats to the community & mission of the church

Notice how both external and internal threats weave back and forth in Acts 4-6:

- Acts 4:1-41 External Threat
- Acts 4:32-5:16 Internal Threat
- Acts 5:17-42 External Threat
- Acts 6:1-7 Internal Threat

External Threats

1. Silencing
2. Suffering
3. Scattering

Internal Threats

1. Selfishness
2. Service (failing to meet needs)

Notice how these threats are to both:

1. Christian Community
2. Christian Mission

Internal Threat: Selfishness (Acts 4:32-5:16)

Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)

- Ancient benefaction & sharing of property.
- "Keep back" – same word meaning "embezzled" (cf. Titus 2:10).
- Similar to Achan's sin (Joshua 7:1) The church is the new temple.
- Notice phrase "filled" (5:3) – this time it is Satan, not the Holy Spirit.

External Threat: Silence & Suffering (Acts 5:17-42)

Acts 5:27-29

And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."

Acts 5:41-42

"Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus."

Internal Threat: Service Needs (Acts 6:1-7)

A Threat of Division & Neglect:

- Disciples were increasing in number.
- Complaint by the Hellenists against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.
- God's concern for widows has a rich OT background.
- Notice the threat of division is cultural here (Hebrew/Hellenistic).

A Holistic Solution:

- Service of the Word
- Service of the Tables

Conclusion

Narrative summary in Acts 6:7

"And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith."

Backstory: Opposition Brings Opportunity

Acts 6:8-8:4 | Session 5

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Review

Internal Threats

- Selfishness
- Service (failing to meet needs)

External Threats

- Silencing
- Suffering
- Scattering

Opposition Brings Opportunity

Stephen's trial looks like Jesus' trial

- Similar cast members
- Stirred up the people
- Secretly instigated false witnesses (cf. Mt 26:59-60)
- The charges:
 - Blasphemy against Moses and God (cf. Lk 5:21; 22:65; Mt 26:65). Thirty years later, Paul will say, "Formerly I was a blasphemer..." (1 Tim 1:13).
 - Threat to the temple (cf. Paul in Acts 21:28).

Stephen is on trial but puts them on trial (Acts 7:51-53)

- History lesson of their backstory of rebellion and rejection of God and his leaders.
 - Rejection and betrayal of a brother who is handed over to Gentiles, but he becomes king.
 - Moses is rejected as ruler, redeemer, and judge.
- Stephen's Indictment: "This behavior runs in the family" (Acts 7:51-53)
 - You stiff-necked people (Ex 32:9, 33:3, 34:9; Dt 9:6, 10:16, 31:37; 2 Chr 20:8, Jer 17:23).
 - Uncircumcised in heart and ears (Lev 26:41; Dt 10:16, 30:6; Jer 6:10, 9:26; Ezek 44:7)
 - You always resist the Holy Spirit.
 - Persecuted the prophets (cf. Mt 23:30).

- You betrayed and murdered the Righteous One.
- Received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.

Two Responses: Rejection & Reception (Acts 7:54-8:4)

1. The Rejection of Stephen (Human Judgement)

- Lit. "Their hearts were torn in two" (Acts 5:33)
- Ground/gnashed their teeth (cf. Lk 13:28)

2. The Reception of Stephen (Jesus' Judgement)

- Gazed into heaven (inclusio)
 - Acts 1:10 The disciples gazed into heaven after Jesus' ascension.
 - Acts 6:15 The earthly court gazed at Stephen (face like an angel).
 - Acts 7:55 Stephen gazes into the heavenly court.
- Saw the glory of God (like Abraham in 7:2)
- Jesus is standing at the right hand of God.
 - Seated in Ps 110:1; Lk 22:69; Acts 2:34-35
 - Standing
 - a witness/advocate standing on his behalf.
 - a judge standing to give verdict & receive.

Conclusion

Echoes of the cross

Lk 23:46 "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
 Lk 23:34 "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."
 2 Tim 4:15 "May it not be charged against them...The Lord stood by me..."

The Resurrection & Ascension of Jesus changes everything

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| - Earthly Verdict = "Guilty!" | Heavenly Verdict = "Innocent" |
| - Earthly Verdict = "Death!" | Heavenly Verdict = "Life" |
| - Earthly Verdict = "Defeat!" | Heavenly Verdict = "Victory!" |

Acts 8:1-4

"And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered [like seed] throughout the

regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word."

Backstory: The Gospel Transforms the Unlikely

Acts 8:1-9:41 | Session 6

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The Gospel Goes Out (North & South)

In Jesus: [Opposition brings Opportunity] □ [But also Joy]

Philip (Appointed to serve widows with Stephen in Acts 6)

- 8:4-8 **NORTH to Samaria**
 - Jerusalem is always “up” in elevation and theology.
 - “So there was much **joy** in that city”
- 8:9-25 **Internal Threat (Simon the Great)**
- 8:26-40 **SOUTH toward Gaza (Ethiopian eunuch)**
 - Looks like Lk 24:13-35 and Jesus on the road to Emmaus
 - Eunuch went on his way **rejoicing** (8:39)

The Gospel Transforms the Unlikely (Saul)

Jesus uses the willing (Ananias & Barnabas), to transform the unlikely (Saul):

Ananias—the one who goes to the unlikely.

- “Here I am Lord”
- Three imperatives and Ananias’ response:
 - 9:11 Go
 - 9:11 Look
 - 9:15 Go
 - 9:17 So he departed

Barnabas—the one who brings in the unlikely.

- “But Barnabas took him and brought him...” (9:27)
- Barnabas continues to encourage and bring along the unlikely (cf. John Mark).

Paul’s Unlikely Testimony (1 Timothy 1:12-17)

Backstory: The Gospel Unites the Unlikely

Acts 9:32-11:18 | Session 7

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Review

The Gospel for the unlikely:

- The Gospel transforms the unlikely
 - Saul
 - Gentile Centurion
- Jesus uses the willing:
 - Ananias—the one who goes
 - Barnabas—the one who brings
 - Peter—the one who goes & brings

2 unlikely stories repeated 3 times in Acts:

- The conversion of Saul (Acts 9, 22, 26)
- The conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11, 15:7-9)

Peter's Journey to Joppa

Acts 9:32-35—Peter visits Lydda and heals Aeneas

- The scene picks up with Peter traveling from Jerusalem to Joppa (in Judea)
- Peter looks like Jesus (Lk 5:17-26)
- Philip has already been through this region on his way to Caesarea (Acts 8:40)

Acts 9:36-43—Peter visits Joppa and heals Tabitha (Aramaic / Gk=Dorcas "Gazelle")

- Joppa (near modern day Tel Aviv) was 10 miles west of Lydda. It was the port city where Jonah attempted to run from his mission to warn the Ninevites (Jonah 1:3).
- Peter looks like Jesus (Lk 7:11-16). Even the phrase, "Tabitha arise" is verbally similar to the Aramaic phrase, "Talitha cumi" (cf. Mk 5:41).
- Simon the tanner who lives by the sea (10:6).
- It is in Joppa that Simon (bar Jonah) will be called to go to the home of an occupying Roman Centurion in the Roman port city of Caesarea.

Peter's Journey to Caesarea from Joppa

Acts 10:1-8—Cornelius the Centurion in Caesarea

- Caesarea Maritima is 32 miles north of Joppa along the coast.
- Centurions were responsible for a *centuriae* (around 80 soldiers) who were part of a larger cohort (around 480 soldiers). A Roman legion often consisted of 10 cohorts with the 1st cohort being larger than 2nd-10th for a total of around 5,200 men.
- Centurions in the NT are almost all depicted in a positive way:
 1. Jesus was amazed at his faith (Lk 7:9)
 2. Crucifixion scene (Mt 27:54; Mk 15:39; Lk 23:47)
 3. Cornelius (Acts 10-11)
 4. This man is a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-29)
 5. Two centurions guard Paul's transfer (Acts 23:23)
 6. Julius and Paul's shipwreck (Acts 27-28)
- Italian Cohort – not much is known but likely a conscript from the region
- Cornelius is a God-fearer who is well respected (similar to Tabitha in Joppa).
- Cornelius sends two servants and a soldier south to Joppa—a trip that took two days. They would return in four days' time (Acts 10:30).

Acts 10:9-23a—Peter's Vision in Joppa

- Notice God's orchestrated timing:
 - Peter goes up to pray (6th hour = 12 PM)
 - He is hungry and has a vision about food (cf. Lev 11)
 - Three times (10:16)
 - Just then, the delegates from Cornelius arrive from their two-day journey.
- "Texts written by Roman authors such as Juvenal (*Sat.* 14.104ff.) and Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.5) show that Jews did regularly refuse to associate with Gentiles, and were objects of suspicion because of their "antisocial" behavior" (Ben Witherington).
- However, Peter again is going to be called upon to unlock the doors for outsiders (Samaritans in Acts 8; cf. Mt 16:19).

Acts 10:23b-48—Peter visits Cornelius in Caesarea

- God does not show favoritism (lit. "face-taker").
- Notice there are no OT quotations like previous sermons (there are allusions).
- Table fellowship in Luke-Acts—there are 10 scenes of table fellowship in Luke's gospel and he is the only one to mention the Pharisee's accusation that Jesus "eats with sinners" (three times—5:29; 15:1; 19:7).

Acts 11:1-18—Peter's Report and Opposition

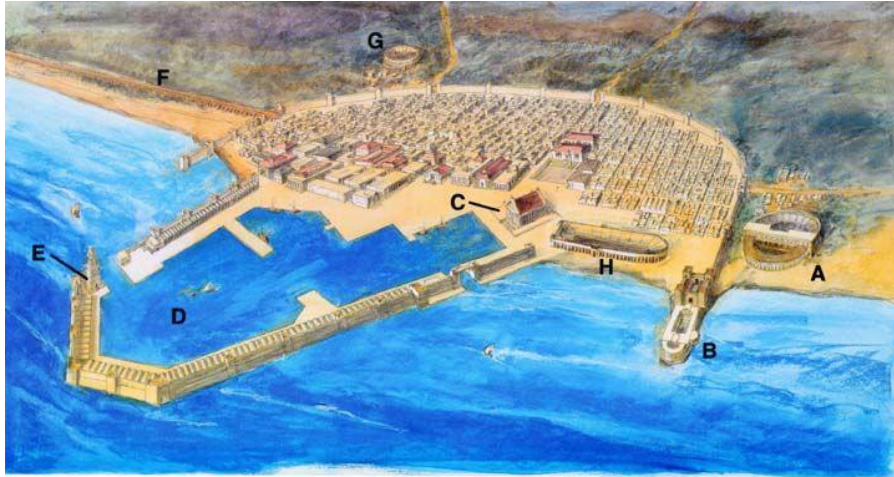
- “The circumcision party criticized him” (11:2)—the inclusion of the Gentiles is going to become a major controversy and source of opposition throughout the remainder of the narrative and the NT (cf. Galatians and Romans).
- Peter will again refer to this episode in Acts 15.
- “Who was I that I could stand in God’s way? (11:17)—this is God’s moving as seen in the Old Testament and commanded by the resurrected Jesus.

We need to be reminded 3 times too! In Acts, 2 stories repeated 3 times:

- The conversion of Saul (Acts 9, 22, 26)
- The conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11, 15:7-9)

Caution: Don’t Close the Doors God is Opening





- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| A Theater | E Lighthouse |
| B Palace | F Aqueduct |
| C Temple of Augustus | G Amphitheater |
| D Harbor (Sebastos) | H Hippodrome |

Backstory: How We Got Our Name

Acts 11:19-12:25 | Session 8

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How did you get your name?

How did we get our name?

- The Way?
- The Nazarenes?
- Christians?

Antioch (Syrian Antioch)

- Geographic shift from Jerusalem (300 miles north of Jerusalem)
- Large Jewish & Gentile population (est. 500K-800K people)
- Josephus states that it was the third largest in the Empire behind Rome and Alexandria.
- Strategic for military, trade, and spreading the gospel

“Christians”

- Mockery? Self-designation? Label of identification?
- “Do not take on the Lord’s name in vain.”

Christians look like Jesus (continue his mission, ministry, message, opposition):

- They provide daily bread to care for needs (Acts 11:27-30)
- They suffer like Jesus as they suffer for Jesus (Acts 12:1-25)
 - James (Acts 12:1-4)
 - i. Executed during Passover
 - ii. Executed by Herod
 - iii. James & John do sit at the right and left of Jesus
 - iv. Echoes of the cross
 - Peter (Acts 12:5-19)
 - i. Arrested during Passover
 - ii. Echoes of the resurrection

Long Live the True King (Acts 12:20-25)

- Herod Agrippa dies after glorifying himself
- Jesus is alive and glorified after dying for us

Backstory: The Going Church (Pt. 1)

Acts 13:1-14:28 | Session 9

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The sending-going church (13:1-3)

1. Paul's Strategy

- Jewish population → Gentiles (13:14; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8)
- Go with people (co-workers & disciples)
 - Barnabas – from Cyprus (4:36)
 - John Mark – a young assistant (13:5)
- Go to people (population centers, synagogues, theaters, etc.)
- Leverage all available resources (roads, ships, letters)
- Preach the gospel
 - Starting with OT (13:16-47)
 - Starting with culture/creation/religion/philosophy (14:8-19)
- Make return trips & encourage (14:21-28)

2. Expect Conflict

- Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus or Elymas (13:4)
- Jewish leaders (13:46)
- An attempt by the Gentiles and Jewish leaders to stone them (14:5; 14:19)

3. Expect Change

- Proconsul named Sergius Paulus (13:7)
- Gentiles (13:48)

4. Expect it to take time

- They remained in Iconium a long time (14:3)
- They remained no little time with the disciples (14:28)

Backstory: The United (but Divided) Church

Acts 15:1-41 | Session 10

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The Jerusalem Counsel (of apostles & elders)

Threats to Unity:

1. False Doctrines:

- Jesus.
- Jesus + _____

Who is responsible for doctrine in the church?

- Apostles / apostles
- Elders (cf. 1 Timothy 3)
 - Examples
 - Direction (overseer)
 - Doctrine (teacher)
 - Discipleship
 - Discipline

2. False Freedoms:

- Saved by grace alone (not circumcision & faith)
- Saved by grace, to give grace:
 - Abstain from meat sacrificed to idols
 - Abstain from sexual immorality

3. Opinions & Personalities

- In Acts 15:36-40, Paul and Barnabas have a “sharp agreement” over John Mark.

Questions:

- Do we ever try to add pre-conditions or obstacles to the gospel?
- Should our allegiance to Christ and love for others cause us to abstain from some actions, attitudes, etc.?
- Can God use even our differences to carry out his work and word?

Backstory: The Going Church (Pt. 2)

Acts 16:1-18:22 | Session 11

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Discipleship on the Journey

1. Take people with you on your journey (e.g. Timothy).
2. Go find people as you journey (e.g. Lydia, jailer, philosophers).
3. Find a hub and send disciples out to make disciples.

Discernment on the Journey

1. Where should we go?
 - Start going
 - Go to people who are both unwilling and willing to listen
 - Trust the Holy Spirit to guide you as you are going
2. What should we preach?
 - The gospel contextualized for the community
("Exegeting the city" – Timothy Keller)

Difficulty on the Journey

1. Sometimes preaching the resurrection through difficulty is our greatest platform for making disciples.
 - Rejection
 - Persecution (e.g. Philippian jail & beating)

"What is the bad news story of this community, and what is the gospel solution?"

Backstory: The Going Church (Pt. 3)

Acts 18:23-21:14 | Session 12

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Paul's Farewell Tour (3rd Missionary Journey)—Highlights vs. Mundane

1. Discipleship Lessons:

- Sometimes ministry is mundane (cf. Mk 4:26-29).
- Sometimes discipleship takes time.

2. Destination Lessons:

- Paul goes back to places he's been (to encourage disciples).
- Paul goes out to places he's never been (to make disciples).
- Paul goes to Jerusalem (like Jesus in Luke 9-19).

3. Leverage your timeline for the gospel:

Paul's Farewell Address (Acts 20:13-38; 2 Timothy)

1. Encourage disciples to continue making disciples.
2. Paul leaves the responsibility to them, and to us.
3. Paul sets sail for Jerusalem in hope because of the hope of the resurrection.

Backstory: The Persecuted Church

Acts 21:15-24:27 | Session 13

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Review

Paul's faith as he travels to Jerusalem:

- Persecuted
- Proclaiming ("The Word of God is not bound!" - 2 Tim 2:8)

Parallels between Jesus & Paul

1. Jerusalem:

- Jesus/Paul Certainty of suffering amplifies as they near Jerusalem
- Jesus/Paul Good news has spread! But, so have rumors and opposition
- Jesus/Paul Farewell address to disciples
- Jesus/Paul Trials before Sanhedrin, Roman governors & Herodian king

2. Temple:

- Jesus/Paul Falsely accused as a threat against the temple
- Jesus Cleansed the court of Gentiles in the Temple
- Paul Accused of defiling the Temple by bringing a Gentile
- Jesus Temple curtain torn
- Paul Gates closed

3. Trials:

- Jesus/Paul Soldiers arrest (the tribunal Claudius Lysias - 23:26)
- Jesus/Paul Unjust pre-trial
- Jesus/Paul Trial before Sanhedrin & High Priest
- Jesus/Paul Trial before Roman governor (Pilate / Felix & Festus)
- Jesus/Paul Trial before Herodian King (Antipas / Herod Agrippa II)
- Jesus/Paul Interrogation/punishment by flogging (Paul uses citizenship)
- Jesus/Paul Conspiracy for assassination
- Jesus/Paul **Verdict** = "he has done nothing deserving death."

The Persecuted & Proclaiming Church

Backstory: The Proclaiming Church

Acts 25:1-28:31 | Session 14

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"The Word of God is not bound!" - 2 Timothy 2:8

1. TRIALS—Paul is bound but proclaims (Acts 26):

- Jesus/Paul Trial before Sanhedrin & High Priest
- Jesus/Paul Trial before Roman governor (Pilate / Felix & Festus)
- Jesus/Paul Trial before Herodian King (Antipas / Herod Agrippa II)
 - Agrippa II was the great-grandson of Herod the Great. He ruled as a client king over regions that included Galilee (48-66 AD).
 - His father, Agrippa I, was eaten by worms and died in 44 AD (Acts 12).
 - Agrippa II was overthrown during the Jewish revolt and retreated to Rome where he lived until his death (sometime around 94-100 AD).
 - Bernice was the widowed sister of Agrippa II – the nature of their relationship was rife with rumors.
 - This meeting would have been a shrewd political alliance for these two regional rulers—it reverberates with the same reasons Pilate and Herod became friends after the trial of Jesus (cf. Lk 23:12).
- Jesus/Paul **Verdict** = "he has done nothing deserving death."

2. SHIPWRECK—Paul proclaims while on his way to Rome (Acts 27)

- Proclaiming and storms
- Proclaiming and shipwrecks
- Proclaiming and snakes

3. ROME—Paul awaits trial in Rome (Acts 28)

- Final destination of the narrative, "...and so we came to Rome" (28:14,16).
- Paul is placed under house arrest in Rome (28:16) but is granted freedom to receive guests.
 - o Paul invites the Jewish leaders (28:17-28)
 - o Paul extended his message to the Gentiles (28:28)
- Paul spends the next two years welcoming anyone who would listen.

Our Backstory: The persecuted, but proclaiming church

Acts 28:29-31 — For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

"The Word of God is not bound!" - 2 Timothy 2:8

This video was made possible with support from:

