

THE
DISCIPLESHIP
PLACE



Acts–Part 2

CHURCH OF  THE NAZARENE

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CLT Bible Study

ACTS-PART 2

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First printing 2008

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SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY

Welcome to the Continuing Lay Ministries series of Bible studies. You are engaged in a study venture that will be both helpful and enjoyable. Here are a few suggestions that will make this Bible study the most beneficial to you.

1. Since this is a Bible study, have your Bible near you at all times. This study outline is only designed to help you read the Bible.
2. The Bible version used for this study is the New International Version (NIV). The editor used the language of the NIV to prepare the lessons. You may use other versions of the Bible if you choose. While the language may be different, the meaning will be the same.
3. Before you begin each section, read the entire Scripture passage. This is very important. The study outline will help you understand the particular Bible verses, but it does not tell what they say.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Note that scriptures from the Book of Acts do not have the book's name. If the Bible reference is (1:4-5), this means you will find these verses in the Book of Acts. Other books of the Bible will include the name in the reference, for example Luke 12:49-50 and Leviticus 23:17.
5. Go through the study outline carefully. Take time to look up all the Scripture verses in the outline.
6. Use a highlighter to mark your Bible as you go. Marking your Bible will help the words become more and more your own.
7. Finally, read the Bible passage again to better understand its meaning.
8. The editor has also included how to pronounce some of the more difficult proper names and words. The first time the word is introduced, the pronunciation will follow the word. At the end of each chapter you will find a list of the words in the order in which they were introduced. Additionally, at the end of the book, all of the words and pronunciations will be listed alphabetically.

If a family or a few friends decide to take this study together, here are two suggestions.

1. Have one person read the Bible passage and another person read the Continuing Lay Ministries outline.
2. Then discuss the Scripture and outline. Ask questions of each other to help clarify the meaning of the Scripture.

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CHAPTER 4

The Church Extended (Acts 13:1-28:31)



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“... and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

The rest of the story of Acts is about the growth of the Church worldwide. Antioch was established as the base of operations (13:1-3). The Church was now free from its prejudice of Gentiles (14:27). Now, the Church was ready to go “to the ends of the earth” (1:8).

A. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY (13:4-14:28)

1. Mission to Cyprus (13:4-12)

- a. Barnabas, Saul, and John Mark composed the first missionary team (12:25; 13:2, 5). The Holy Spirit directed the believers in Antioch to commission Barnabas and Saul for a special work (13:2). So, they prayed, fasted, and sent them off (13:3).
- b. The three men set sail for Cyprus [SIE-prus] (13:4), which was the home of Barnabas (4:36). Cyprus was about 60 miles from the coast of Syria. Beginning at Salamis [SAL-uh-mus] (13:5), they evangelized the island. But Luke's main interest in telling the story was the conversion of Sergius Paulus [SER-jee-us PAHL-us] (13:6-12). The Roman ruler was interested in the gospel (13:7). But a false prophet, Bar-Jesus (also Elymas [EL-uh-mus]) tried to turn Sergius Paulus from the faith (13:8). Saul rebuked Elymas (13:9-11), and the false prophet became blind (13:11). Then Sergius Paulus believed and became a Christian convert (13:12).
- c. At Paphos [PAY-fus], Saul took his Roman name Paul (13:9). In Cyprus he obviously became the leader of the missionary team instead of Barnabas.

2. Evangelization of Galatia (13:3-14:24)

- a. The team sailed across the Mediterranean [MED-uh-tuh-RAY-nee-un] Sea and landed at Perga [PER-guh] on the coast of Asia Minor (13:13). John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (13:13). The reason he deserted the missionary team is not known for sure. He may have been afraid because the trip was difficult. Perhaps it was because Paul became the leader, since John Mark and Barnabas were cousins (Colossians 4:10).
- b. Paul and Barnabas came to Antioch in Pisidia [pie-SID-ee-uh] (13:14). This was not the same city that became the center of the Christian church. Antioch of Pisidia was located in Galatia [guh-LAY-shee-uh] on

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a high tableland. Paul may have gotten malaria in Perga and went to Antioch of Pisidia for healing in the mountain air (see Galatians 4:13). Paul had the opportunity to preach in the synagogue (13:15-41). He concluded his sermon with a strong emphasis on justification by faith (13:38-39; see also Galatians 2:16; 3:1-2).

The people of Antioch seemed impressed (13:42-43) and wanted to know more. But the Jews were jealous and upset (13:45). So Paul turned to the Gentiles (13:46) and the Gentiles received the Word gladly (13:48). Many believed (13:48). But the Jews continued to stir up trouble and forced the missionaries to leave the city (13:50).

- c. Paul and Barnabas traveled to Iconium [ie-KOH-nee-um] (13:51), which was about 80 miles from Antioch. At first, they experienced success and many people believed (14:1). Their ministry was fruitful (14:3). Again, Jews stirred up trouble, and the missionaries were persecuted (14:2, 4-5). This forced Paul and Barnabas to flee the city (14:6).
- d. The two men arrived in Lystra [LIS-truh]. Their ministry began with a dramatic healing of a crippled man (14:8-10). The people mistake Barnabas for the Greek god Zeus [ZOOS] and Paul for the Greek god Hermes [HER-meez] (14:12). The people wanted to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas (14:13). But Paul was not able to convince the people otherwise and success was limited (14:14-18). Some Jews stirred up the people who then stoned Paul, leaving him for dead (14:19). But the word "disciples" (14:20) indicated some success in this city. In Lystra on Paul's second missionary journey he added Timothy to his missionary team (16:1).
- e. The mission to Derbe [DER-bee] is barely mentioned (14:20-21). But the evangelistic effort was successful, as there were "a large number of disciples" (14:21). Here the apostle Paul probably recuperated from his stoning.
- f. Paul and Barnabas decided to retrace their steps. They went back to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and Perga (14:21, 25). They encouraged these new churches (14:22) and appointed elders (14:23). The elders were spiritual leaders ordained to care for the congregations. Paul and Barnabas then sailed for Antioch in Syria, not stopping on the island of Cyprus.

The missionaries took the long route home. It would have been much closer to go from Derbe directly to Antioch in Syria. But Paul was concerned for the churches he had started (2 Corinthians 11:28). He did not know when or if he would ever return to see them again.

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3. The Apostles' Report (14:26-28)

The church in Antioch eagerly awaited the report of the first missionary venture (14:27). The Christian faith had been opened to the Gentiles. This meant non-Jews were admitted into church membership without circumcision or other Jewish laws. God had opened the door. Christianity had become a universal faith by the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Cyprus [SIE-prus]

Salamis [SAL-uh-mus]

Sergius Paulus [SER-jee-us PAHL-us]

Elymas [EL-uh-mus]

Paphos [PAY-fus]

Galatia [guh-LAY-shee-uh]

Mediterranean [MED-uh-tuh-RAY-nee-un]

Perga [PER-guh]

Pisidia [pie-SID-ee-uh]

Iconium [ie-KOH-nee-um]

Lystra [LIS-truh]

Zeus [ZOOS]

Hermes [HER-meez]

Derbe [DER-bee]

B. THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL (15:1-35)

1. The Dispute Concerning Circumcision (15:1-2)

Some Jews did not like what the believers in Antioch of Syria were teaching. Certain Jews felt this error must be corrected right away (15:1). These Jews were known as Judaizers [JEW-duh-ie-zerz]. They insisted people could not be saved unless they were circumcised (15:1). Judaizers believed Gentiles could only become Christians by obeying all the laws of the Jews. Therefore, the leaders in Antioch proposed a general Church council to settle the dispute. Paul and Barnabas, along with others, were appointed to go to Jerusalem (15:2).

2. The Meeting in Jerusalem (15:3-12)

On the way to Jerusalem, Paul found a happy response to his report of his missionary trip (15:3). But the response of Christian Pharisees in Jerusalem was different (15:5).

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After a private conference with church leaders (15:4), an open discussion was held (15:6). As the chief apostle, Peter spoke first, telling about the Gentile Pentecost he was involved in (15:7-9). Since salvation is by grace to both Jew and Gentile, Peter said Gentiles should not be bound by Jewish law (15:10-11). Paul and Barnabas then reviewed their ministry among the Gentiles (15:12).

3. The Decision of James (15:13-21)

James, the brother of Jesus, was chairman of the council in Jerusalem. He spoke next (15:13). He argued that the Old Testament supported Peter's position (15:15-18). Then he gave the decision, recommending a compromise. He said Gentiles should abstain from (15:20):

- a. food given to idol worship
- b. sexual immorality
- c. eating meat of strangled animals
- d. blood

James said the Church "should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God" (15:19). And this should be put in writing (15:20). This was a reasonable and practical compromise.

4. The Decree of the Apostles and Elders (15:22-29)

A letter was addressed to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia (15:22-23). Here is what the letter contained:

- a. Those who were trying to force Gentiles to become Jews were condemned (15:24).
- b. Barnabas and Paul were recognized as heroes of the faith (15:15-26).
- c. Judas and Silas [SIE-lus] were sent to affirm the sincerity of the apostles (15:27).
- d. Gentile converts were to be freed from the law of circumcision. But some practical rules were made to keep harmony in the Church (15:28-29).

The Holy Spirit was prominent in the whole discussion (15:28). His advice was instantly obeyed.

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5. The Return to Antioch (15:30-35)

The reading of the decree in Antioch received a favorable response (15:31). The Christians were encouraged by the teaching of Judas, Silas, Paul, and Barnabas (15:32, 35). Often spiritual reform involves compromise that is reasonable and practical. Even with the best of people, truth is not revealed all at once.

Judaizers [JEW-duh-ie-zerz]

Silas [SIE-lus]

C. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (15:36-18:22)

The council in Jerusalem gave official approval for Gentiles becoming Christian believers. Paul was then free to continue his missionary work. He revisited the churches in Syria, Cilicia, and Galatia. Then he took the gospel to Europe. He went to the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica [THES-uh-loh-NIE-kuh], Berea [buh-REE-uh], Athens [ATH-unz], and Corinth [KOHR-unth] before returning to Antioch.

1. The People Involved (15:36–16:5)

The story begins with a painful incident, a dispute between Paul and Barnabas (15:37-38). Barnabas wanted to take John Mark again, but Paul did not. So, Barnabas took John Mark and went to Cyprus. Paul chose Silas to go with him. And the church gave its blessing to Paul and Silas (15:40). Later, Paul was reconciled to Barnabas (1 Corinthians 9:6) and John Mark (Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11). Out of this dispute, however, came a wider extension of the work—two missionary teams (15:39-40). Where God may not be able to rule because of people's decisions, He uses these decisions for His good and purpose (Romans 8:28).

Paul and Silas revisited the churches in Syria and Cilicia (15:41). At Lystra Paul met Timothy (16:1). He wanted Timothy to join him and Silas on this journey (16:3). Timothy was not a circumcised believer, so Paul circumcised him (16:3). While Timothy's circumcision was not required, Paul did this as a compromise to the Jews who "lived in that area" (16:3). The group of three men set out on a journey to visit and strengthen the other churches.

2. The Gospel Goes to Europe (16:6-40)

Against his own judgment and plans, Paul and his companions traveled to Troas (16:6-8). Three times the Spirit provided clear leadership for the missionaries (16:6, 7, 10). The Spirit kept the group from going into certain

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areas; instead, they went to Troas. Here Paul had a vision that “a man of Macedonia” [MAS-uh-DOH-nee-uh] begged him to come and help them (16:9). Macedonia is located in Europe [YOOR-up].

In Acts 16:10, we see the first of the “we” sections of Acts, which were explained in the Introduction. The author, Luke, was present with the group after Troas (16:10). Luke traveled with them to Philippi (16:11-12). He remained there probably for several years (20:6).

- a. The group traveled to Macedonia and arrived at Philippi (16:11-12). There was no synagogue in this city, so the missionaries found a Jewish prayer meeting (16:13). Here they had their first European [yoor-uh-PEE-un] convert, a wealthy woman named Lydia (16:14-15).
- b. Paul and Silas soon were in trouble (16:16-22). They met a slave girl, a fortune teller, who followed them. Paul cast an evil spirit from the girl “in the name of Jesus Christ” (16:18). When the girl no longer made money for her owners (16:19), the owners took Paul and Silas to government officials (16:20). As a result, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison (16:22-23). But God heard their prayers (16:25). An earthquake freed them from their chains (16:26). And the jailer believed and became a convert along with his entire family (27-34). The government officials were concerned because Paul and Silas were Roman citizens and requested they leave town (16:38-39).

In this chapter we see two very different types of conversions. Lydia heard the gospel, her spiritual eyes were opened, and she responded easily (16:14). The jailer, however, responded only after an earthquake in which he almost killed himself (16:26-27).

3. Paul at Thessalonica and Berea (17:1-14)
 - a. The missionaries moved on to Thessalonica about 100 miles southwest of Philippi (17:1). The synagogue offered an opportunity for Paul to speak (17:1-3). The missionaries met with considerable success (17:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:2). But persecution eventually forced them to leave the city (17:5-10). However, they left a group of believers (1 Thessalonians 2:13-15), and Paul praised them in a letter he wrote (1 Thessalonians 1:7-8).
 - b. In Berea, Paul found a more receptive group of Jews (17:10-12). But the Jews from Thessalonica came and stirred up the people against the missionaries (17:13). When Paul was forced to leave Berea, he went to Athens (17:14-15).

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4. Paul at Athens (17:16-34)

- a. Paul arrived at Athens, the cultural and religious capital of the ancient world. But he was disturbed by all the idols in Athens (17:16). He spoke in the synagogue (17:17), but a group of Greek philosophers argued with Paul (17:18). They took Paul to the Areopagus [air-ee-AHP-uh-gus], (17:19) a hill in Athens where people met to discuss ideas. The Areopagus was also known as Mars Hill.
- b. Paul preached to the Jews and Greeks. He told them he found an altar to “an unknown God” (17:23). Paul preached about the God they did not know. His sermon included all the essential points of the Christian faith. He referred to God (17:24), creation (17:24-25), man (17:26), sin (17:29), Christ (17:31), salvation (17:30), the Resurrection (17:31), and judgment (17:31). As a result, there were several converts (17:34).

5. Paul at Corinth (18:1-22)

- a. Paul then left Athens for Corinth (18:1). Corinth was a large, commercial city. But the people of Corinth pursued sensual pleasures. They were known for their immorality. Paul faced his task there with fear and trembling (1 Corinthians 2:1-3). Therefore, Paul was glad to be with Aquila [uh-KWIL-uh or AK-wuh-luh] and Priscilla (18:3), who were tentmakers as he was. He was also glad to see Silas and Timothy again (18:5). They had remained in Berea when Paul left for Athens. Paul was also glad to receive assurance from the Lord (18:9-10).
- b. At first Paul spoke in the synagogue (18:4-5). But when the Jews opposed him, he decided to devote his time and effort to the Gentiles (18:6). He then enjoyed a successful ministry for a year and a half (18:11). Because the Jews opposed him, Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the home of a believer (18:7). Crispus [KRIS-pus], the ruler of the synagogue, became a believer along with his entire family (18:8). Many people became baptized believers (18:8).

The Jews finally succeeded in raising a mob against Paul (18:12-13). He was brought before Gallio [GAL-ee-oh], a Roman official. But Gallio refused to try a man in court for religious beliefs (18:14-16).

- c. Paul continued his ministry in Corinth for some time (18:18). Then Luke quickly moved the story of Paul to Ephesus [EF-uh-sus], Caesarea, and Antioch (18:18-22). Aquila and Priscilla stayed in Ephesus (18:19), and the people there received Paul favorably (18:18-20). This prepared the way for Paul's long stay in Ephesus on his third missionary journey.

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Thessalonica [THES-uh-loh-NIE-kuh]
Berea [buh-REE-uh]
Athens [ATH-unz]
Corinth [KOHR-unth]
Macedonia [MAS-uh-DOH-nee-uh]
Europe [YOOR-up]
European [your-uh-PEE-un]
Areopagus [air-ee-AHP-uh-gus]
Crispus [KRIS-pus]
Gallio [GAL-ee-oh]
Ephesus [EF-uh-sus]

D. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (18:23-21:16)

1. Apollos at Ephesus and Corinth (18:23-28)
 - a. As Paul began his third missionary journey, he again visited the churches he started on his first journey (18:23).
 - b. The author, Luke, introduced Apollos [uh-PAHL-us], who was a Jew at Ephesus. Apollos had knowledge of the Scriptures, and he spoke fervently about what he knew (18:24-25). He was a disciple of John the Baptist (18:25). What little Apollos knew about Jesus, he taught accurately (18:25). But Apollos did not know about Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, and the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost. It appears under the teaching of Aquila and Priscilla, Apollos accepted salvation through Christ (18:26). Apollos then went to Achaia [uh-KAY-uh] where he had a successful ministry (18:27-28). Apollos also evidently had a successful ministry in Corinth (1 Corinthians 3:4-6).

2. Paul at Ephesus (19:1-41)
 - a. The Ephesian Pentecost (19:1-7). Ephesus was capital of the Roman province of Asia and the most important seaport of Asia Minor. Ephesus was known for its great temple of Artemis [AHR-tuh-mus] or Diana [die-AN-uh], one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Paul labored in Ephesus for three years (20:31).

In Ephesus, Paul found 12 disciples of John the Baptist (19:1, 7). Paul asked them an important question (19:2). Like Apollos, they only knew about the baptism of John (19:3). They were ignorant about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But Paul found these disciples open to new truth, and they received the Christian message and baptism (19:5). Then they received the gift of the Holy Spirit, the second crisis experience (19:6).

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- b. Paul's time in Ephesus (19:8-41). For three months, Paul preached in the friendly Jewish synagogue (19:8). But gradually opposition grew until he was forced to move his teaching to the school of Tyrannus (tie-RAN-us) (19:9). He taught there for two years (19:10), and God did miracles through Paul (19:11-12). Some Jewish sorcerers thought Paul was one of them. But they were amazed to learn Christianity was a spiritual power whose source was in the person of Jesus (19:13-16). As a result, the magicians and sorcerers burned the tools of their business (19:18-19). This incident brought great growth in the church at Ephesus (19:20).

Near the end of Paul's ministry in Ephesus, something happened that indicated his success in Asia. Demetrius [duh-MEE-tree-us] was a silversmith who made idols for the worship of Artemis (19:24). Artemis was the god's Greek name; Diana was the Roman name. Demetrius told his fellow craftsmen the Christians would upset the worship of Artemis. People would stop buying idols, and the makers of idols would not have any income (19:23-27). This resulted in a big riot (19:28-34). But a wise speech by the city clerk stopped the mob (19:35-41). In this story, Luke showed how the gospel triumphed over paganism.

3. Paul's Visit to Greece and Return to Miletus (20:1-15)

The story of Paul's trip suddenly goes much faster. Paul left Ephesus and made a trip through Macedonia to Greece, where he stayed a short time (20:1-3). But just as he was ready to sail to Syria, he learned of a plot against him (20:3). He decided to go back through Macedonia (20:3). Luke told of several men that traveled with Paul, but only Timothy's name is well-known today (20:4).

At Troas, Luke joined Paul's group (20:5-6). Here we have the second "we" section. Luke told the story of Eutychus [YEW-tuh-kus], which he witnessed himself. While Paul was preaching, Eutychus fell out of a third-story window. Luke, a doctor, said the young man was dead (20:9). But God through Paul brought Eutychus to life again (20:10-12). After a brief stay in Troas, Paul and his group hurried on to Miletus [mie-LEE-tus] (20:13-15).

4. Paul's Speech to the Elders of Ephesus (20:16-38)

In Paul's haste to return to Jerusalem, he decided not to stop in Ephesus. So, he summoned the Ephesian elders to come to Miletus (20:17), a distance of about 36 miles. In this farewell speech to the elders, he gave practical advice to Christian ministers (20:18-35). In closing, he quotes a saying of Jesus that is not preserved anywhere else: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (20:35). His farewell was a tearful one, because he told them "they would never see his face again" (20:36-38). Then Paul went on his way (20:38).

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5. Paul's Return to Jerusalem (21:1-16)

Paul sailed from Miletus, and made his way to Caesarea on the coast (21:1-8). He made short stops along the way. In Caesarea he stayed with Philip the evangelist, whose four daughters were preachers (21:8-9). Here a prophet named Agabus [AG-uh-bus] prophesied Paul would be arrested in Jerusalem (21:10-11). Although his friends pleaded with Paul not to go to Jerusalem, he chose to go anyway (21:12-14).

There are two important facts about Paul's life at this point. First, Paul's friends had a deep affection for him (20:36-38; 21:4, 12). Second, Paul had great courage in facing the trial awaiting him in Jerusalem (21:13). Paul had been planning for years to take to Jerusalem a love offering from the Gentile churches. He was not stubborn in rejecting his friends' warnings (21:4, 12). If Paul made a mistake in going to Jerusalem, it was due to his courage and zeal.

Apollos [uh-PAHL-us]

Achaia [uh-KAY-uh]

Artemis [AHR-tuh-muhs]

Diana [die-AN-uh]

Demetrius [duh-MEE-tree-us]

Eutychus [YEW-tuh-kus]

Agabus [AG-uh-bus]

E. PAUL'S ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT IN JERUSALEM AND CAESAREA (21:17-26:32)

The rest of the Book of Acts deals with the experiences of Paul as a prisoner of Roman authorities. Throughout this section, Luke stressed the fact that Paul was innocent of any crimes against Rome. Also, Luke indicated Paul was not guilty of any violation of Judaism, the faith of Israel. Luke was probably writing the first legal defense of Christianity. He showed that the Christian Church qualified as the true representative of Judaism. Therefore, Christians should have legal standing in Roman law. In these final chapters, Bible students should be impressed by the pictures Luke drew as a witness to these events.

1. Paul's Arrest (21:17-36)

Returning to Jerusalem, Paul hurried to report to James and the elders (21:17-19). They were impressed by Paul's report (21:20). But the leaders were concerned about a false rumor that was hurting Paul's reputation (21:21). They advised the apostle to disprove the rumor by taking a decisive action regarding purification (21:22-25; also see Numbers 6:1-21). He

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consented to this request (21:26). Paul rejected the Law as a means of salvation but not as a way of living. He practiced Jewish rites and ceremonies because he loved his nation. He did not want to offend anyone needlessly (1 Corinthians 9:20).

Certain Jews from Ephesus recognized Paul in the Temple (21:27). Quickly, they stirred up the people against Paul (21:27-30). The mob would have killed Paul, but a Roman commander of troops rescued him (21:31-36).

2. Paul's Defense Before the Jews (21:37-22:21)

The Roman commander thought Paul was an Egyptian who had started a revolt (21:37-38). Paul proudly declared he was a citizen of Tarsus and requested the privilege of speaking to the people (21:39). In making his own defense, Paul gave four arguments:

- a. He was a Jew by birth, trained by Gamaliel, and a former persecutor of the Church (22:1-5).
- b. His conversion was a supernatural one and was confirmed by Ananias (22:6-16).
- c. Even after his conversion he continued to worship in the Temple (22:17-20).
- d. He received a divine command to preach to the Gentiles (22:21).

3. Paul Before the Sanhedrin (22:22-23:11)

When Paul mentioned the word "Gentiles," the crowd was in a frenzy (22:22-23). The Roman commander ordered Paul to be flogged and questioned. (22:24). But Paul told them he was a Roman citizen, and this brought terror to the centurion and commander (22:25-28). They changed their minds and decided not to flog him (22:29). The next morning Paul was brought before the entire Sanhedrin (22:30).

Paul spoke with boldness to the assembled group. This angered Ananias, the high priest, who ordered Paul to be slapped (23:1-2). Paul rebuked the high priest (23:2-5) with even greater boldness. Clearly, Paul had not recognized the high priest who had violated the Law (23:3; see also Deuteronomy 19:15 and John 7:51). When Paul was informed about the high priest, he was immediately respectful to him (23:5; Exodus 22:28).

Paul then raised the issue of the Resurrection (23:6-7). The charge against him clearly concerned his teaching that Jesus' resurrection was proof He was the Messiah (25:18-19; 26:6-8, 21-23). Paul was shrewd in mentioning the Resurrection. He knew the Sadducees did not believe in the Resurrection

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(23:8). He knew this might cause a dispute between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. And he was right. “There was a great uproar” (23:9), violence erupted, and the commander had to rescue Paul again (23:10). That night Paul was comforted by a vision and a promise from the Lord (23:11).

4. Paul Sent to Caesarea (23:12-35)

The Jewish hatred of Paul was great. This was revealed in the plot of more than 40 men who conspired to kill him (23:12-15). The nephew of Paul (23:16) was responsible for saving his life. He boldly went to the commander to report the plot (23:17-22). The commander acted promptly by providing a strong military guard to take Paul safely to Felix [FEE-likes] in Caesarea (23:23-24). The commander’s letter is an excellent example of sound reasoning and judgment. He presented his action to Governor Felix in a most favorable way (23:26-30). The military guard delivered Paul safely to Felix (23:31-35).

5. Paul’s Defense Before Felix (chapter 24)

The trial before Felix, the governor, began. Ananias, the high priest, some of the elders, and Tertullus [ter-TUH-lus] came from Jerusalem (24:1). Tertullus spoke first and summarized the charges against Paul. Paul was a “troublemaker” and caused riots (24:5). He was “a ringleader of the Nazarene sect” (24:5). He desecrated the Temple (24:6). Other Jewish witnesses agreed with Tertullus (24:9).

Then Paul spoke and answered the charges specifically (24:10-21).

- a. He had no intentions of stirring up trouble or causing riots (24:11-12, 18).
- b. The Nazarene sect to which he belonged was a lawful Jewish group (24:14-16, 20-21).
- c. He said his accusers had no evidence he had desecrated the Temple (24:13, 17-18).
- d. Felix knew there was no answer to Paul’s arguments (24:22). Paul had made a good defense. But Felix kept him in prison anyway (24:23), probably to please the Jews.

Several days later, Paul received the opportunity to speak to Felix and his wife, Drusilla [drew-SIL-uh] (24:24). Paul spoke boldly about Jesus and his faith in Christ (24:24-25). Felix was obviously convicted, but he was afraid and sent Paul away (24:25). Hoping Paul would offer him a bribe, Felix spoke with Paul frequently (24:26). But there is no indication Felix became a Christian convert. He kept Paul in prison for two years until Festus [FES-tus] became governor. He did this “to grant a favor to the Jews” (24:27).

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6. Paul's Appeal to Caesar (chapter 25)

The change of governors encouraged the Jews to renew their efforts to kill Paul (25:1-3). However, Festus insisted the court hearing be held in Caesarea (25:4-5). After a few days, the hearing was scheduled (25:6). Again the same false charges were brought against Paul, which Luke does not record this time (25:7). It is evident the Jews had no case against Paul. But Festus wanted the Jews' approval and asked if Paul was willing to go to a trial in Jerusalem (25:9). To Paul, this idea was ridiculous (25:10-11). Governor Festus seemed unwilling to defend an innocent Roman citizen. So, Paul felt he had no other choice: he appealed to Caesar [SEE-zer] in Rome (25:11)

Festus was in a most awkward situation. He must send Paul, an innocent man, to Rome (25:12). Yet, Festus knew he could not make a charge against Paul that would stand up to the Roman justice system (25:25-26).

King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice, visited the new governor (25:13). This visit offered a solution for Festus. King Agrippa was the son of Herod, who killed James and imprisoned Peter (12:1-3). The king was a Jew who might help Festus find some charge against Paul. Festus then presented the case to Agrippa (25:14-21). The king was impressed and asked for a hearing with Paul (25:22). The next day, Agrippa and Bernice, along with a group of prominent Romans, gathered to hear Paul (25:23-27).

7. Paul's Defense Before Agrippa (chapter 26)

This was the occasion Paul had been waiting for. He expressed his happiness at being able to defend himself before Agrippa. He thought the king would judge his case on its true merits (26:1-3).

Regarding the charge of heresy, Paul argued he was a Jew of the "strictest sect" (26:5). Yet, he was arrested for believing the central faith of Judaism, the hope of the Messiah (26:4-7). Therefore, he was innocent of any crime against Rome, since, according to Roman law, Judaism was a "lawful religion." He could not be guilty of heresy against Judaism.

Paul admitted, however, that he differed with Judaism on two points: the resurrection of Jesus and preaching to the Gentiles.

- a. With passion Paul said the living Jesus confronted him while he was fervently persecuting the Church. He was overwhelmed with conviction by Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lord (26:8-15).
- b. Paul said the Lord himself commissioned him as an apostle to the Gentiles. He was to preach the twofold gospel of salvation and sanctification by faith (26:16-18).



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Paul then told Agrippa he had obeyed “the vision from heaven” (26:19). This was the reason the Jews tried to kill him (26:21). But, in reality, the Jews themselves were denying their own Law and their prophets (26:22-23).

Festus, an ignorant pagan, could stand this no longer. With a shout, he interrupted Paul and accused him of being insane (26:24). But Paul was courteous and denied his accusation (26:25). Then he invited Agrippa to make a personal confession of faith (26:26-27). But Agrippa avoided Paul’s direct invitation. Agrippa asked, “Do you think in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?” (26:28). Bible scholars disagree on the meaning of Agrippa’s question. Some think there was scorn in his voice. Others think he was sincere but not yet ready to become a Christian. But we do know Paul was powerful in his presentation of the gospel. It was Agrippa’s choice to accept or reject, and he chose to reject.

Paul’s last defense was ended (26:30). While he was judged to be innocent (26:31), his appeal to Caesar must stand (26:32). Paul would have to go to Rome.

Felix [FEE-likes]

Tertullus [ter-TUH-lus]

Drusilla [drew-SIL-uh]

Festus [FES-tus]

Caesar [SEE-zer]

F. PAUL’S VOYAGE TO ROME (27:1-28:15)

This story by Luke is the best account of travel on the Mediterranean Sea at this time in history. It provides excellent information about sea travel in the first century.

1. From Caesarea to Myra (27:1-5)

Sometime after the hearing before Agrippa, plans were made to send Paul with other prisoners to Rome. A centurion by the name of Julius [JEW-lee-us] was in charge of the prisoners and soldiers (27:1, 42-43). They boarded a ship returning to Asia Minor (27:2). Luke and Aristarchus [air-is-TAHR-kus] (27:2) were with Paul, possibly as his servants or slaves. After a brief stop at Sidon (SIE-dun), the ship bypassed Cyprus and continued on to Myra [MIE-ruh] (27:3).

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2. From Myra to Fair Havens (27:6-12)

At Myra the centurion found a ship from Alexandria [al-ig-ZAN-dree-uh] en route to Italy (27:6). He put the entire group on this ship (27:6). The centurion acted as the ship's commanding officer (27:11). There was wheat (grain) on board the ship (27:38). This fact indicated it was probably a ship that carried grain from Egypt to Italy on a regular route.

The trip was slow as the wind was not always favorable (27:7). The ship finally sailed to the island of Crete and stopped at a place called Fair Havens (27:8). A long delay brought more difficulty. After the "Fast" (27:9) in the fall, sailing conditions usually became treacherous. The Fast was the Jewish festival called the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur [YOHM kuh-POOR] (Leviticus 16:29-31; 23:26-32). Paul warned Julius, the centurion, not to continue the trip (27:9-10). But Julius did not take Paul's advice. Instead, he did what the ship's pilot and owner said (27:11). They decided to sail on to Phoenix [FEE-niks] on the west side of Crete (27:12). They wanted to spend the winter there.

3. The Storm (27:13-26)

The ship had only been sailing for a short time when it encountered a violent storm (27:13-26). The winds had the powerful force of a hurricane (27:14). The men on board secured the lifeboat and strengthened the ship's cables (27:17). For two weeks, the ship was at the mercy of the tempest (27:27). Finally, the people on the ship "gave up all hope of being saved" (17:20). Paul then spoke to the 276 people on the ship (27:21, 37). First, he gently rebuked them for not heeding his advice (27:21). He then assured them God would protect all of them, and they would be safe (27:22-26).

4. The Shipwreck (27:27-44)

On the 14th day, the experienced sailors sensed they were near land (27:27). Determining the depth of the sea and fearing shipwreck, the sailors tried to escape in a lifeboat (27:28-30). But Paul discovered their plan and reported it to the centurion. The sailors' plan was defeated (27:31-32). Paul then took command of the situation. Paul reassured the group and urged them to eat (27:33-34). And, in response, they all ate as much as they wanted (27:35-38). Then they threw the rest of the grain into the sea (27:38).

At daybreak, they attempted to land on the shore (27:39). But the waves of the sea tossed the ship onto a sandbar, and it broke into pieces (27:41, 44). When the soldiers planned to kill all the prisoners so they wouldn't escape, Julius stopped them. He wanted to spare Paul's life (27:42-43). And as Paul promised, all of them made it to shore safely (27:44).

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5. The Winter on Malta (28:1-10)

The shipwrecked survivors learned they were on the island of Malta [MAHL-tuh] (28:1), and the islanders welcomed them (28:2). Paul encountered a poisonous snake that bit him, and the islanders expected him to die (28:3-4; see Mark 16:18). But Paul showed his strong trust in God, and he “suffered no ill effects” (28:5). This impressed the people and they thought Paul was a god. (28:6). Paul soon found himself in the home of Publius [PUB-lee-us], the Roman official on Malta (28:7). A miracle, the healing of the father of Publius, was performed (28:8). This resulted in a healing ministry that brought great favor and honor to Paul (28:8-10).

6. The Voyage Ended (28:11-15)

After three months, the large group set sail on another ship from Alexandria (28:11). They made stops along the way and finally arrived at Puteoli [pew-TEE-oh-lee] (28:12-13). They found a Christian group there, and Paul and his friends were permitted to stay with them for a week (28:14). The news of Paul’s arrival had reached Rome, and people from the Church met him on the way (28:15). The aim of Paul’s ministry was about to become reality, and his heart was filled with gratitude (28:15).

Julius [JEW-lee-us]

Aristarchus [air-is-TAHR-kus]

Sidon [SIE-dun]

Myra [MIE-ruh]

Alexandria [al-ig-ZAN-dree-uh]

Yom Kippur [YOHM kuh-POOR]

Phoenix [FEE-niks]

Malta [MAHL-tuh]

Publius [PUB-lee-us]

Puteoli [pew-TEE-oh-lee]

G. PAUL’S IMPRISONMENT IN ROME (28:16-31)

1. A Meeting with Roman Jews (28:17-29)

In Rome, Paul was permitted to live by himself with only a soldier to guard him (28:16). Paul immediately contacted non-Christian Jews and met with them and preached to them (28:17-20; Romans 1:16). They arranged to meet with him on another day, and even more people came (28:23). It was a day of decision (28:24). With a sad heart, Paul told of the doom of Israel in the words of Isaiah (28:26-27; Isaiah 6:9-10). Paul then declared he would go to the Gentiles, because they (the Jews) would not listen to him (28:28).

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2. Imprisonment (28:16, 30-31)

Luke records a two-year imprisonment for Paul. During this time, Paul enjoyed comfort, rented a house, and called in his friends (28:30). But he was chained to his soldier guard (28:16, 20).

Besides preaching (28:31), during this time Paul wrote what we call the “prison letters.” They were written to Philemon and the churches in Colossae, Ephesus, and Philippi. The names of these New Testament books are Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.

H. FINAL THOUGHTS

We do not know for sure what happened to Paul after this. Some Bible scholars do not believe Paul’s trial before Caesar resulted in his death. He may have been released to continue his work as an apostle (see Philippians 1:25-26; Philemon 22).

Luke did not write a biography. Instead, he told of the establishment, enlargement, and extension of the Church. When Paul reached Rome and preached the gospel (28:31), Luke’s purpose was achieved. Empowered by the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, the Church of Jesus Christ was carrying out the glorious commission (1:8).

In this study, you have learned about great men of God, such as Peter and Paul. They labored under the close guidance of the Holy Spirit. We trust you will also make it your personal goal to allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. We hope you will become better acquainted with the Bible.

Dr. J. B. Chapman was a well-known Nazarene leader and theologian of the 1900s. He said Acts ended suddenly because God wanted us to add other chapters under the Holy Spirit’s power. This is your challenge today: to add your personal ending to this wonderful book—The Acts of the Apostles. May the Lord bless your efforts and labor for Him.

STUDY QUESTIONS



NOTES

CHAPTER 4. SECTIONS A AND B

1. Which is true about the beginning of Paul's first missionary journey?
 - A. He took Barnabas and John Mark with him.
 - B. The church in Antioch prayed, fasted, and sent them off.
 - C. They first traveled to the island of Cyprus.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
2. It was in Paphos Saul took his Roman name, Paul.
 - A. True
 - B. False
3. Which is true about John Mark?
 - A. He traveled with Paul on the first missionary trip.
 - B. He left Paul and Barnabas because his mother died.
 - C. He was a cousin of Paul.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
4. Antioch of Pisidia and Antioch of Syria are the same city.
 - A. True
 - B. False
5. Some Jews often stirred up trouble against Paul and Barnabas.
 - A. True
 - B. False
6. Which is true about Paul and Barnabas in Lystra?
 - A. The ministry began with the healing of a blind man.
 - B. The people thought Paul and Barnabas were gods.
 - C. The missionaries had no success at all.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
7. Barnabas was stoned in Lystra and left for dead.
 - A. True
 - B. False

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8. Instead of taking the shortest route back to Antioch, Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps.
 - A. True
 - B. False
9. Salvation by grace alone was important in the teachings of Paul (15:1-35).
 - A. True
 - B. False
10. Which is true about the decree of the apostles and elders?
 - A. Barnabas and Paul were viewed as heroes.
 - B. Gentile converts were freed from the law of circumcision.
 - C. The letter was sent to the churches in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.

CHAPTER 4. SECTION C

11. What is true about the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey?
 - A. Barnabas wanted to take John Mark, but Paul did not agree with him.
 - B. Paul selected Silas to be his traveling companion.
 - C. Paul and Silas revisited the churches in Syria and Cilicia.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
12. Paul circumcised Timothy as a compromise to the Jews before he went with Paul on his journey.
 - A. True
 - B. False
13. Paul had a vision with a voice that begged him to come to Macedonia.
 - A. True
 - B. False
14. Lydia was the first convert of Paul after he began his missionary trip in Europe.
 - A. True
 - B. False

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15. What is true of Paul's stay in Philippi?
- A. Paul cast an evil spell out of a girl.
 - B. Paul and Silas were put in jail.
 - C. An earthquake freed Paul and Silas from the jail.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
16. What is true of Paul's visit to Athens?
- A. He was disturbed by the many idols in the city.
 - B. He talked with philosophers and people at a place called Mars Hill.
 - C. He saw an altar for an "unknown god," so he preached about God and His son, Jesus.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
17. Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth who were tentmakers.
- A. True
 - B. False
18. Paul stayed in Corinth about ____ months and had a successful ministry (18:18).
- A. six
 - B. twelve
 - C. eighteen
 - D. twenty-four

CHAPTER 4. SECTIONS D AND E

19. Apollos did not believe in God until he was taught by Aquila and Priscilla.
- A. True
 - B. False
20. What is true about the city Ephesus?
- A. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia.
 - B. It was known for its great temple dedicated to the goddess Diana.
 - C. It was a place where Paul labored for three years.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
21. Eutychus was a sorcerer who stirred up people against Paul.
- A. True
 - B. False

NOTES

22. Luke records a saying of Jesus not found in the gospels: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."
A. True
B. False
23. Paul showed great courage in returning to Jerusalem, as he knew some Jews wanted to harm him.
A. True
B. False
24. Which is true about Paul's return to Jerusalem?
A. James and the elders were impressed with Paul's report of his missionary work.
B. Paul refused to participate in the purification rite because he knew it wasn't necessary for salvation.
C. The Jews did not turn against Paul as he had expected.
D. all of these.
E. none of these.
25. Paul was saved from being flogged because he was a citizen of Rome.
A. True
B. False
26. The Sadducees and Pharisees agreed upon the Christian belief of the resurrection of Jesus.
A. True
B. False
27. Which is true about Paul's trial before Felix?
A. Paul was accused of being a "trouble maker" and "a ringleader of the Nazarene sect."
B. Paul made a good defense before Felix.
C. Although Paul spoke frequently to Felix, there is no evidence Felix became a Christian.
D. all of these.
E. none of these.
28. When Paul appeared before Festus, the governor was willing to defend Paul as a Roman citizen.
A. True
B. False

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29. Paul appealed his case to Caesar in Rome because he felt he could not get a fair trial before the new governor, Festus.
- A. True
 - B. False
30. Which is true of Paul's defense before King Agrippa?
- A. Paul gave his conversion testimony.
 - B. Festus accused Paul of being a mad man.
 - C. Agrippa was almost convinced to be a Christian.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.

CHAPTER 4. SECTIONS F, G, AND H

31. Luke was one of the men who traveled with Paul to Rome.
- A. True
 - B. False
32. Which is true about the storm Paul encountered on his journey to Rome?
- A. The winds were as powerful as a hurricane.
 - B. The storm lasted at least two weeks.
 - C. Paul assured all on board that God would protect them.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
33. Which is true about the shipwreck?
- A. The sailors tried to escape in a lifeboat and leave everyone else on the ship.
 - B. Paul told everyone they would be saved and to eat as much as they wanted.
 - C. The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
34. Which is true about the winter at Malta?
- A. The islanders welcomed the shipwrecked passengers.
 - B. Paul suffered no ill effects from a poisonous snake bite.
 - C. They were shipwrecked on Malta for three months.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.

NOTES

35. Which is true about Paul's time in Rome?
- A. He was permitted to live by himself with only a soldier to guard him.
 - B. He was imprisoned for two years.
 - C. He wrote several letters to people and churches while there.
 - D. all of these.
 - E. none of these.
36. Scholars are uncertain what happened to Paul after his appeal to Caesar.
- A. True
 - B. False

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

NOTES

Achaia [uh-KAY-uh]
Agabus [AG-uh-bus]
Alexandria [al-ig-ZAN-dree-uh]
Apollon [uh-PAHL-us]
Areopagus [air-ee-AHP-uh-gus]
Aristarchus [air-is-TAHR-kus]
Artemis [AHR-tuh-muhs]
Athens [ATH-unz]
Berea [buh-REE-uh]
Caesar [SEE-zer]
Corinth [KOHR-unth]
Crispus [KRIS-pus]
Cyprus [SIE-prus]
Demetrius [duh-MEE-tree-us]
Derbe [DER-bee]
Diana [die-AN-uh]
Drusilla [drew-SIL-uh]
Elymas [EL-uh-mus]
Europe [YOOR-up]
European [your-uh-PEE-un]
Eutychus [YEW-tuh-kus]
Felix [FEE-likes]
Festus [FES-tus]
Galatia [guh-LAY-shee-uh]
Gallio [GAL-ee-oh]
Hermes [HER-meez]
Iconium [ie-KOH-nee-um]
Judaizers [JEW-duh-ie-zerz]
Julius [JEW-lee-us]
Lystra [LIS-truh]
Macedonia [MAS-uh-DOH-nee-uh]
Malta [MAHL-tuh]
Mediterranean [MED-uh-tuh-RAY-nee-un]
Myra [MIE-ruh]
Paphos [PAY-fus]
Perga [PER-guh]
Phoenix [FEE-niks]
Pisidia [pie-SID-ee-uh]

NOTES

Publius [PUB-lee-us]
Puteoli [pew-TEE-oh-lee]
Salamis [SAL-uh-mus]
Sergius Paulus [SER-jee-us PAHL-us]
Sidon [SIE-dun]
Silas [SIE-lus]
Tertullus [ter-TUH-lus]
Thessalonica [THES-uh-loh-NIE-kuh]
Yom Kippur [YOHM kuh-POOR]
Zeus [ZOOS]