

# **ACTS II NOTES**

Compiled by:

Mark Moore

Ozark Christian College

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**ACTS II NOTES**

1.	13:1	Antioch on the Orontes .....	01
2.	13:1	Leaders of the Antioch Church .....	02
3.	13:2	Fasting.....	05
4.	13:3	Paul’s Missionary Journeys – Journey 1 .....	09
5.	13:13	Why did John Mark Leave.....	10
6.	13:14	Synagogue.....	11
7.	13:16	Preaching in the Book of Acts .....	13
8.	13:16	Rhetorical Analysis of Paul’s Sermon in Acts 13:16-41 .....	16
9.	13:33	O.T. Quotations in the Book of Acts .....	17
10.	13:1	All the Prophets of the Bible.....	19
11.	13:48	Acts 13:48 and Appointed to Eternal Life .....	21
12.	14:12	Zeus & Hermes .....	22
13.	14:12	Greco-Roman Deities.....	23
14.	14:26	Pauline Cycle of Missions.....	24
15.	15:1	Passages Predicting Gentile Inclusion in the Church.....	25
16.	15:1	Galatians 2 and Acts 15 – Are They the Same?.....	26
17.	15:5	Are We Still Under the Law?.....	27
18.	15:28	How Shall We Handle Acts 15:28-29?.....	29
19.	15:40	Paul’s Missionary Journeys – Journey 2 .....	31
20.	16:6	When the Holy Spirit Hinders Missions .....	32
21.	16:12	Philippi.....	34
22.	16:17	Free Press for the Gospel .....	35
23.	16:23	Roman Prisons .....	36
24.	16:25	Things That Make You Go Hmmm .....	37
25.	16:30	Household Baptisms in Acts – Did They Include Infants? .....	38
26.	17:16	Athens, Philosophers and Paul.....	39
27.	17:18	Epicureans & Stoics .....	40
28.	17:18	Are You a Stoic or an Epicurean?.....	41
29.	17:22	Paul’s Challenge to the Greek Thinkers on Mars Hill .....	42
30.	18:1	Corinth in the Time of Paul .....	43
31.	18:1	1 & 2 Corinthians in Relation to Acts.....	44
32.	18:12	Gallio.....	45
33.	18:23	Map – Third Journey.....	46
34.	18:23	Paul’s Missionary Journeys – Journey 3 .....	47
35.	19:1	Evangelism in Corinth and Ephesus .....	48
36.	19:1	A Sketch of Ephesus .....	49
37.	19:1	Paul’s Ministry at Ephesus.....	50
38.	19:2	The Holy Spirit’s Relationship to Belief and Baptism .....	51
39.	21:11	Did Paul Disobey the Holy Spirit?.....	53
40.	21:17	Paul’s Journey to Rome – Journey 4.....	54
41.	23:2	Characteristics of Authorities, Acts 23-26.....	55

42.	23:3	Paul vs. the High Priest, Acts 23:3 .....	56
43.	24:11	No More Than Twelve Days Ago .....	57
44.	25:11	Blameless Character and Appeal to Caesar, Acts 25 .....	58
45.	25:11	Nero.....	59
46.	26:28	Acts 26:28 .....	60
47.	28:26	Isaiah 6:9-10 in Fulfillment.....	63
48.	28:16	Paul's Prison Texts .....	64
49.	28:16	Paul's Companions in Rome.....	65
50.	28:32	Passages Describing Paul's Fourth Journey.....	66
51.	28:32	Paul's Fourth Missionary Journey .....	67
52.		The Sea Voyages of Paul .....	68
53.		Mega Lessons From Acts.....	69

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## ANTIOCH ON THE ORONTES

By Mark Moore

1. This is one of 15 cities at the time by the name of Antioch. Also called "Antioch the Great," "The Queen of the East," "The Beautiful," and "Antioch by Daphne," after the nearby Temple of Apollo by that name.
2. Population = about 500,000; Chrysostom (*Homily on St. Ignatius, 4*) indicated that there were perhaps as many as 200,000 citizens (demos), which would not include the nearly half a million slaves, women and infants. It also may not include the rural areas. Thus the whole population may have been as many as 800,000.
3. Third largest city of the Empire, behind Rome and Alexandria.
4. Today there are only about 35,000 people in Antioch.
5. Founded by Selucus I. Nicator about B.C. 300.
6. It was the Capital of Syria.
7. It was equipped with street lights and water fountains.
8. The main street was four miles long, lined with mansions.
9. Because she was placed strategically on both land and sea trade routes, she was a melting pot for many cultures, often retaining the worst of both the Occidental and Oriental elements.
10. She is the Mother of the church of Asia Minor and Europe:
  - a. She sent out the first organized mission team, (Acts 13:2).
  - b. Here the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26).
  - c. Here flamed the Gentile/Jewish debate (Acts 15).
11. Mommsen, *The Provinces of Roman Empire from Caesar to Diocletian*, (1909, p. 128), said, "In no city of antiquity was the enjoyment of life so much the main thing, and its duties so incidental."
12. The "park" of Daphne was famous for lewd and immoral acts that took place in "worship" of Apollo.
13. Her citizens were also famous for their invective--ridicule and snide wit. They even attacked Emperor Julian because he interfered with their market affairs. They mocked him as he strode through the streets, calling him a goat because of his long beard and a butcher because of his many animal sacrifices. Some commentators see this characteristic as the impetus behind the name "Christians" (Acts 11:26).
14. In the limestone cliffs to the N.E. of the city is the 16' bust of Charionion was seen by all her citizens. It is traditionally dated during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (B.D. 175-163), and thought to be an attempt to appease the gods due to a plague in the region at that time. Charon was the ferryman over the River Styx.
15. A tradition dating back to the 3rd century claims that Luke's home was Antioch. The text of Acts as well as a "Western" variant in 11:28 (another "we" passage), would seem to substantiate that claim.
16. By the end of the first century it is estimated that perhaps 1/7 of the population was Jewish. Also, Josephus records the rise of Jewish wealth and prominence as many Gentiles became "God-fearers" (*War of the Jews*, vii, 45).
17. Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch and the first martyr of Antioch, was sent to Rome early in the second century, and was there torn to pieces by wild beasts.
18. In A.D. 540 the Persians, led by king Chosroes Nushirvan, leveled the city. Emperor Justinian restored it, but it would never be the same.
19. In the first half of the seventh century it was captured by the Moslems; nearly a hundred years later it was captured by the Greek Emperor Nicephorus Phocas; and in 1098 it was captured by the Crusaders.
20. See Bruce Metzger, "Antioch-on-the-Orontes." *The Biblical Archaeologist* 11 (Dec. 1948), pp. 69-88, for archeological details of the work done by Princeton University between 1932 and 1939. Of special interest is the Chalice of Antioch, pictured on p. 87, which some claim is the silver covered Holy Grail from which Christ drank at the Paschal Supper.

## LEADERS OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH (Acts 13:1-3)

By Mark Moore

Antioch was a unique city--pluralistic religiously, ethnically and culturally. It would compare favorably to a San Francisco or a New York both for its demographic diversity and its "modern" advances, which included, for example, street lights and running water. Antioch was the third largest city of the Roman Empire and the launching pad for Paul's first missionary journey. Antioch usurped Jerusalem as the center of Christian mission for the second half of the book of Acts.

But the significance of Antioch to the Christian Church was not primarily because of its location or population but because of its leadership. In this city, God raised up five men who would literally change the course of human history. The purpose of this essay is to examine three essential ingredients of the character of these leaders: They were Sociologically Diverse, Spirit Led and Missions Oriented. If we can recapture these three characteristics in today's church leaders, we too can reroute our own culture.

### I. Sociological Diversity

Acts 13:1 lists five individuals who were leaders of the church at Antioch:

<b>NAME:</b>	<b>ORIGIN:</b>	<b>ETHNICITY:</b>
Barnabas	Cyprus	Hellenistic Jew
Simeon (Niger)	---	Black
Lucius	Cyrene	African
Manaen	Palestinian	Greek/Herodian
Saul	Tarsus/Jerusalem	Hebraic Jew

This is an impressive list for at least two reasons. First, God had truly made "two peoples into one" (Eph 2:14). He united these people at several levels: (a) Those from different financial strata -- assuming that Manaen, having been raised in Herod's household,<sup>1</sup> was a wealthy aristocrat. (b) Those from different religious backgrounds--Hellenistic and Hebraic Jews as well as Greeks (cf. 11:19-20). (c) Those from different nationalities--African, Syrian, Cyprus, Palestinian. And (d) those of differing skin color--assuming that Niger, meaning black, was a description of Simeon.

Second, this list is impressive because it indicates the mobility of this church. Because their leaders represented such a broad array of people, the church could move evangelistically into any

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<sup>1</sup>The word *syntrophos*, literally means "suckled by the same nurse." It seems to indicate that Manaen was a comrade and peer of Herod rather than a servant to him.

sector of this pluralistic city with a coherent voice for Christ. Simeon could speak to the blacks; Saul could debate in the synagogues; Manaen could deal with the wealthy politicians; Lucius could minister to the immigrants. Furthermore, because of the diversity represented in the leadership, this church would be more likely to avert the kind of racial division that impacted the young church of Jerusalem (Acts 6:1).

In a time of rising racial tensions, the church today would be wise to raise up leaders from a variety of socio-economic strata to evangelize and represent the diversity of people we find in our cities. If we fail in this, we may consign the next generation of Christians to churches that are myopic and schismatic, albeit homogenous and complacent.

## II. Spirit Leading

We notice from 13:1 that these five men were gifted by the Holy Spirit in the area of prophecy and teaching. It is grammatically possible to view Barnabas, Simeon and Lucius as prophets and Manaen and Saul as teachers. But more likely all five displayed both gifts. For instance, Barnabas was certainly a gifted teacher (cf. 11:26). Furthermore prophecy was not primarily for predicting future events (e.g. Agabus 11:28; 21:10-11), but for speaking out authoritatively a message from God. This was especially crucial prior to the writing of N.T. books. In light of this, it is easy to see how prophecy and teaching would go hand in hand.

In addition to their corporate gift of prophet-teachers, each individual was uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit. At least we know that to be true of Barnabas and Saul whose personalities and abilities were complementary but quite distinct (cf. 15:37-39). Barnabas was an encourager (4:36; 9:27; 11:22, 25; 15:37), and gifted with benevolence (4:37), while Saul was a skilled orator, debater, and writer.

Not only were these men gifted by the Holy Spirit, they also opened their lives to the Spirit through the spiritual disciplines of worship, fasting, and prayer (cf. Lk 2:37; Acts 14:23). It was in this context of actively pursuing God that the Holy Spirit spoke to these men. Like the Apostles of Jerusalem, their primary duties as church leaders were the ministry of the word and prayer (6:2-4).

Should it be any different today? Our preachers and elders must adopt the priorities of the early church leaders. Both in Jerusalem and Antioch their primary tasks involved the Word and prayer. Social programs and administrative decisions are important and perhaps necessary. But too often the expediency of the urgent prevails over the most important priorities of our leaders. Not only must our leaders be Spirit-gifted men with unwavering priority, but they must continually open their lives up to the leading of the Holy Spirit through the disciplines. This frightens us for two inappropriate reasons. First, we are afraid of being labeled Pentecostal if we talk about or seek the Spirit's guidance. But if anything is clear from the book of Acts, it is this: The progress of the Church is in the hands of the Holy Spirit. We will do little of eternal significance if not led by Him. Second, we fear the cost of the disciplines. Worship, prayer, fasting, and Bible study are terribly time-consuming and painful. But as they say, "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen." Leadership is not for the half-hearted, nor is it for the purpose of stroking egos. It requires discipline and hard work.

### III. Missions Orientation

The church of Antioch was the result of some brave missionaries who dared to cross cultural lines (11:19-20). And the church never forgot their debt to God and to the people who first evangelized them. That is why their mission's program took the shape that it did. First, Saul and Barnabas were not sent to distant lands and foreign languages. Rather, they went to Barnabas' home land of Cyprus, returning the gospel to the people who first brought it to Antioch. They recognized a debt to the people of Cyprus. But because they were willing to meet the needs they saw around them, their concentric circles of influence continued to expand until Paul knocks on Rome's door by the end of the book. Furthermore, when the great debate exploded in Acts 15 over circumcision, the leaders of Antioch did not presume authority over the church of Jerusalem. Even though Antioch had effectually become the center of Gentile missions, they submitted themselves to the decision of the Elders and Apostles in Jerusalem.

Second, when they sent out an evangelistic team, they did not recruit a couple of idealistic misfits who were a bit slow but quite eager. They went after the best, sacrificing their own leadership to accomplish this task. These two were veterans who had both been on church planting ventures before (11:22-26; 15:40-41). And even when Paul and Barnabas split up, they both recruited helpers that they considered "prize fighters" for the gospel. Case in point: On Paul's second missionary journey he acquired: (1) Silas--a Jewish prophet from Jerusalem. (2) Timothy--a bright young man with a glowing reputation that had compassed 40 miles by foot; as a half-breed he could speak to a significant "people group." (3) Luke--a Greek physician, historian, and linguist. And (4) in Corinth he met up with Priscilla and Aquila--a successful "blue-collar" couple from Rome. But no matter how far Paul traveled, he continued to return to his "home" church at Antioch to report the ever expanding work of the Holy Spirit (Acts 14:26-28; 18:23).

Church leaders who are in tune with the Holy Spirit, will be aware of at least two things in terms of Missions: Spiritual responsibility (Rom 15:27) and Global opportunity. For Spiritual leaders the primary question is not, "What will it cost?" but "What will it take?" We have more Christians per capita than we have ever had in the history of the church. We have better training institutions, more money and more technology than we've ever had. We have the Bible in over 1,400 languages, and Christianity, scattered all over the globe, is now the largest of all world religions. We can say, without hesitation, that we have far more advantages and opportunities than did the church of Antioch to spread the Gospel. The only factor which could tip the scales is leadership. Do we have leaders who are Sociologically Diverse, Spirit Led, and Missions Oriented? The answer to this question is not found at the end of your pointed finger. It is found in the mirror as you honestly answer this question: Am I the person that God wants me to be in the global conquest for His Kingdom?

## **FASTING**

By Mark Moore

Gk. νηστεύω--To go without food; to be hungry. Heb. נָצַח--Abstain from food.

### I. Major Texts on Fasting:

1. Isaiah 58:3-7--The fast God desires is compassion and justice.
2. Matthew 6:16-18--Do not fast for ostentatious show (though it still could be in community).
3. Matthew 9:14-15; Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:34-35--When the bridegroom leaves we will fast.

### II. Purposes or Reasons for a Fast:

1. A sign of grief (may also be from a natural loss of appetite due to grief)--Mt. 9:15 and parallels; Ezra 8:23; Nehemiah 1:4; 1 Kings 21:27; particularly in conjunction with repentance (Acts 9:9).
2. Preparation for prayer and/or a desire to gain God's ear or approval, or to show God your intensity in the matter--2 Samuel 12:16-23.
3. Preparation for a serious decision--Esther 4:16.
4. Fasting is also an effective way to deemphasize the flesh and give priority to the spirit--i.e. to show the body who's boss.
5. Casting out demons--Matthew 17:21; Mark 9:29 (Although both these texts have suspicious textual variants).

### III. Facts about Fasting:

1. Total or partial abstinence from food and/or drinkB Esther 4:16; Psalm 35:13; Daniel 10:3.
2. Time limits:
  - (a) Through the night--6:18.
  - (c) Morning through evening -- 20:26; 1 Samuel 7:6; 2 Samuel 1:12.
  - (b) Three days, three nights--4:16.
  - (d) Seven days--Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 12:16-18; 1 Chronicles 10:12.
  - (e) Forty days--Matthew 4:2.
3. It is referred to as "afflicting" the body. It causes physical weakness--Psalm 109:24
4. It is connected to:
  - (a) Repentance--Joel 2:12-17; Jonah 3:5; Nehemiah 9:1; 2 Samuel 12:15-23; 1 Kings 21:27-29.
  - (b) Prayer--1 Samuel 7:5, 6; 2 Samuel 12:16-23; 2 Chronicles 20:3; Nehemiah 1:4ff; Ezra 8:23; Psalm 35:13; Daniel 9:3; Joel 1:14; 2:12-17; Matthew 17:21 [in Majority text]; Mark 9:29; Luke 2:37; Acts 13:2,3; 14:23.
  - (c) Mourning--Daniel 6:18; 2 Samuel 1:12; 12:16, 21, 22; Zechariah 7:5; Judges 20:26; 1 Kings 21:27; Nehemiah 1:4ff.; 9:1; Esther 4:3; Psalm 35:13; Daniel 9:3; Joel 2:12-17; Jonah 3:5.

### IV. Who Fasts

1. Anna serving in the temple--Luke 2:37.
2. Jesus' temptations 40 days--Matthew 4:2.
3. John's disciples and Jesus' compared-- Matthew 9:14, 15; Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:34-35.
4. Official Jewish fast--Acts 27:9, (cf. Lev. 16:29, 31).
  - (a) Pharisaic fast days were Monday and Thursday (cf. Luke 18:12).
  - (b) Christian fast days became Wednesday and Friday.
5. Paul's sufferings--2 Corinthians 6:5; 11:27.
6. Church leaders at ordination--Acts 13:2, 3; 14:23.
7. Fast of Pharisee (Hypocritical)--Luke 18:12.

## Paul's First Journey

Acts 13:1-14:8 Estimated: 1200 miles, approximately 2-3 years in duration. Planted at least 6 churches.

Place	Location	Events
1. Antioch of Syria	13:1	The Holy Spirit called Barnabus & Saul into missionary service. Sent away by church.
2. Seleucia	13:4	Caught a ship to go to the island of Cyprus.
3. Salamis (Cyprus)	13:5	Proclaimed Word in synagogues with John's help.
4. Paphos (Cyprus)	13:6	Encounter with Bar-Jesus and Sergius Paulus.
5. Perga (Pamphylia)	13:13	John left missionary team.
6. Antioch of Pisidia	13:14	Preached famous synagogue sermon, rejected.
7. Iconium	13:51	Racial tension. Rejected
8. Lystra (Lycaonia)	14:6	Healed lame man. Sacrifice to Barnabas and Saul. Preached. Stoned.
9. Derbe (Lycaonia)	14:20	Preached gospel and made many disciples.
10. Lystra	14:21	Returned to strengthen church.
11. Iconium	14:21	Returned to strengthen church.
12. Antioch of Pisidia	14:21	Returned to strengthen church.
13. Perga	14:25	Returned to strengthen church.
14. Attalia	14:25	Set sail for Antioch
15. Antioch of Syria	14:26	Reported on journey.

## Why Did John Mark Leave? (Acts 13:13)

By Mark Scott & Mark Moore

John Mark leaving in the middle of the first missionary tour was evidently a "big deal" to Paul. In fact, he says that John Mark "abandoned" them on the trip. Significantly, this word comes from the same root as the word "apostasy" (*apostanta*, Acts 15:38). Clearly for Paul there was more than this one missionary journey at stake in John's "breach of contract." His entire integrity in ministry was jeopardized, (according to the Apostle). Luke does not set in judgment of this, but from Paul's perspective views it as significant. But what were John Mark's motives? We can only make educated guesses and we are not shy of options.

1. John objected to Paul's itinerary. Obviously Cypress was Barnabas' home territory. Because John was related to Barnabas, we might assume that he too had roots in this island or at least friendly family connections. When the trip went beyond this familiar territory John might have balked.
2. John got homesick. He did follow Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem to Antioch and now returns to Jerusalem. This may be a clue that he longed for home.
3. John was frightened. The area they were headed was known to be riddled with bandits. John may have been frightened by the prospect of getting beat up. Moreover, given Paul's track record, even in Paphos, conflict with political entities was inevitable.
4. Paul may have contracted malaria. Some have suggested that the reason Paul and Barnabas bypassed Ephesus for Psidian Antioch was for the higher altitude and a more agreeable climate for recovering from malaria. Indeed Paul says in Gal. 4:13 that he came to them the first time because of a bodily illness. Perhaps John was trying to avoid this devastating disease.
5. John may have objected to Paul's leadership. Up to the conversion of Sergius Paulus, Barnabas was clearly the leader. He introduced Paul to the Apostles in Jerusalem. He verified the work in Antioch. He recruited Paul to help with the work. He gets top billing both on their mission of mercy in Jerusalem (chp 11) and their evangelistic tour on Cyprus (chp 13). Suddenly (and from here on out), Paul not only changes his name but takes the lead over Barnabas. John Mark may have been jealous for his kinsman when he took a back seat to Paul.
6. John may have objected to Paul's preaching. As Paul's message of grace turns toward Gentile audiences, it becomes clear that he will not require them to be circumcised. This has profound implications that will fester into a serious confrontation in chapter 15. John may object to Paul's "libertine" views just as other conservatives from Jerusalem did.

Whatever John's motives, we're happy to report that he was eventually reconciled to Paul and became quite helpful to him once again (2 Tim 4:11). There is a clear lesson here that both personal failure and fractured relationships are redeemable in Christian ministry.

## THE SYNAGOGUE (Ezekiel 11:16)

By Mark Moore

- I. Definition:
  - A. "A gathering," etymologically = to lead together.
  - B. Origin:
    1. Most likely during the Babylonian captivity after the destruction of the temple.
    2. Sacrifices could no longer be offered (Amos 7:17), but were replaced by prayer and study.
    3. Such meetings as Ezekiel 8:1; 20:1-3 likely got more frequent and organized, evolving into the synagogue system.
  - C. Importance: The synagogue is one of the leading factors which facilitated the spread of Christianity in a number of ways:
    1. It gave a welcome preaching point for early evangelists.
    2. It preserved and proliferated monotheism and the Holy Scriptures as the Jews spread among pagan people.
    3. It laid a Jewish theological/philosophical foundation among pagan cultures which is so critical to understanding Christianity.
  
- II. Description:
  - A. Structure
    1. Situated so that worshipers entered and faced toward Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:44, 48, Dan. 6:10; T.P. Berakot 4, 8b-c), with three entrances.
    2. They desired to place the building on the highest point of the city.
    3. They preferred a site near water for ritual cleansing.
  - B. Furniture:
    1. The most important fixture was the Ark for scrolls.
    2. Bema--Raised platform near the center where several people could stand.
    3. In front of the ark stood an 8 branched candlestick.
    4. The chief seats were those nearest the ark.
    5. Since the Middle Ages, synagogues have provided balcony seating for women or screens which separate men from women. It is not certain that there was separate seating for women in ancient times (Pfeiffer, p. 63).
    6. Alms-boxes at or near the door.
    7. Notice boards on which excommunicants would be recorded.
    8. A chest for musical instruments.
    9. Eternal light--A lamp which never is allowed to go out. Modern synagogues will often use electric timers to avoid breaking the Halakah prohibiting making fire on the Sabbath.
  - C. Leadership:
    1. Head of the Synagogue--*ARCHISYNAGOGOS*, (Mark 5:22). This person ranked just below a scribe. Also called the Sheliach. His qualifications were much like those Paul gives for an elder.
      - a. Supervision of the services
      - b. Maintaining order (Luke 13:14)
      - c. Inviting a guest to speak (Acts 13:15)
      - d. Handing the Scripture scroll from the Chazzan to the reader.
    2. Council of Elders--Served much like our board of Elders. Sometimes they were called shepherds.

3. The Chazzan (minister/servant)--functioning as our deacons taking care of janitorial duties of the synagogue and often acted like a schoolmaster of the town. The Sheliach and Chazzan were placed in leadership by the imposition of hands.
- D. The services
1. The Nature of the Service:
    - a. Each service required the presence of at least 10 adult males (i.e. who have been through bar mitzvah at 13).
    - b. Appropriate apparel included the prayer shawl [*tallit*], and its fringes [*sisit*], as well as phylacteries.
    - c. Synagogues were open daily for instruction and prayer.
    - d. Involved set prayers, reading of the Law (a cycle completed every 3 years), and the Derash "word of exhortation". There were five parts:
  2. Structure of the Service:
    - a. Shema (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41--This became the Jewish confession of faith that later replaced animal sacrifices)
    - b. Prayer [*Tefillah*], chiefly the 18 benedictions as of the beginning of the 2nd century. A nineteenth was added by the grandson of Gamaliel which originally read, "For apostates may there be no hope, and may the Nazarenes and the heretics suddenly perish."
    - c. Reading of the Law.
      - (1) The Chazzan stands next to the reader and corrects any mistakes and stops the reader if he feels the passage would shock the congregation or make them laugh.
      - (2) Each passage is to be translated into the vernacular.
      - (3) No one was allowed to read more than one verse at a time and no less than three verses in the reading.
      - (4) The reader was forbidden to take his eyes off the scroll or to trust his memory.
      - (5) Any adult male could be a reader, except that the reading of Esther was not permitted by minors.
    - d. Reading of the prophets [*Haftarah*], with the benediction
      - (1) A reader was allowed here to read three verses at a time. He could also delete or skip verses if he chose.
      - (2) Jesus likely was reading the *Haftarah* in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-20).
    - e. The Scripture lesson:
      - (1) Anyone present and able could be asked to preach, especially prominent visitors (Luke 4:16-20; Acts 13:15).
      - (2) They did so while sitting on an elevated platform (Luke 4:20).
      - (3) Purpose: Praise God and Educate the people.
- E. Other functions of the Synagogue:
1. Judicial functions (Lk. 12:11; 21:12)
    - a. Formal court hearings
    - b. Punishment (Mat. 10:17; Mk. 13:9)
    - c. Excommunication (John 12:42; 16:2). The church also imitated this judicial function with excommunication. Although the synagogue could declare the death penalty, under Roman occupation, it had to be confirmed with the procurator (cf. John 18:31).
  2. Schools--bet hammidrash
  3. Community Center

## PREACHING IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

By Mark Scott & Mark Moore

The book of Acts is punctuated with speeches. Most of them are sermons of some sort. These are not "breaks" in the action, but part of the essential "Acts" of the book. "No fewer than nineteen significant Christian speeches occur in his second volume (omitting the non-Christian speeches by Gamaliel, the Ephesian town clerk, and Tertullus). There are eight by Peter (in chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 15), one each by Stephen and James (in chapters 7 and 15), and nine by Paul (five sermons in chapters 13, 14, 17, 20, and 28, and four defense speeches in chapters 22 to 26)," (John R.W. Stott, *The Spirit, the Church, and the World*, p. 69). Counting only the speeches of Peter, Paul and Stephen, this accounts for 20-25% of the book. In other words, it is simply not possible to understand the book of Acts without getting a handle on these speeches.

### I. Accuracy of the Sermons

These are not verbatim accounts. They are far too short for that. Case in point: Peter's sermon in chapter two lasted from the afternoon sacrifice (approximately 3 p.m.), until early evening when they were arrested. Thus, it was about 3 hours long. Yet the text takes less than thirty seconds to read. We also get a hint of this in Peter's Pentecost address when Luke writes, "With many other words he warned them . . ." (Acts 2:40). What we have, then, are reliable summaries of the speeches given on various occasions.

The question now becomes, "How much did Luke alter the actual speech in order to fit his narrative or theology?" We should consider several of things here. First, it was not uncommon for students to keep written records of important speeches. Thus Luke's sources may well have documented Peter and Paul's major addresses, and Luke himself, may have recorded some of Paul's.

Second, Luke is a master rhetorician. In other words, he uses forms of speech that were common and acceptable in his day (cf. Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998]). In defense speeches he sounds like a lawyer, in Athens he sounds like a philosopher, and in Palestine he sounds somewhat like a Rabbi. Thus, the speeches fit hand in glove their setting. This is like what Thucydides claims he did in his speeches -- he phrased the words so that they accurately reflect the very kinds of things the speaker would have said, even if they are not word for word reproductions.

Third, Luke reproduces the language, social setting, and theology of the speakers. For example, when speaking of Palestinian events, he introduces more Aramaism and when in Greek cities, his Greek is arguably the finest in the N.T. Thus, it looks like he really did reflect not just the intentions of the speakers but their verbiage as well. As a result, Peter and Paul's speeches are comparable to the language and theology used in their own epistles. Thus it seems reasonable to regard the speeches as "reliable summaries."

## II. The Occasion/Place of the Sermons

It is as varied as the circumstances of the early church. Even the occasions of the sermons preach. They tell us that the early church spontaneously erupted into proclamation whenever and wherever it found an opportunity to articulate the message of Jesus. They were given on:

1. Jewish Holiday--Pentecost (Ac. 2).
2. Hour of Prayer--Temple (Ac. 3, 21, 22).
3. Meeting of the Sanhedrin--Council Chambers (Ac. 4-5, 23).
4. Synagogue--Sabbath (Ac. 7, 13, 17, et. al.).
5. Outdoors--Samaria and desert road (Ac. 8, 14).
6. House of Roman Official--Cornelius (Ac. 10).
7. In the Assembly of the Church--Leaders (Ac. 11, 15).
8. By the Riverside--Ladies (Ac. 16).
9. In Prison--jailer (Ac. 16).
10. In City Gates--Areopagus (Ac. 17).
11. In People's Homes--Crispus (Ac. 18, 20, et. al.).
12. In University Setting--Tyrannus (Ac. 19).
13. In Greek Theater--Ephesus (Ac. 19).
14. In Seaside Retreat Area--Miletus (Ac. 20).
15. In Roman Courts of Law--Defenses (Ac. 24-26).
16. On Board Ship--In Storm (Ac. 27).
17. On an Island--Malta (Ac. 28).
18. In Roman House-Arrest (Ac. 28).

## III. How to Imitate Apostolic Preaching

The style of these sermons varied, like it does for all preaching, depending on the text, audience, occasion, preacher and purpose. Sometimes the message moved deductively from Text, to Kerygma, to Proof, to Appeal (Acts 2). Other times it moved inductively from Story, to Text, to Appeal (Acts 7). But almost invariably it included the resurrection of Jesus as its central theme.

Often these sermons included the use of O.T. texts which helped prove a point or demonstrate how prophecy had been fulfilled. There are some 104 quotations, citations, or allusions in these sermons. It is notable, therefore, that sermons to Gentile audiences (e.g. Acts 10 & 17), often lacked O.T. citations. Yet, why quote the Bible to those who don't know it? It is also of interest that there are no Scripture citations in Paul's sermon to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20). Instead Paul uses the testimony of his own life to prove his point about how they should follow his example.

Luke chooses to record three dominant sermons of Paul in the second half of Acts (13, 17, 20). The first is a sermon to synagogue Jews, the second to educated pagan, the third to the Elders of the church of Ephesus. Hence, Luke is not primarily interested in the telling us the words spoken on these occasions. He is showing us a paradigm of preaching to these three target audiences.

So what lessons can be learned about how to preach "Apostolically"? (1) Since Paul's sermon to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20) is the closest parallel in Acts to what we call "preaching" today, we might be instructed to include more exhortation along with our exegesis. (2) We might want to be familiar with the kinds of literature, legends, and philosophical presuppositions that helped Paul grab the attention of the Athenians. (3) Along the same lines, we will need to exegete our audience as carefully as we do the text. We should feel free to exploit a variety of opportunities with a variety of styles, texts, and hermeneutical approaches. The Apostles were inspired, while I shall shoot for inspiring-homiletical commitment. Within this freedom of expression, however, we must stay true to the author's intended meaning. (4) Continue to take advantage of the liturgical setting to preach in, but expand your "preaching" to include other settings so as to encompass more unbelievers. (5) If we are to preach as the Apostles did, we will need to be familiar with a great variety of O.T. texts and be prepared to show unbelievers how these prophecies typologically predicated Jesus as the Christ. (6) We must make a beeline to the cross and resurrection of Jesus and extend an offer of forgiveness, grace, and salvation.

We need to be cautious about trying to narrow preaching down to one single kind of communication or style. After all there is great variety even in the book of Acts. This is reflected in the vocabulary used to describe preaching in this book: preach, teach, testify, say, proclaim, reasoning, dialogue, explaining, giving evidence, strengthen, encourage, dissension, debate, evangelize, declare, etc. Furthermore, because all we have are "reliable summaries" of these sermons we should be careful of assuming too much. For example, the fact that there are no illustrations, no alliterated outlines present in the text does not mean they were never used. And we may need to ask if the apostles were preaching in our day, what differences would they make in their preaching to communicate to our audience?

Conclusion: Preaching is central to the action of Acts. It was an essential characteristic of the early church. And it was a dangerous activity. It was dangerous to the preacher because it often placed him face to face with political opponents. It was perceived as dangerous by governmental entities who felt threatened by the new social configuration it announced. It was dangerous for those who responded because of the radical cost of discipleship. And it was dangerous for those that listened but refused respond because the very act of preaching was used by God to harden the hearts of those who headed not the message. Therefore we must not tinker with preaching. Through this message preached souls are brought out of darkness and into light, the gates of Hell give way, governments tumble, and the kingdom of God is established on this earth.

## Rhetorical Analysis of Paul's Sermon in Acts 13:16-41

This sermon is a deliberative address, meaning it is designed to change behavior, not merely belief (cf. vv. 40-42). According to the classic Greek rhetorical handbooks, such an address should contain five major movements. Paul follows them precisely.

1. A *proem* which exhorts the audience to give him attention (v. 16).
2. A *narration* which recounts significant historical events (vv. 17-25).
3. A proposition which is to be proven and acted upon (v. 26).
4. Arguments proving the proposition (vv. 27-37). According to Quintillion (5.10.12-13) there were four major kinds of arguments to be used to make a case. Paul here uses all four:
  - a. Things perceived by the senses (vv. 30-31).
  - b. Things established by law or other written authority (vv. 27, 29, 33-35).
  - c. Things about which there is general agreement (i.e. providence and power of God), (vv. 32-33, 37).
  - d. Things pertaining to the issue that would be admitted by all parties (vv. 28-29, 36).
5. A *peroration* or a final exhortation calling for action (vv. 38-41).

## OT Quotations in the Book of Acts

## OT Quotations

## ALL THE PROPHETS OF THE BIBLE

(Arranged by Mark Moore)

<u>Arranged Scripturally</u>		<u>Arranged Alphabetically</u>	
Enoch	Gen 5:21,24	Aaron	Ex 7:1
Noah	Gen 9:25-27	Abraham	Gen 20:1,7
Abraham	Gen 20:1,7	Agabus	Acts 11:28
Jacob	Gen 49:1	Ahijah	1 Kin 11:29
Aaron	Ex 7:1	Amos	Amos 1:1
Miriam	Ex 15:20,21	Anna	Luke 2:36
Eldad	Num 11:27	Asaph	1 Chron. 25:2
Medad	Num 11:27	Azariah	2 Chr 15:1-8
Jesus	Deut 18:18	Daniel	Mt. 24:15
Moses	Deut 18:18	Philip's Daughter	Acts 21:8,9
Deborah	Judg 4:4,5	David	Acts 2:25,30
Samuel	1 Sam 3:20	Deborah	Judg 4:4,5
Nathan	2 Sam 7:2	Eldad	Num. 11:27
Zadok	2 Sam 15:27	Elijah	1 Kin 17:1
Gad	2 Sam 24:11-14	Elisha	1 Kin 19:16
Ahijah	1 Kin 11:29	Enoch	Gen 5:21,24
Jehu	1 Kin 16:1,7,12	Ezekiel	Ezek 1:1
Joshua	1 Kin 16:34	Gad	2 Sam 24:11-14
Elijah	1 Kin 17:1	Habakkuk	Hab 1:1
Elisha	1 Kin 19:16	Haggai	Ezra 5:1
Micaiah	1 Kin 22:7,8	Hanani	2 Chr 16:7-10
Jonah	2 Kin 14:25	Heman	1 Chron. 25:5
Isaiah	2 Kin 19:2	Hosea	Hosea 1:1
Huldah	2 Kin 22:12-20	Huldah	2 Kin 22:12-20
Asaph	1 Chr 25:2	Iddo	2 Chr 9:29;12:15
Heman	1 Chr 25:5	Isaiah	2 Kin 19:2
Iddo	2 Chr 9:29; 12:15	Isaiah's wife	Is. 8:1-3
Shemaiah	2 Chr 12:5,7,15	Jacob	Gen 49:1
Azariah	2 Chr 15:1-8	Jahaziel	2 Chr 20:14
Hanani	2 Chr 16:7-10	Jeduthun	2 Chr 35:15
Jahaziel	2 Chr 20:14	Jehu	1 Kin 16:1,7,12
Oded	2 Chr 28:9	Jeremiah	2 Chr 36:12,21
Jeduthun	2 Chr 35:15	Jesus the Messiah	Deut 18:18
Jeremiah	2 Chr 36:12,21	Joel	Joel 1:1
Haggai	Ezra 5:1	John	Rev. 1:1
Isaiah's wife	Is 8:1-3	John the Baptist	Luke 7:26-28
Uriah	Jer 26:20	Jonah	2 Kin 14:25
Ezekiel	Ezek 1:1	Joshua	1 Kin 16:34
Hosea	Hosea 1:1	Judas	Acts 15:32
Joel	Joel 1:1	Malachi	Mal 1:1
Amos	Amos 1:1	Medad	Num 11:27
Obadia	Obad 1	Micah	Mic 1:1

Micah	Mic 1:1	Micaiah	1 Kin 22:7,8
Nahum	Nah 1:1	Miriam	Ex 15:20,21
Habakkuk	Hab 1:1	Moses	Deut 18:18
Zephaniah	Zeph 1:1	Nahum	Nah 1:1
Zechariah	Zech 1:1	Nathan	2 Sam 7:2
Malachi	Mal 1:1	Noah	Gen 9:25-27
Anna	Luke 2:36	Obadiah	Obad 1
John the Baptist	Luke 7:26-28	Oded	2 Chr 28:9
David	Acts 2:25,30	Paul	1 Tim 4:1
Agabus	Acts 11:28	Peter	2 Pet 2:1,2
Judas	Acts 15:32	Samuel	1 Sam 3:20
Silas	Acts 15:32	Shemaiah	2 Chr 12:5,7,15
Philip's Daughters	Acts 21:8,9	Silas	Acts 15:32
Paul	1 Tim 4:1	Uriah	Jer 26:20
Peter	2 Pet 2:1,2	Zadok	2 Sam 15:27
John	Rev 1:1	Zechariah	Zech 1:1
		Zephaniah	Zeph 1:1

BAD PROPHETS: Balaam (2 Pt. 2:15-16), Hananiah (Jer. 28:1,15), Zedekiah (1 Kings 22:10-11), Ahab (Jer. 29:21), Shemaiah (Jer. 29:24-32).

## ACTS 13:48 AND APPOINTED TO ETERNAL LIFE

Mark Moore

Acts 13:48b says, "All who were appointed for eternal life believed." That is a striking statement. It sounds as if one could only believe if s/he had been appointed or ordained by God to do so. In other words, this translation would make it appear that one must be predestined by God or s/he won't be able to come to faith. If that's true, however, how does such predestination play against texts like 2 Pet 3:9, "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance?" Isn't that a blatant contradiction? Either God ordains a select few to salvation and those individuals have no choice in the matter, or God desires all to come to repentance, but most willfully reject the offer. This is a thorny issue. Let's begin with what we know.

First, the context of Acts 13:48 indicates a dramatic step in God's plan to save the world. Paul has just finished his sermon in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. He concludes with a warning from Habakkuk 1:5. As in the days of the Babylonian captivity the Jews of Paul's time needed a strong warning to not reject God's offer to save. They would be held personally responsible should they neglect God's offer of salvation. When the sermon was over the people wanted some "buzz" sessions to discuss the matter further more (vs. 42). As a result, many accepted Paul's message and came to Christ (vs. 43). They were so successful, in fact, that scores of Gentiles wanted in on the action (vs. 44). This made the opposition -- Luke calls them "the Jews" -- jealous (vs. 45). And a brouhaha is beginning to brew.

In vs. 46 Paul deemed it necessary to offer his rationale for turning to the Gentiles. While this verse might not be on par with Jn. 3:16 it is a major turning point in Acts. Paul develops the theology about this in chapter 9-11 of Romans. A basic gospel formula would be: JEWISH REJECTION → GENTILE INCLUSION → JEWISH which leads to JEWISH ACCEPTANCE OR FURTHER REJECTION!! This was exactly how God planned it!

In vs. 47 Paul quotes Isaiah 49:6 as justification for what he is doing in his missionary work. It is interesting that Paul uses a text that was part of the "Servant" section of Isaiah and applies it to his mission work. He not only saw the Messiah fulfilling Scripture, he also saw his own work as part of that same saving work.

Now we come to our text. The Gentiles are glad to receive this news and responded to Christ (vs. 48a). There are a couple of points of Greek grammar to lay on the table and then we will be in a position to come to a definite conclusion. First, the verb "appointed," literally "inscribed" or "enrolled," is a perfect participle. It's pretty complex, but comes out something like this: "Those who had been enrolled in eternal life." Second, the word "believe" is the main verb of the sentence and actually comes first in the Greek text. This is a summary expression of Luke to indicate someone's conversion (cf. Acts 11:21, 24). Thus rather than the NIV's rendering, the text could be read, "And they believed, those were the ones who had been enrolled unto eternal life." Thus, their inscription into eternal life is based on their belief, not visa-versa. This translation retains the converts' freewill, thereby respecting the context of Paul's warning and their response to his preaching. As Marshall (231) says, "Whatever be the precise nuance of the words, there is no suggestion that they received eternal life independently of their own act of conscious faith." Make no mistake, God is the one who provides salvation; yet man is still responsible to partake in it.

# **ZEUS & HERMES--ACTS 14:12**

By Mark Moore

## **Zeus--Romans called him Jupiter.**

1. Represented as the son of Saturn and Ops.
2. Most powerful of all the ancient Gods.
3. Educated in a cave on Mount Ida, on Crete.
4. Nearly universal: Africa = Ammon; Babylon = Belus; Egypt = Osiris
5. Represented as sitting on a golden or an ivory throne, holding a thunderbolt in one hand and a scepter of cypress in the other.
6. All gods and men were subject to his dominion. Fate alone was exempt from his power.

## **Hermes--Romans called him Mercury.**

1. He was a messenger for the gods.
2. He presided over roads and all who used them--even thieves.
3. God of herdsmen.
4. Conducted souls to Hades.
5. He was a divine trickster and rogue--the Greek embodiment for cleverness.

## **Greek Religion**

1. A thing of everyday life as opposed to "other-world-liness."
2. Lacked any major religious code or ethical system.
3. Gods were anthropomorphic but were:
  - (a) Ageless and deathless.
  - (b) Amorphous--not limited to physical restrictions.
  - (c) Amoral--above man's ethics.
4. Greeks worshiped the "holiness of beauty" rather than the "beauty of holiness."
5. The Roman religions were simply an adaptation of the older Greek system.

## Graeco-Roman Deities

**Pauline Cycle of Missions**  
**According to Donald Hesselgrave**  
**Based on Acts 13-14**  
**Mark Scott**

- 1. The Missionaries Commissioned**
- 2. The Audience Contacted**
- 3. The Gospel Communicated**
- 4. The Hearers Converted**
- 5. The Believers Congregated**
- 6. The Faith Confirmed**
- 7. The Leaders Consecrated**
- 8. The Believers Commended**
- 9. The Relationships Continued**
- 10. The Sending Church Convened**

**NOTE: Also see Stott's good section on  
Paul's Missionary Policy--pp. 235-239.**

## Passages Predicting Gentile Inclusion

- Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."
- Deut 32:43 Rejoice, O nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants; he will take vengeance on his enemies and make atonement for his land and people.
- Psa 18:49 Therefore I will praise you among the nations, O LORD; I will sing praises to your name.
- Psa 67:2 That your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.
- Psa 98:2 The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations.
- Psa 117:1 Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples.
- Isa 2:2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD=S temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.
- Isa 11:10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.
- Isa 42:6 I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles.
- Isa 49:6 He says: It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.
- Isa 49:22 The Sovereign LORD says: See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.
- Isa 51:4 Listen to me, my people; hear me, my nation: The law will go out from me; my justice will become a light to the nations.
- Isa 52:10 The Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.
- Isa 60:3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- Joel 2:28 And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.
- Amos 9:11-12 In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and built it as it used to be so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name, declares the LORD, who will do these things.
- Mal 1:11 My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations.

**Galatians 2 is not Acts 15 but Acts 11**  
(According to H.I. Marshall & F.F. Bruce,  
Response by Mark Moore)

1. Gal 2:2 indicates a private rather than a public meeting.  
*However, cf. Acts 15:4, which seems to indicate a private meeting.*
2. Gal. 2 does not mention the conditions of Acts 15:29.  
*However, that was unnecessary since they probably received a copy of the letter (cf. Acts 15:23 & 16:16).*
3. It seems inconceivable that Peter and Barnabas would have refused to eat with the Gentiles after the Jerusalem council (Gal. 2:11-14).  
*True, but Peter has "fumbled" before. This is neither inconceivable for Peter or for most of us.*
4. Paul claims that this was only his second visit (Gal 1:17-18; 2:1).  
*It would be natural to omit the mention of the second visit (Acts 11:30) since he met no Apostles, and that is the point of his argument in Gal. 1.*
5. The letter of Acts 15:23 is not addressed to Galatia but only to Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.  
*Cilicia is very close to the region of Galatian and the principles would apply.*
6. Critics claim that Acts 15 contains historic improbabilities.  
*They are wrong . . . Pthhhh.*

**Difficulties with their view:**

1. This would give a date for Galatians that is much too early, Paul had not even been there yet, unless we suppose he went there between leaving Jerusalem (Acts 9) and Barnabas bringing him to Antioch (Acts 11).
2. Galatians 4:13 says Paul has made more than one trip to Galatia. Acts 14 & 16 seem to be the only two possibilities.
3. The similarities are too strong to believe they represent two councils.
4. Galatians 2 presents Paul as dominant over Barnabas. This "shift" didn't take place until Acts 13.
5. Galatians 2 presents Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles. But in Acts 11 he has not yet been on any Gentiles missions.

## ARE WE STILL UNDER THE LAW?

By Mark Moore

### I. ARGUMENTS FOR (With Response Below):

1. ***Jesus was a Jew and kept Jewish law and traditions and feasts***, (excluding, of course, added teachings of the Pharisees.) True, Jesus lived under the Old Testament. The New Testament did not take place until His death, burial and Resurrection (c.f. Galatians 4:4,5).
2. ***If you take away law, you have "law-less-ness" which is strictly forbidden in both Old and New Testaments***. We are not governed by law. However, that is not to say that we are not governed. We are led by the Spirit of Christ, and prompted by love. And this is magnificently more powerful to change one's life than law ever was.
3. ***Order--Under the law we know what is expected of us***. Under the New Covenant, without law, we also know exactly what is expected--Love God and love your neighbor (Romans 13:9, 10; Galatians 5:14). And the advantage of this system is that there are no loop-holes in love like there are in law.
4. ***The imperatives of the N.T. are simply new laws to be kept***. Indeed, we are told, imperatively, to do certain things and to act certain ways. But the appeal to obedience in the N.T. is not law, but relationship. We do not keep N.T. commands in order to earn merit or to escape punishment. (Which are the only two reasons one keeps law.) But we keep them because of the relationship we have with Jesus as slave and master. One more note: Our obedience to these commands does not "make or break" our salvation. It does, however, reflect the depth of our love for our master and/or the level of our Christian maturity.
5. ***"Faith without works is dead."*** Indeed, but a clear distinction must be drawn between works of faith and works of law. A work of faith is what I do in response to my relationship with Jesus as Lord. A work of law is what I do either to escape punishment or to earn merit.
6. ***In Acts 15:20, 23-29, which is said to be the Apostolic decision against the law, we find four laws given to the Gentiles***. These are not laws given to the Gentiles, because there is no punishment involved in breaking them. (And law always involves punishment, or penalty.) In other words, their salvation is not dependent upon keeping these laws. So what are these? They are commands which, when kept, would keep the Jews who might become Christians, from being offended by their potential brothers.
7. ***In Acts 16:3, just after the Jerusalem Council, Paul circumcised Timothy***. Thus Paul still kept the law of circumcision. It is clearly stated that he did this, not to keep the law, but to keep potential Jewish converts from being offended.

8. ***In Matthew 5:17, Jesus said, "I have not come to abolish the law, but to fulfill it."*** Jesus fulfilled it in two ways, (1) by obeying it completely, and (2) by retiring it. In the same way as the apple blossom is fulfilled by the apple, and then falls off, so also the law was fulfilled by the sacrifice of Christ and passed quietly into inactivity.

## II. ARGUMENTS AGAINST:

1. One must keep all the law to be justified by it, which has never been done, except by Jesus, (Galatians 3:10-12; 5:3).
2. The law can only condemn. It never makes one righteous (Romans 3:19, 20; 7:10,11; Galatians 2:16-21; 3:10,11,21).
3. The law arouses sinful passion (Romans 7:5).
4. Law produces sin by informing us of our sin and educating us further as to what sin is and how to do it (Romans 3:20; 7:7, 8).
5. The law is slavery, grace is freedom (Galatians 4:9-11, 21-26; 5:1).
6. Those under law are severed from Christ (Galatians 4:11; 5:4).
7. We have been released from the law (Romans 3:21; 8:1-3).
8. We died, thus are free from the law (Romans 6:4-7; 7:1, 4; Galatians 2:18-20).
9. Faith preceded and superseded the law (Galatians 3:15-25).
10. Only faith can produce righteousness (Galatians 3:5-9).
11. Christ abolished [KATARGEO = Render powerless], the law (Ephesians 2:15).
12. The law was fulfilled by grace, and thus retired (Romans 3:31; Matthew 5:17).
13. We are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8-10; Acts 15:11).

## HOW SHALL WE HANDLE ACTS 15:28-29

By Mark Moore

*Acts 15:28-29 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell. (cf. 15:20 & 21:25)*

Does this list of prohibitions, approved by the Holy Spirit through the Jerusalem Council, still apply to Christians today? Is this "Law" for Gentile Christians? Are we still obligated to follow this? The answer depends on what this list is and there are several suggestions:

1. **Compromise**: Compromise is often a good way of settling a dispute. And these four obligations were those that the Pharisees expected of a proselyte at the gate. Hence, one might come to the conclusion that James is suggesting a compromise: "Alright, the Gentiles don't have to get circumcised, but they do have to follow the minimum requirements of a proselyte at the gate."

However, the issue here is not merely about circumcision, but about keeping law as a system of salvation. Are we saved by grace through faith? Or does grace only supplement what we lack in keeping Jewish law? The decisive answer of the council is that we are saved by grace alone. We sense that in Acts 15, but it is spelled out clearly in Galatians 2, where Paul describes the victory of the Jerusalem council without even mentioning these four requirements which are only incidental to the decision.

2. **Noahic commands**: Some have suggested that these four requirements are a condensed version of the Noahic commands. Supposedly, God gave seven civil guidelines to Noah's family after the flood. Rabbi Johanan lists them in the Talmud (*b Sanhedrin* 56a): Prohibition of (1) Blasphemy, (2) worship of other gods, (3) murder, (4) incest and adultery, (5) theft, (6) eating flesh of animals before it dies, and (7) they were positively commanded to establish courts of justice. These laws, given to the only family to survive the flood, would, of course, apply to all Gentiles.

If this is so, then all Gentiles, whether Christian or not, would be expected by God to obey these commands. This would be even more true of Christians who strive to serve the one true God. However, these laws are based on Jewish Oral tradition not the Scriptures themselves. In addition, only two of the four ordinances given here correlate with the seven Noahic laws. Furthermore, in a small, but insidious way, it submits to legalistic salvation.

3. **These were major temptations for Gentiles within their culture of idolatry**: James may be suggesting that these new converts "watch their step." After all, these four prohibitions can all be connected with the temple worship of pagan idols. Paul will later discuss at great length eating meat sacrificed to idols (Rom 14; 1 Cor 8:4-10, 13; 10:1-22). And Jesus, in his revelation to John, condemns the churches at both Pergamum and Thyatira for their idolatry which manifested itself in both sexual immorality and eating meat sacrificed to idols (Rev 2:14, 20).

However, this issue of Acts 15 is not morality, but about the Gentiles' relation to the Jewish body of believers with which they have become a part. Any interpretation that falls short of recognizing this mutual relationship of Jews and Gentiles, will lack appropriate application.

4. **These prohibitions would keep the Gentiles from offending the Jews:** Through the Babylonian captivity, God cured the Jews of their penchant for idolatry. In fact, they learned to abhor it as much as God did. Now, if Jews and Gentiles were going to get along in this new Body, they had to take into account their cultural peculiarities. The Jews despised every aspect of idolatry that had become such an intrinsic part of the Gentile daily life. These commands are not designed as requirements for salvation, but as cultural requirements for unity.<sup>2</sup>

This interpretation makes sense in context. For after these four prohibitions were introduced in verse 20, the next verse says, "For Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath" (Acts 15:21). In other words, since Moses has gained such prominence all over the Empire, the Gentile brothers must be cautious not to offend the Jews all around them. Otherwise, the unity of the body would be broken.

So, can Christians today ignore these prohibitions? Obviously we live in a different society.<sup>3</sup> We cannot say that "Moses has been preached in every city" of America. Nor need we worry about buying meat sacrificed to idols at the grocery store. With the exception of fornication,<sup>4</sup> the offence of these four practices was not in the activity itself but in its connection to idolatry.

In fact, Paul even gave permission to eat meat sacrificed to idols, if one did it without any thought, superstition or connection with pagan worship (1 Cor 8:7-8; Rom 14). Therefore, one doesn't need to worry about having a rare steak or indulging in blood pudding which hardly connotes any connection with pagan worship.

What we need to be concerned with here is the principle of not offending brothers of a different cultural group. For instance, Anglos must not smoke in front of Hispanic brethren who consider it a sin. Black churches should be cautious with their women speaking in public services of Islamic converts. Younger Christians should take care that their energetic worship styles don't offend older believers. The examples could be multiplied. This principle can hardly be overstated.

These prohibitions are not intended as a Gentile "law" required for admission into the church. They are guidelines to protect the unity of the body, the purity of believers and the witness in the community. Because our culture has changed, these four guidelines are mostly irrelevant. But each generation of Christians, in the cultural settings they find themselves, must carefully evaluate and abstain from those activities which could potentially cause a rift in the unity of the Body of Christ.

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<sup>2</sup>Leviticus 17-18 lays down the same requirements for resident aliens so that they would not defile the Jewish community with pagan sacrifices (17:8), blood (17:10-14), strangled meat (17:13), and illicit sex (18:6-23).

<sup>3</sup>The Western text demonstrates that the culture had changed and the text was altered to reflect those changes. These four cultural commands were modified as ethical commands: (1) No Idolatry, (2) no sexual immorality, (3) no murder (blood), (4) do not do to anyone what you would not wish done to yourself." (Pohill, *Acts*, p. 331).

<sup>4</sup>It is inconceivable that fornication would be permissible to a Christian under any circumstances. It is not that our salvation is tied to this prohibition, but it is impossible to honor Christ through this activity.

### Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Acts 15:36-18:22 Estimated: 2600 miles, approximately 3 years in duration. Planted at least 6 churches.

Place	Location	Events
1. Antioch of Syria	15:36	Plans to return to churches
2. Syria & Cilicia	15:41	Strengthened churches
3. Derbe & Lystra	16:1	Obtained & circumcised Timothy
4. Phrygia & Galatia	16:6	Passed through, wanting to go to Asia Minor.
5. Mysia	16:7	Passed through, wanting to go to Bithynia
6. Troas	16:8	Paul received Macedonian call.
7. Samathrace	16:11	Passed through on route to Philippi
8. Neapolis	16:11	Passed through on route to Philippi
9. Philippi	16:12	Lydia. Fortune teller. Jailer.
10. Amphipolis & Apollonia	17:1	Traveled through
11. Thessalonica	17:1	Preached 3 Sabbaths. Jason's pledge. Rejected.
12. Berea	17:10	Preached 3 Sabbaths. Jason's pledge. Rejected. Noble-minded people examined the Scriptures daily. Rejected.
13. Athens	17:15	Paul preached to idolatrous city. Won few converts. Laughed out of town.
14. Corinth	18:1	Friendship with Aquila and Priscilla. Paul stayed 1 1/2 years. Much controversy.
15. Cenchrea	18:18	Haircut because of vow.
16. Ephesus	18:19	Would return if Lord wills.
17. Caesarea	18:22	Landed here.
18. Jerusalem	18:22	Went "up" to great church.
19. Antioch of Syria	18:22	Went "down" to report to Antioch.

## When the Holy Spirit Hinders Missions

Acts 16:6-7

Mark Scott

1. Acts teaches that the Holy Spirit leads the church in its mission (1:8; 2:17; 6:10; 7:51; 8:15-17; 8:29; 9:31; 10:44-48; 11:15-17; 13:2-3)
2. So it is most odd that the Holy Spirit would "hinder" (NIV- kept) that work (16:6-7). But the Holy Spirit did so only temporarily and only to further define the geographical expansion of the church.
3. It would seem that Paul and Silas desired to move west toward Troas and then northward toward the Black Sea (Bithynia). Perhaps Paul had in mind to make a complete circle as he headed back to Antioch of Syria. This would give both southern and northern Galatia exposure to the gospel. Perhaps he intended to evangelize Russia to the north or head eastward toward Iran, Iraq, India, and the Far East.
4. But the Holy spirit somehow "kept" (vs. 6) and "would not allow" (vs. 7). KJV—"forbidden" and "suffered not;" NASV – "forbidden" and "not permit;" Phillips – "prevented" and "not allow;" RSV – "forbidden" and "not allow;" TEV – "did not let" and "not allow" him to complete these plans. How did the Holy Spirit do this?
  - a. Through audible voice (8:29)
  - b. Through a prophet (11:28; 13:1)
  - c. Through a vision (16:8,9)
  - d. Through an inner compulsion or voice (Stott, 260-261; cf. Reese's good caution on p. 569, ftnt. 22).
  - e. Through natural phenomena

We are not told how. But we can be sure of some things:

- a. Paul and Silas felt sure that they were not to go forward with their plans.
  - b. Paul and Silas were not sure about where to go next. Thus, the need for the Macedonian vision.
  - c. Having the Macedonian vision did not tell them everything. They still had to "conclude" (vs. 10), i.e. "to put together with the use of the mind," what God wanted them to do.
5. Some suggest that the different expressions "Holy Spirit" (vs. 6) and "Spirit of Jesus" (vs. 7) would indicate different methods of revelation, but this pushes the language hard and fails to recognize synonymous expressions.
  6. Maybe the Holy Spirit wanted this to be Peter's territory (cf. 2 Pet. 1:1).

7. At least the text suggests that Christians should be more sensitive to the direction of the Holy Spirit whatever form that direction takes. And, it may also suggest some mystery in His leading. Notice that all the trinity is involved in this: Spirit (vs. 6), Jesus (vs. 7), and God (vs. 10).
8. All Christians living in the West should thank God for the Macedonian vision. The result was that the gospel went to Europe, from which most of our ancestors came. This gave those who live in the West first chance at the gospel. It's possible that we could have been spirit worshipers, communists, etc.
9. This text is also insightful about God's will for our lives. Paul and Silas did not sit around waiting for a voice of the clouds to tell them where to work. They thought, planned, and evidently prayed. If God wanted to change their plans they were spongy in His hands. We've already been commissioned. Let's get up and go. Then let's pray, "God, if you are not in this then lead us elsewhere."

Philipi

## Free Press for the Gospel?

Acts 16:17-18

Mark Scott

1. As the gospel spreads to Europe, Satan tries to stop its growth. Already Lydia has been converted (16:15) and others seem to be following her example (16:16). Satan uses an abused girl (at least others were making profit by her) to hinder the progress of the gospel.
2. The slave girl (*paidisken*) had a "python spirit" by which she predicted the future:
  - a. In Greek mythology this referred to the snake that guarded the Delphic Oracle and was slain by Apollo.
  - b. Later the word came to refer to any spirit of divination.
  - c. Finally it was used by Plutarch to refer to a ventriloquist.

Probably some O.T. concept is intended by Luke. The O.T. condemns fortunetelling, soothsaying, familiar spirits, etc., and that's most likely the meaning here.

3. The problem with this text comes in vs. 17-18. What is so wrong with what she says in vs. 17? And, why does Paul put up with such antagonism when he evidently could have exorcised this spirit earlier than he did?
4. I have little to offer as a reason for the latter question. Maybe Paul delayed his exorcism so as to frame up a more dramatic power encounter. Perhaps he worked patiently (after all he was more sad than mad) hoping the girl would be converted by natural means. We should note that Luke never actually tells if she was converted. We might assume so, but Luke hastens to the arrest and imprisonment of Paul and Silas and the dramatic conversion of the jailer.
5. But what's the problem with vs. 17? Isn't what she says true? Why not get a little free press for the gospel? Maybe deep down in her heart she wants to believe. Let me suggest four reasons as to why Paul is threatened by what she says:
  - a. Wrong Content: The text literally says, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you 'a' way to be saved." We have to be careful how much we press the presence or absence of the definite article. But, is she syncretistic in looking at Christianity as one of the many ways to be saved.
  - b. Wrong Tone: We can't critique this because we were not there. Perhaps she said it sarcastically in such a way as to make light of the content of the preaching.
  - c. Wrong Source: Maybe Paul does what he does because he doesn't want any free press for the enemy. Like Jesus, the best thing Paul could do with a demon is to hush it immediately. Having Satan say good things about the missionaries would be like the Democratic Party asking Rush Limbaugh to be their key-note speaker at their

convention. "Perhaps the ulterior motive was to discredit the gospel by associating it in the people's minds with the occult" (Stott, 264).

- d. Wrong Audience: Would a Gentile crowd understand the significance of "Most High God?" They may have written off this terminology as nonsense. Maybe it opened the possibility of too much misunderstanding given their polytheistic background.
6. Regardless of our understanding we do know that Paul released her from her oppression, and that the owners and the authorities were upset. The fallen nature of man is indicated in not rejoicing when others are helped.

## ROMAN PRISONS

By Mark Moore

### I. General Facts

#### A. Three Divisions of a Roman Prison

1. *Communiore* = Low Security
2. *Uteriore* = Maximum Security (Paul and Silas, Acts 16:23-24)
3. *Tullianum* = Dungeon--the place of execution (Perhaps Paul's final Roman imprisonment, 2 Tim 4:9-12).

#### B. Punishment

1. Whipping and prison may be part of the interrogation but not part of punishment.
2. The equivalent of prison was exile.
3. Various kinds of punishment:
  - a. Financial: fines, sold into slavery (an indentured servant).
  - b. Cast Out: condemned to work in the mines for life, exile.
  - c. Beatings: rods, flogged (which preceded most capital punishment).
  - d. Execution: Condemned to fight in the gladiatorial arena, beheaded, crucified.

### II. Imprisonments in Acts

ACTS	IMPRISONED BY	CITY	PRISON
4-5	Sanhedrin	Jerusalem	Gazith
12	Herod	Jerusalem	Praetorium
16	Magistrates (praetors)	Philippi	City Jail
22(23)	Roman Commander	Jerusalem	Tower of Antonia
28:16,30	Festus/Paul's Appeal to Caesar	Rome	House Arrest

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## Things That Make You Go Hmmm (Acts 16:25-40)

By Mark Scott & Mark Moore

There are a lot of peculiar things taking place in this story that simply defy any naturalistic explanation. Either Luke made up a whale of a fish-story or God's hand really does manipulate human events.

1. Singing in jail (v. 16)--You expect to hear many sounds in a prison, clanging bars, angry shouts, footsteps of guards falling heavy on concrete, but the melodious praise of God just doesn't seem to fit.
2. "Captive" audience (v. 25)--These inmates can't help but hear the Psalms of these preachers reverberate off the cold stone walls. This was undoubtedly a breath of fresh air in an otherwise dank and dark place.
3. "Timing" of the earthquake (v.26)--It is likely that Paul and Silas are laying face down in these stocks trying to raise their praise to God by bouncing these songs off the ground. How strange, indeed, that the tremor strikes precisely during the third verse of How Great Thou Art. It is almost as if God is joining in the refrain.
4. A sleeping jailer (v. 27)--The Code of Justinian declared that Roman guards who failed to keep their prisoners were to receive the prisoner's sentence in themselves. That was enough incentive to keep most awake at their posts. Perhaps Paul and Silas' Psalms were lullabies that put this rough-and-tumble jailer to sleep. Or maybe he trusted in the tempered steel doors. Or could it be that God caused the slumber? Nevertheless, the earthquake shook him awake. Naturally, seeing the open doors and loosed chains, he would take the honorable way out, at least for a Roman, and kill himself, sparing the magistrates this painful duty.
5. No prisoner escaped (v. 28)--Now we go from odd to downright weird. These men with sentences on their heads and open doors before them sat spell-bound. It is almost as if they felt the hand of God on their shoulders staying their escape.
6. Trembling before Paul and Silas (v. 29)--Suddenly the prisoners become judges.
7. What must I do to be saved? (v. 30)--This is a strange questions since he had just been saved from certain death by his own hand and/or that of his commanding officer. He realizes that there is a fate worse than death and that these two men whom he and his ilk had beaten and chained were representatives of the living God! Talk about being on the wrong side of the fence!
8. Release from prison (v. 30)--Paul and Silas are treated as honored guests at this man's home in the middle of the night. For a pair of Jewish prisoners, that was certainly unprecedented.
9. Back in prison (v. 35)--How ironic that the preachers who set this man free must now be bound by him again! How that must have hurt his heart.
10. Refused to be released (v. 37)--When most of us would scamper off, considering ourselves lucky with the narrow escape from injustice, Paul refuses to allow God's name to be slandered by leaving without a public apology. He is convinced that God orchestrated these events not the magnates of Philippi.

***Household Baptisms in Acts  
Did They Include Infants?***

<b>Text:</b>	<b>Household of:</b>	<b>Activity:</b>
10:44-48	Cornelius	Speaking in tongues
16:14,15	Lydia	-----
16:30-33	Philippian Jailer	Belief in Jesus A response to the spoken word
1 Corinthians 1:16; 16:15	Stephanas	Devoted themselves to ministry

## ATHENS

By Mark Moore

1. Athens was a powerful city-state of Ancient Greece which derived its name from its patron goddess Athena, the Greek goddess of war. It was founded by Theseus.
2. Its first inhabitants appeared to have lived on the acropolis, the 512' hill with access to water and easily defensible.
3. Its best years were between 443 and 429 B.C. It was then ruled by democracy under Pericles. It flourished in art, drama, literature, architecture, philosophy, rhetoric, ethics and history. It represented the pinnacle of humanism of ancient times.
4. The city was in decline in Paul's day. It's population was perhaps as few as 10,000-15,000. Today Athens boasts several million citizens.
5. Athens was the educational center of the first century. The two other greatest universities were found in Alexandria and Tarsus. It was the home of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Epicurus, and Zeno.
6. Attica is a dry region, but there is sufficient rainfall to produce olive groves and vineyards which supply the major exports.
7. The port of Athens, and the basis of her navy, was located five miles S.W. of the city at Piraeus. It was joined to the city by a corridor 250 ft. wide with walls on each side about 50 feet high. This corridor was lined with idols, which the ancient historian, Pausanias, says were "altars to gods called unknown." This aligns with Paul's statement of Acts 17:23 about an altar to "an unknown god" [note the singular].
8. The agora was the center of the educational, religious, commercial and political life of the city. Excavations have revealed its structures, which substantially agree with the description of Pausanias. They were as follows:
  - a. On the East: Stoa (porch) of Attalos & Odeion--Music Hall.
  - b. On the South: Two parallel stoas.
  - c. On the West,
    - (1) The Tholos was the meeting place of the executive committees of the 500 member Athenian Council.
    - (2) Bouleuterion was the meeting place of the general council.
    - (3) The Metroon was the sanctuary of the Mother of all gods.
    - (4) The Temple of Apollo Patroos
    - (5) The Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios.
  - d. The Temple of Ares was near the middle of the agora in the open area.
9. The Areopagus, directly south of the agora was the court of the day. Its Roman name was Mars Hill. It is 377' of solid rock to the west of the acropolis.
10. The Acropolis, to the S.E. of the agora stood atop a prominent hill 512'.
  - a. Its main attraction was the magnificent Parthenon. It had a gold and ivory statue of Athena which stood 20' high. It is 238' x 111'. The outer colonnade had 46 columns, 34' high. At their base are depicted various mythological scenes. It was at its peak when Paul saw it but was still 400 years old.
  - b. On the south side stood the was the small temple of Wingless Victory.
  - c. The Erechtheion was on the N. side of the hill, erected in honor of Erechtheus, supposedly the first king of Athens and a semi-divine hero.
  - d. The Prytaneion, the "town hall," was on the northern slope of the hill and was the keeper of the sacred fire of the city.
  - e. Further north was the forum, built by gifts from the Caesars, Julius and Augustus.
  - f. S.E. of the Acropolis was the largest temple in all Greece. It was the temple of Olympian Zeus, known as the Olympeion. When Paul was there it was yet unfinished.

## STOICS AND EPICUREANS

By Mark Moore & Mark Scott

### I. Epicureans

- A. Background: These philosophers followed the teachings of Epicurus, 341-270 B.C. of the Athenian colony of Samos. He taught his students in his garden, and they had to learn their doctrines by heart. He had more devoted followers and bitter enemies than any of the early philosophers. No other figure of importance arose from his school, although some of the writings of Lucretius (94-55 B.C.) still survive.
- B. Major Beliefs:
  - 1. Pleasure is the highest end of living (this would include good pleasure, such as generosity, patriotism, etc. and not just hedonistic pleasure). Epicurus, "By pleasure we mean the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul."
  - 2. Matter is eternal--this world was not created by deity. "Nothing can ever be created by divine power out of nothing."
  - 3. Death is final--thus no hope. They denied the immortality of the soul. In addition, they denied any future retribution--judgment. Lucretius, "If anyone thinks that nothing can be known, he does not know whether even this can be known, since he admits that he knows nothing."
  - 4. Acquiring friends is vital--perhaps this desire is due to the despair caused by #3.
  - 5. Denied the providential control over human affairs. We have freewill. "Gods might exist but they are too removed from us."
  - 6. Sought to debunk traditional religion with its oracles, divination, magic, etc. "He saw religion as a source of fear; therefore the banishing of the gods brought peace and the possibility of a good life" (Ferguson, Backgrounds of Early Christianity, p. 298).
  - 7. Perception is the basis of all reason--a pure empirical epistemology.
- C. This is not to be misunderstood with modern Hedonism.
  - 1. Epicurus would forego pleasure which would lead to further pain. For instance, he would avoid getting drunk because of the hangover the next day.
  - 2. He places pleasure of the soul/mind above that of the body. In his analysis there was kinetic (active) and static pleasure, both of which are evaluated by the following three criteria: (1) intensity, (2) duration, and (3) purity (its absence of pain).
- D. Diogenes (c. A.D. 200) aptly summed up Epicureanism: "Nothing to fear in God; Nothing to feel in Death; Good [pleasure] can be attained; Evil [pain] can be endured."

### II. Stoics

- A. Background--This philosophy came from Zeno of Cyprus (335-263 B.C.) who died at the age of 96. He regularly held his classes in the porches of the market place, called STOA, specifically the Stoa Poikile--the painted porch--thus came the name "Stoics." [He was the first to scientifically study Greek grammar and vocabulary.]
- B. Famous Stoics:
  - 1. Aratus of Soli (c. 315-240 B.C.) was a stoic quoted by Paul in Acts 17:28, from the opening lines of Phaenomena, which, along with Homer was read by all Greek students--it dealt with the phenomenon of seasons and astronomy, so vital to both agriculture and travel.
  - 2. Brutus, the man who killed Julius Caesar. Shakespeare does an interesting character study of this man.
  - 3. Stoicism was well known in Tarsus. At least six famous stoics came from Tarsus.

4. Seneca (c. 1-65 A.D.), was a contemporary of Saul. He was from the equestrian order and the brother of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia who is mentioned in Acts 18:12. He was the tutor of the young Nero, but finally resigned in despair as Nero "went bad." "Seneca's life fell far short of his exhortations to others: after heaping slavish flattery on the living Claudius, he poisoned his memory with malicious satire; if he did not connive at the crimes of Nero, he did not restrain them; while preaching an indifference to material wealth he allowed himself to be enriched while in office; his writings describe in detail moral impurities and violence, so that whatever their author's practice the influence of some of his writings would have stimulated baser instincts" (Ferguson, p. 290). Even so, his writings are closer to Christian teachings than any other philosophy of the day. Tertullian calls him "always our Seneca" (On the Soul, 20). See J. B. Lightfoot, "St. Paul and Seneca" in Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (London 1913; repr. Grand Rapids, 1953), 270-333) for a comparison of the two. Seneca was conservative, in that he proposed to teach young men to worship in piety and not in superstitions. He was also an annihilationist.
  5. Epictetus (c. A.D. 55-135) was another notable stoic of the first century whose writings are still extant.
  6. Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180) was a stoic and an emperor whose persecution of Christians was among the fiercest and most bloody. His Meditations are extant--a collection of proverbial, miscellaneous musings.
- C. Major Beliefs
1. The world was created by Zeus.
  2. All things were governed by fates--determinism.
  3. Self-denial contributes to the highest end in life. There was a desire to suppress all passions. One was to show indifference to either pleasure or pain and mastery over all lusts. In such indifference one found contentment, thus self-control was a supreme virtue. Basically, they were not happy campers. They were the Pharisees of the philosophers. Apathy made them lose their sympathy.
  4. The soul was not immortal but existed until the destruction of the universe. At that time it was either destroyed (some said), or absorbed into the divine essence (others said).
  5. Nothing is immaterial, even the Gods (e.g. the Mormons).
  6. "The logos became another word in the Stoic system for god, since it maintains order" (Ferguson, p. 284).
  7. Stoics used an allegorical method of interpretation.
  8. Knowledge is empirically gained--they believed in *tabula rosa* of the soul.
- II Relationship between Epicureans, Stoics, & Christians
- A. Similarities between the Stoics and Epicureans
1. They were the two dominant philosophical schools of the day.
  2. Both sought to liberate man from fate. Epicureans, by denying the validity of fate; Stoics, by not responding (at least externally and emotionally) to the consequences of fate, either pleasurable or painful.
  3. Both sought to be self-sufficient and unaffected by externals.
  4. Both had a primary emphasis on ethics.
- B. Similarities between Epicureans and Christians
1. Both had a tight-knit community, even using similar terminology.
  2. Both were accused of being atheists.

3. Both sought the pleasure of the soul over the pleasure of the body.
- C. Similarities between Stoics and Christians:
1. Stoics used some of the same terminology as Christians. For instance, both talked of Logos, Spirit, conscience, virtue, self-sufficiency, freedom of speech, reasonable service, etc. "The biblical injunctions concerning the units of society (Eph. 5:21-6:9; Col. 3:18-4:1; 1 Peter 2:13-3:7; etc.) in both form (the reference to stations in society) and content (e.g., "it is fitting") show Stoic influence.
  2. The similarities go deeper than individual items to a general atmosphere:
    - a. humankind's persistent evil.
    - b. the need for self-examination.
    - c. humanity's kinship with the divine.
    - d. denial of the world's values.
    - e. emphasis on inner freedom from external circumstances.
    - f. The Stoic natural theology, transmitted via Hellenistic Judaism (cf. Wisdom of Solomon 13-14), influenced Romans 1-2 and Acts 17" (Ferguson, p. 293).
- D. Differences between Stoics and Christians: (These outweigh the similarities)
1. To the Stoics, god was immanent, but not personal. Stoics were pantheists, not believing in a personal creation.
  2. Christians viewed the world as purposeful with both a beginning and an end--the Stoics would own none of this.
  3. Christianity appealed to the masses; stoicism was for the elite.
  4. Stoicism talked about ethics from a philosophical point of view, Christianity implemented ethics by connecting its injunctions with a personal absolute Divine. Thus, conscience in stoicism was not nearly as developed as it was in Christianity.
  5. Stoicism had not personal immortality--the "divine spark" in each of us would be absorbed back into the Whole.
  6. Christianity is optimistic and full of joy. Stoics subjugated emotional expression, including joy and hope.
  7. Christians were motivated and driven by AGAPE; Stoics were motivated and driven by self-respect.

NOTE: Paul knows that false knowledge about God leads to idolatry and bad ethics. Paul fights them on their own turf by quoting their prophets. You can see their offspring today in philosophy, psychology, New Age, evolutionary science, and secular humanism.

**Are You a Stoic or an Epicurean?**  
By Mark Moore

Mark the statement you agree with the most:

1.    \_\_\_ Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.  
      \_\_\_ If you don't love anything, you won't be sad if you lose it.
2.    \_\_\_ Matter is eternal.  
      \_\_\_ The world was created.
3.    \_\_\_ Once you die, there ain't no more.  
      \_\_\_ The soul is immortal.
4.    \_\_\_ Human beings have freewill, we control our own destinies.  
      \_\_\_ What God ordains to be, will be -- we can't change our destiny.
5.    \_\_\_ Religion is a bunch of superstition, fear, and magic.  
      \_\_\_ Traditional religion is revealed to us by God.
6.    \_\_\_ We know things through the empirical sciences.  
      \_\_\_ We know things through revelation and reason/logic.
7.    \_\_\_ To be truly happy in life we ought to party, hardy!  
      \_\_\_ Self-denial contributes to the highest end in life.
8.    \_\_\_ Happiness is found in friendships and pleasures.  
      \_\_\_ Contentment is found in indifference -- if you don't care you won't be disappointed.
9.    \_\_\_ We will be happiest living in an authentic community.  
      \_\_\_ We will be happiest being independent and self-reliant.
10.   \_\_\_ Pleasures of the soul outweigh pleasures of the body.  
      \_\_\_ Pleasure and pain should be treated with equal indifference.

(The first statements are ideas of the Epicureans, the second of the Stoics. Count the number of each you had and record them below.)

Stoic \_\_\_                      Epicurean \_\_\_

Read through Acts 17:22-31 and place verse numbers by the above statements that Paul addresses in his sermon on Mars Hill.

## **Paul's Challenge to the Greek Thinkers on Mars Hill**

By Terry Bowland

The Apostle Paul is making his presentation of the God of the Bible, challenged five of the Greeks basic presuppositions in his message in Acts 17:22-31.

1. God is the Creator of the Universe (17:24): This is directly opposed to the Naturalism of the Epicureans and the Panthesm of the Stoics.
2. God is the Sustainer of Life (17:24): This is opposed to the Monism of Greek thought. God is a God who gives to creation-- not to himself.
3. God is the Ruler of all the nations (17:26-28a): This opposes the concept of the cyclical view of history. History has purpose--to discover and to know the real living God.
4. God is the Father of all human beings Greek superiority as well as the whole concept of idolatry. If we are God's offspring, how can our God be made of gold, silver and stone?
5. God is the judge of the world (17:30-31): This opposes the Fatalism of the Greeks. Natural revelation is now being replaced with the true message of Christ. There is a chance to change in life. Repentance is held out to those trapped in the confines of fatalism.

## Corinth in the Time of Paul

## 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS IN RELATION TO ACTS

By Mark Moore

- 1. Paul sent Titus from Ephesus to Corinth with a copy of 1 Corinthians in the Spring of A.D. 55:** *1 Cor 16:5-8 After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you--for I will be going through Macedonia. Perhaps I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey, wherever I go. I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost.*
- 2. Paul writes a painful letter to the Corinthian Church:** *2 Cor 2:3 I wrote as I did so that when I came I should not be distressed by those who ought to make me rejoice. I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy.*
- 3. Paul takes off for Macedonia, hoping to meet up with Titus:** *Acts 20:1 When the uproar had ended, Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia.*
- 4. Paul stopped at Troas to preach the gospel:** *2 Cor 2:12-13 Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said good-bye to them and went on to Macedonia.*
- 5. Paul finally meets up with Titus and gets a good report about the Corinthians' repentance:** *2 Cor 7:5-9 For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn--conflicts on the outside, fears within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever. Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it--I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while--yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.*
- 6. Paul writes 2 Corinthians and sends it ahead with Titus from Macedonia:** *2 Cor 7:13 By all this we are encouraged. In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you.*

## **GALLIO--ACTS 18:12**

- 1. Proconsul, most probably 51-52 A.D.**
- 2. Real name: Marcus Annaeus Novatus.**
- 3. Took the name of his adopted father, Lucius Junius Gallio upon coming to Rome.**
- 4. Younger brother of Seneca the Stoic philosopher and tutor of Nero as a child.**
- 5. Noted for his mild disposition:  
Seneca, Natural Questions, IV.  
Statius, Silvae, II. 7. 32.  
Seneca, Epistolae Morales, CIV.**
- 6. Achaia just recently returned to the rule of a proconsul, probably in conjunction with the Jewish expulsion from Rome.**

## Paul's Third Missionary Journey

### Paul's Third Missionary Journey

Acts 18:23-21:17. Estimated: 2700 miles, approximately 4 years in duration. Planted no new churches as the record goes.

Place	Location	Events
1. Antioch of Syria	18:23	Spent some time here
2. Galatia & Phrygia	18:23	Strengthened churches.
3. Ephesus	19:1	Holy Spirit & 12 disciples. School of Tyrannus. Miracles. Riot with Demetrius.
4. Troas	2 Cor. 2:12-13	Couldn't wait for Titus.
5. Macedonia	20:1	Exhorted brethren.
6. Philippi	20:5	Sailed from here.
7. Troas	20:6	Broke bread. Paul preached. Eutychus
8. Assos	20:13-14	Paul got on board ship.
9. Chios & Samos	20:15	Places where they stopped
10. Miletus	20:15	Gave address to Ephesian elders
11. Cos, Rhodes, and Patara	21:1	islands where they stopped
12. Cyprus	21:3	Passed by
13. Tyre	21:3	Ship unloaded cargo. Paul visited friends.
14. Ptolemais	21:7	Greeted brethren.
15. Caesarea	21:8	Visited Philip. Agabus' prophecy.
16. Jerusalem	21:15	Paul follows elder's advice. Paul is arrested.

## **Evangelism in Corinth and Ephesus Acts 18 and 19 Compared**

1. Paul first goes to the synagogue with serious minded persuasion (18:4-6; 19:8).
2. Rejected in the synagogue, Paul turned to the Gentiles by moving the "Base of Operation" to the home of Titius Justus (18:6-7, Corinth) and the School of Tyrannus (19:9, Ephesus).
3. Many people believed (18:8; 19:10).
4. Paul's work miraculously confirmed (18:9-10; 19:11-12).
5. Roman authorities dismissed charges against Paul and the Christians, Gallio in Corinth (18:12-17) and the Town Clerk in Ephesus (19:35ff).

Taken from John Stott, The Spirit the Church and the World, Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1990, pp.294-295.

## A Sketch of Ephesus

by Mark Moore

1. The fourth largest city of the Empire behind Rome, Alexandria and Antioch.
2. The Temple of Diana, destroyed by fire on the day of Alexander the Great's birth, was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. Although there are no remains of it today, it was four times the size of the Agora of Athens.
  - a. The Platform=239' x 418'; with 10 steps leading up to the temple
  - b. The Temple = 180' x 377'
  - c. The Temple was surrounded by a large colonnade which had 117, 60' columns, each 6' in diameter, which held up the roof.
  - d. 36 of these columns were sculptured at the base with life-sized figures. White, blue, red and yellow marble were used, as well as gold.
  - e. Diana of Ephesus was the many-breasted fertility goddess.
3. The Agora (market) was 370' square, surrounded by a double petitioned gallery behind which were the shops.
  - a. The Gallery was made of Doric columns, probably put there by Nero.
  - b. In the center of the agora was large sundial, statues of many famous citizens and a water clock.
4. The Theater was on the western side of Mt. Pion.
  - a. The Orchestra pit was 80' x 20'
  - b. There were 3 bands with 22 rows of seats each, and 12 stairways of bands.
  - c. It seated more than 25,000 people
  - d. It was a mile and a half from the Temple of Diana.
  - e. It was 495' in Diameter.
5. The Hydrion was a two-story public water fountain.
6. The Hestia was the public source of fire.
7. The Curatia was the most important street in Ephesus paved with white Egyptian marble.
8. The roads had covered walkways on either side of the streets; Chariots and horses drove in the center.
9. The streets were guttered and some show evidence of a sewage system beneath.
10. There were public, portable light poles along the streets, which could be removed during the day.
11. The city had public toilets with constantly running water. In one location there were more than 30 seats.
12. The city had roman baths with ceramic clay pipes bringing hot, cold and warm water to them.
13. There were many brothels to meet the demand for "worship" of Diana.
14. There were perhaps as many as 300,000 people in Ephesus in Paul's day.
15. The supposed tomb of the apostle John is in Ephesus.
16. The gospel became so prominent in Ephesus that on top of the four pillars at the major intersection of the city were placed statues of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

## **Paul's Ministry at Ephesus--Acts 19**

### **I. Significant Spreading of the Gospel:**

- 1. Holy Spirit Phenomena:**
  - Jewish Pentecost (2)**
  - Samaritan Pentecost (8)**
  - Gentile Pentecost (10)**
  - Pagan Pentecost (19)**
- 2. Use of "Kingdom"**
- 3. Spirit World Forces.**
- 4. Roman Indifference and Protection.**
- 5. Similar Missionary Strategy.**
- 6. Similarity to Peter's Ministry.**

### **II. Contrasts in the chapter:**

- 1. Incomplete Teaching vs. Ministry of Corrections and Lecture.**
- 2. Spiritual Counterfeiting vs. Ministry of Genuine Holy Spirit Power.**
- 3. Intense Opposition vs. Ministry of Length.**

### **III. Outline of the Chapter:**

- 1. The Completion Ministry at Ephesus (1-7)**
- 2. The Miraculous Ministry at Ephesus (8-20)**
- 3. The Disturbance of the Ministry at Ephesus (21-41).**

## **The Holy Spirit's Relationship to Belief and Baptism**

Based on Acts 19:1-7

By Mark Moore

This is an odd paragraph that raises several important theological questions for us: (1) What is the nature or manifestation of the Holy Spirit in our lives? (2) What is the connection between the Holy Spirit, belief and baptism? (3) What is the function of tongues and prophecy? And how do you get it?

Here we encounter twelve "disciples," not of Jesus, but of John the Baptist. They were baptized in John's baptism and likely had been taught by that eloquent Alexandrian, Apollos (18:24).

### **I. What did Paul mean, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit . . .?"**

Paul obviously saw something lacking in the lives of these twelve men. But just what was it? The Pentecostal position on this text is that they lacked the baptism of the Holy Spirit which would obviously manifest itself in tongues (2:4; 10:45-46). And this does align with verse 6 which says that these twelve spoke in tongues and prophesied. However, this glossolalia was not a result of the baptism but of the laying on of hands (Acts 6:6 [cf. 6:8; 8:6]; 8:17-19; 19:6; Rom 1:11; 2 Tim 1:6). And the baptism of the Holy Spirit in both Acts 2 and 10 happened without immersion in water.

Paul may have noticed a lack of spiritual gifts in the believer's lives. This would include tongues and prophecy (v. 6) but would not be limited to these. However, the manifestations of Spiritual gifts are rather obvious. One wonders if Paul would have had to ask if they possessed Spiritual gifts when he could just look and see--did they speak in tongues, prophesy, etc. Furthermore, this passage describes the conversion of these twelve men. Nowhere are the gifts of the Spirit or the baptism of the Holy Spirit connected with conversion. What Paul is looking for is evidence that these men are Christians, not that they are adept at exercising their spiritual gifts.

This might lead us to the conclusion, therefore, that Paul was looking for evidence that these men were indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39; Rom 8:9, etc.). This, of course, would manifest itself in the Spiritual fruit (Gal 5:22-23). These are often less tangible and visible than the gifts. Hence, Paul might wonder why these disciples, who would know the right vocabulary and liturgy, seemed to lack Christian character and behavior.

### **II. What are the connections between the Holy Spirit, Belief and Baptism?**

We note first of all, that the Holy Spirit is granted to those that believe. Ephesians 1:13 says, "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Cf. Jn 7:38-39; Gal 3:2, 5). Thus Paul's question of verse 2, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Of course "belief" to Paul extended beyond the mind. It is not that they thought there was a Holy Spirit and thus received his presence. They entrusted their lives to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit, in turn, took control.

Second, we know that belief is connected with baptism. This was true of John's baptism (Mt 21:25) as well as Christian baptism (Mk 16:16; Acts 8:12-13; 18:8; 19:4; Col 2:12). Again, this "belief" is not a theological stance on a point of Christian doctrine. Baptism was a visible response of faith. The candidate believed what Jesus (or John) said and thus obeyed by submitting to this liquid rite. In Acts 8:12 "When they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of

God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." The same is said of Simon Magus (Acts 8:13), Crispus (18:9), and these twelve disciples (19:4-5). Paul puts it this way: "Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col 2:12).

This third point is perhaps the most controversial, but the Bible clearly states that the Holy Spirit is connected with water baptism. Now, no one would deny that the Holy Spirit is involved with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 10:44-46; 11:16). But can the same be said about water immersion?<sup>1</sup> There are a number of texts that describe the Holy Spirit in terms of working through or like water both in the O.T. (Psa 46:4-5; Isa 32:15; 44:3; 55:1; 58:11; Eze 39:29; Joel 2:28) and in the N.T. (Jn 7:38-39). Even more specifically, several "New Birth" texts mention both the water and Spirit as effective forces in the conversion process (John 3:3-7; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:3-7). But is this "water" merely a metaphor, or does it signify immersion? There is no question that the Holy Spirit is connected to immersion in Acts 2:38-39; 19:1-6 and 1 Cor 12:13. It seems fair, therefore, to interpret the other "water" passages as baptism. The bottom line is that the Holy Spirit is clearly connected with water baptism in the process of conversion.

So, belief, baptism and the Holy Spirit are all central to Christian conversion. The Holy Spirit, the true mark of a Christian (Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13) is promised both through belief (Jn 7:38-39) and immersion (Acts 2:38-39). Baptism is not a work by which we earn the presence of the Holy Spirit. Rather it is an expression of our faith which causes us to open our lives to the Spirit's indwelling.

### **III. What is the function of the tongues and prophecy of verse 7:**

Generally, supernatural gifts are either a result of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit or the laying on of hands. And never are they necessary for salvation. Therefore, we have likely moved from "conversion talk" in verses 1-5, to "ministry talk" of verses 6-7. This is, after all, the only time where the laying on of hands follows baptism. It likely serves to separate the two events rather than to unite them. There are three possible purposes for these gifts here. First, since the church obviously does not yet have N.T. scriptures, these prophets would serve a vital role in the daily teaching and edification of the church. Second, these visible signs would serve to validate their Christian baptism and mark the significant difference between it and John's baptism. This would dispel any doubt in or criticism of Paul's teaching. Third, Ephesus is a city full of magic practices and exorcists. These gifts would serve to edify, clarify and confront both pagans and Christians in this new community of the faith.

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<sup>1</sup>Many, in fact, equate water baptism with Spirit baptism (cf. Eph 4:5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Titus 3:5; John 3:5).

## Did Paul Disobey the Holy Spirit?

By Mark Moore

In Acts 21:4 the brothers of Tyre urged Paul "through the Spirit" not to go up to Jerusalem. Paul ignores their appeal and heads toward the capital city. Two days later, on route to his "destiny," Paul is urged again not to go, this time by the prophet Agabus in the city of Caesarea. He binds himself with Paul's belt and says, "Paul, this is what is going to happen to you if you continue in your present course." Of course Paul is not dissuaded. With these strong words he rejects their pleadings; "I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

Here's the issue: Paul gets a clear message from the Holy Spirit through Christian brothers that he would be arrested and beaten in Jerusalem and yet he persists in going. Is he disobedient to the Holy Spirit? After all, his actions got him brutally beaten and landed him in jail for nearly four years. We should consider several things here.

First, Paul has twice before indicated that he was bound "in the spirit" to go to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21 & 20:22). Granted, we might read "spirit" as a lower case rather than a capital "S," thus indicating that this was Paul's desire, not God's. However, that is not the natural reading of this Greek construction (en followed by the dative article and *pneumati*, cf. Lk 1:27; 4:1; unless another *pneuma* is specified, cf. Lk 1:17; Rom 1:9). It looks an awful lot like Paul means to say that the Holy Spirit led him to go to Jerusalem and then on to Rome.

Second, the fact that Paul gets beat up and thrown in jail does not mean that this goes against God's will. Like it or not, God's primary agenda is not our comfort but the proclamation of the gospel. Furthermore, Paul has been arrested and beaten throughout his ministry and his sufferings have consistently advanced the gospel. There is nothing new or surprising here. The fact that Paul's travels were halted for four years may bother us, but these imprisonments also afforded both Paul and Luke the opportunity to do a good bit of writing which has proved to be even more effective and enduring than their itinerant tours. Moreover, Paul's actions eventually got him to Rome through God's sovereign hand. Here he was privileged to evangelize Nero himself (Acts 27:24). Luke, as a historian, apparently sees this as part of God's design. At least that's the way he paints the picture in his narrative.

Third, the Christians in Tyre and Caesarea received a message from the Holy Spirit about Paul's sufferings, not necessarily a message forbidding him to go to Jerusalem. Hence, their urging Paul not to go may be their assumption about the Holy Spirit's message beyond the message itself. As Stott says, "Perhaps Luke's statement is a condensed way of saying that the warning was divine while the urging was human" (p. 333). Granted, Paul is not Jesus. Thus, it is not blasphemy to blame him for making a mistake or not heeding the warnings of the Holy Spirit. But in this case such an accusation seems premature. Rather, it looks like both Paul and the brothers hear the same message from the Holy Spirit and decide to do two different things about it. The brothers have a tender and proper concern for Paul's welfare. Paul has a zealous and proper concern for the conversion of his countrymen. Both are correct and God's will is done.

## Paul's Journey to Rome

Acts 2:17-28:31. Estimated: 1850 miles, approximately 3-4 years in duration. Planted no new churches but won several soldiers and visited many brethren.

Place	Location	Events
1. Jerusalem	21:17	Paul is beaten, gives a speech, and is imprisoned
2. Antipatris	23:31	Paul is taken here by soldiers
3. Caesarea	23:33	Imprisoned for 2 yrs. Before Felix, Festus, & Agrippa. Appeal to Caesar.
4. Sidon	27:3	Port. Paul allowed some freedom
5. Cyprus	27:4	Sailed by the island because of contrary winds
6. Myra (Lycia)	27:5	Landed on route to Rome.
7. Cnidus	27:7	Arrived here with difficulty
8. Under Crete	27:7	Contrary wind forced this.
9. Fair Havens	27:8	Harbored. Paul predicted difficulty
10. Clauda	27:16	Small island where they attempted to get the boat under control.
11. In the open sea	27:17-44	Ship is tossed by the wind. Paul encouraged by God.
12. Malta	28:1	Ship ran aground. Paul preaches and heals on island.
13. Syracuse	28:12	Stayed here 3 days
14. Rhegium & Puteoli	28:13	Ports and stopping places. Stayed with brethren.
15. Market of Appius & Three Inns	28:15	Brethren came and greeted. Paul took courage and preached.
16. Rome	28:16	Paul spoke to Jews and then turned to Gentiles. In house-arrest for 2 yrs.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHORITIES

### ACTS 23-26

By Mark Scott & Mark Moore

- I. Ananias, the High Priest:
  1. Held office, A.D. 48-59
  2. He was insolent and quick tempered.
  3. He was hated by the Jews for his pro-Roman leanings.
  4. Known for liberal use of violence.
  5. Confiscated temple tithes.
  6. Rebelled in A.D. 66, was sought and assassinated by the Jews.
- II. Antonius Felix (cf. Josephus, *Wars*, II. 12.8-18.7; *Antiquities*, XX. 7.1-8.9):
  1. Born and raised as a slave in Caesar's house. Freed by Antonia, mother of Claudius.
  2. His brother, Pallas, became a favorite advisor the Emperor Claudius. Thus Felix became the "corrupt favorite" of Claudius.
  3. Through Pallas' influence, Felix became the governor of the land extending from Jerusalem up to Cilicia, including Tarsus and Antioch.
    - a. Appointed to rule Samaria in A.D. 48.
    - b. Appointed to govern Judea in A.D. 52.
  4. Insurrections and anarchy increased during his rule.
  5. Tacitus described him as, "A master of cruelty and lust who exercised the powers of a king with the spirit of a slave" (*Annals*, XII. 54; *History*, V. 9).
  6. Nero recalled him in A.D. 59.
  7. He married two women named Drusilla and in between these he married a princess:
    - a. Drusilla #1: Granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra.
    - b. Drusilla #2: Daughter of Herod Agrippa I.
      - (1) At 15 she married King Azizus of Emesa, a petty state of Syria.
      - (2) At 16 she married Felix, influenced by a Cypriot magician named Atmos.
      - (3) During Paul's trial she is about 20.
- III. Drusilla:
  1. Daughter of Herod Agrippa I and sister of Agrippa II.
  2. As a teenager she married Azizus.
  3. She was captivated by Felix' ruthlessness and power.
  4. She wanted power and saw marriage to Felix as a way to climb the political ladder.
  5. Perhaps her conscience got the best of her--Acts 24:25.
- IV. Festus:
  1. Began rule in A.D. 60. Died in A.D. 62.
  2. While he seems antagonistic towards Paul in Acts, the sources are kind to this ruler.
  3. He does desire to rule "all" the people--in contrast to Felix. This is evident in how swiftly he goes to Jerusalem.
- V. Herod Agrippa II:
  1. The son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12); he was 17 when his father died.
  2. Ruled with the status of a king for about 30 years; also controlled the temple.
  3. Did have Jewish blood, which could prove to be an advantage.
  4. His sister, Bernice, lived with him. Some accused them of being incestuously involved.
  5. (Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.2; Seutonius *Titus* 7; Dio Cassius, 65.15; 66:18)
- VI. Bernice:
  1. Sister of Herod Agrippa II.
  2. Was known as a bed-hopper.
  3. She was the Jewish Cleopatra and the mistress of Titus, the Roman general.

### **Paul vs. the High Priest (Acts 23:5)**

Paul replied, Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: 'Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.'

1. **Irony**--"I did not know that the high priest acted in such a manner.:
2. **Apology**--"I'm sorry. I spoke in haste."
3. **Change in Priests**--"The high priest changed no less than 28 times between 37 and 70 A.D. Perhaps because he had been away for so long he was not aware of the most recent change in the high priest.
4. **Wrong Setting**--Because Lysias had called this meeting, perhaps the Ananias did not have time to put on the proper robes of the high priest or was not sitting in the proper position.
5. **Vision**--some have suggested that the room was dark and/or Paul's poor eye sight hindered him from seeing who it was who commanded the beating.
6. **Usurpation of High Priest**--Still others have suggested that Ananias usurped the position of High Priest and Paul suggested that he did not actually belong.

## NO MORE THAN TWELVE DAYS AGO, ACTS 24:11

By Mark Moore

Days	1	2	3	4	Events:
1				1	Arrival in Jerusalem, 21:17
2				2	Went to meet James, 21:18
3			1	3	Went up to the Temple to Pay for Purification vows, 21:26
4-9	1-7		2-3	4-9	Almost Seven Days, 21:27
10		1	4	10	Paul Arrested, 21:27
11		2	5	11	Trial before the Sanhedrin, 22:30
12		3	6	12	Assassination plot and Paul's escape, 23:12
13		4	7		Paul's arrival in Caesarea, 23:33
14-17	8-11	5-8	8-11		Paul waits for Tertullus
18	12	9	12		Paul's Trial before Felix, 24:1

### Solutions:

- Count only the days that Paul spent waiting. There were seven days waiting for the purification to be complete and five days waiting for Tertullus to arrive. That makes for good math but poor exegesis. It does not account for all the other important days in this scenario.
- Begin counting the twelve days at Paul's arrest. This solution leaves three extra days but still fits Paul's words, "No more than 12 days ago . . ." However, it does not accurately describe when Paul went up to Jerusalem.
- Begin counting the twelve days when Paul first went up to worship in the temple (i.e. when he paid for the purification vows, 21:26). This is a better description of Paul's words "went up to Jerusalem to worship" (24:11). However, it leaves only 2-3 days for what Paul calls "nearly seven days" (21:27).
- Count only the days that Paul was in Jerusalem. Granted, these would be the only days germane to the charges--that he stirred up trouble and defiled the temple in Jerusalem (24:5-8). But that is somewhat of a loose interpretation of 24:11 since it overlooks the last five days.

**Blameless Character and Appeal to Caesar**  
**Acts 25**  
Mark Moore

Paul's Blameless Character:

No one is perfect. That includes the Apostle Paul. Yet he lived his life with such integrity that he could not be successfully attacked in a court of law. In other words, he lived his life without handles. This never mattered less than when he was maligned by unbelievers with legal clout. It may sound presumptuous when Paul claims to be above reproach (vv. 8, 10-11). But Luke echoes the same sentiment (v. 7). Well, one might say, that's because he was Paul's friend. But Festus, certainly no friend of Paul, said so much himself (vv. 5, 18-19, 25). Our integrity may not matter much of the time. But when it matters, it makes all the moments of personal sacrifice worth it, particularly when it is the reputation of our Lord on the line along with ours.

Paul's Appeal to Caesar:

This is obviously a big deal. It is mentioned no less than 6 times in the text (vv. 11-12, 21, 25-27). It was risky business, though, to appeal to Caesar, particularly this one. Nero could be whimsical. If he didn't like you, for any particular reason, he could just execute you. He was a despot. So why Paul would take the chance and appeal to him? There are several possibilities:

1. He was inspired by God or prompted by the Holy Spirit to make this move.
2. He got impatient. Perhaps he was tired of waiting in prison and decided to take matters into his own hands.
3. He wanted to take advantage of a golden opportunity. It is not entirely clear just when a Roman citizen had the right of appeal. But apparently Paul was in such a situation and thus made the appeal. It is also quite like Paul to imagine himself converting Nero and Christianizing the empire!
4. He was tired of trials and knew that no good would come of them so he simply pulled the plug on the process through his legal recourse of appeal.
5. He knew Festus to be just but unsympathetic to his situation. This he forced his hand.
6. He knew that a Jerusalem trip would be too dangerous. He decided to gamble on Nero rather than the Sanhedrin.

## NERO

By Mark Moore

1. Nero Claudius Caesar Germanicus was the fifth emperor. He was born A.D. 37 and reigned from 54-68 A.D.
2. He was the son of Agrippina's first husband, Cnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, a vicious and corrupt man. His mother was a schemer who cared little for his moral development but much for his social standing. At the age of 34 (in A.D. 49), she married emperor Claudius who was 59. He was a life-long victim of cerebral Palsy and in his latter years an inept and cowering leader. He had a limp from an earlier injury and drooled saliva, which made his contemporaries consider him a half-wit. However, he had spent much of his time in the imperial palace reading and studying--he was apparently quite bright. He was the one responsible for expelling the Jews from Rome [Suetonius, Claudius, 25.4; Acts 18:2]. Pallas, Seneca and Burrus helped her plot her son into office. Claudius died in A.D. 54, presumably by poison. For their efforts on Nero's behalf, they were all repaid with traitorous murder.
3. The first five years of his reign were rational--these are called the quinquennium. This is primarily due to the fact that his affairs were under the direction of two men: Seneca, whose brother, Gallio had been the governor of Greece (Acts 18:12); and Burrus, the prefect of the praetorian guard. He was 16-21 years old during this time. Even then, however, his private life was licentious. It is interesting, however, that during this time he expressed great concern and reservation that he would likely have to put people to death. Later he overcame this feeling and put people to death without qualms.
4. "Nero's marriage to Poppaea opened the second period of his reign. He killed his mother, his chief advisers Seneca and Burrus, and many of the nobility to secure their fortunes." This was in the year 62 A.D. [Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, p. 581]
5. Burrus died in A.D. 62 (there was some suspicion of poison). Seneca thereafter retired, knowing that he alone could not control the young monarch. Later Nero ordered him to take his life (A.D. 65) apparently only so he could obtain his wealth (which Seneca had already given over to him). These two were replaced with Tigellinus, who brought out the worst of Nero's avarice.
6. In A.D. 62 he had his wife, Octavia murdered so he could marry Poppaea. Poppaea successfully plotted the elimination of Agrippina, Nero's mother, by convincing her to have her murdered in A.D. 59, as well as Octavia, Nero's wife, even while she was married to Otho, the brief successor to Nero. Later she, herself, fell prey to his viciousness:

"Having killed Poppaea by a kick when she was with child, (A.D. 66), Nero proposed to marry Antonia, his adopted sister, and on her refusal ordered her to be put to death. He then married Statilia Messalina, whose husband Vestinus he had assassinated for marrying Messalina after the emperor had cohabited with her."

[Baker's Bible Dictionary, p. 789]

7. It was during this time (c. A.D. 63) that Paul made his defense before him (Acts 25:10-11).
8. In A.D. 64 a large section of Rome was destroyed by fire. Many suspected Nero of starting the conflagration, including the historian Tacitus. He needed a scapegoat for the mishap and found it in the Christians of Rome. Tacitus, certainly no friend of the church, said this about the persecuted Christians:

"Their death was made a matter of sport; they were covered in wild beast's skins and torn to pieces by dogs; or were fastened to crosses and set on fire in order to serve as torches by night . . . Nero had offered his gardens for the spectacle and gave an exhibition in his circus, mingling with the crowd in the guise of a charioteer or mounted on his chariot. Hence, . . . there arose a feeling of pity, because it was felt that they were being sacrificed not for the common good, but to gratify the savagery of one man."

[Tacitus, Annals, XV, 44]

9. Nero was the first to enact official Roman persecution against the church. Both Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom under his hand.
10. His private life was full of scandal. He entertained himself with the basest forms of depredation including murder, homosexuality, sadomasochism, and unimaginable violence.
11. Conspiracies dogged his later years. He was advised to take his own life but he did not have the courage to do it. The senate, in fact, decreed his death. His final traitorous act was to put many of the senators to death. Finally, on June 9, A.D. 68, he took his own life. His final words were these, "What an Artist dies in me." (He fancied himself a musician and artist and athlete). Thus died the last of the line of Julius Caesar.

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## ACTS 26:28

Ev oligō me peítheis chriistianon poiēσαι  
In little me you persuade Christian to make

KJV: Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

RSV: In a short time you think to make me a Christian.

NASB: In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.

NIV: Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?

ASV: With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.

LAMSA: With little effort you almost persuade me to become a Christian.

LO: You almost persuade me to be a Christian.

Spanish: Por poco me persuades a ser criastiano.

HEB: עוֹד מְעַט וּפְתִיתַנִּי לְהִיּוֹת נִצְרִי

**Acts 26:28**  
By Mark Moore

NIV: Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?

Literal: In a little you are persuading me to make a Christian

This is a difficult passage to interpret because of three questions which we may never be able to answer. First, does the word little refer to time, the number of words Paul spoke or some other factor? Second, what was Agrippa's tone? Was he serious or sarcastic. Third, is this a statement of fact or a question? The following paraphrases suggest a few possibilities.

Sarcasm:

- What is this? Do you think that you can convert me in just 30 minutes?
- What is this? Do you think that I'm going to become a Christian on the basis of such meager evidence?
- Come on Paul! You've hardly expended any effort on me. You'll have to do better than this if you want me to convert.

Serious:

- Paul, you almost had me. With just a little more evidence I could accept what you are saying.
- Paul, I'm pretty close to becoming a Christian. If I let you keep talking a little longer I would probably convert.
- Wow! You've drawn me in quickly. Is it possible that I would change my mind so soon?
- You are an amazing man! With such little effort on your part, I've come so close to accepting your position.

## **Isaiah 6:9-10 in Fulfillment**

**And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking but do not understand.' Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and repent and be healed."**

### **Who is Responsible for the Rejection?:**

- 1. Matthew 13:14                      Jesus/Evangelist**
- 2. John 12:40                            God Himself**
- 3. Acts 28:25                            Listeners**

## PAUL'S PRISON TEXTS

Acts 28:20 For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.

Eph 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles.

Eph 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Phil 1:7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me.

Phil 1:13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.

Phil 1:17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains.

Col 4:18 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Phm 1:9 Yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul--an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus . . ."

Phm 1:13 I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

Phm 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings.

## **Paul's Companions in Rome**

<b>Luke</b>	<b>Colossians 4:14</b>
<b>Timothy</b>	<b>Acts 20:4; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1:1</b>
<b>Mark</b>	<b>Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24</b>
<b>Aristarchus</b>	<b>Colossians 4:10; Philemon 24</b>
<b>Demas</b>	<b>Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24</b>
<b>Epaphras</b>	<b>Colossians 4:12</b>
<b>Tychicus</b>	<b>Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7</b>
<b>Epaphroditus</b>	<b>Philippians 2:25-30</b>
<b>Jesus/Justus</b>	<b>Colossians 4:10-14</b>

## **Passages Describing Paul's Fourth Journey**

**Romans 15:24** I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

**Romans 15:28** So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way.

**Titus 1:5** The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

**2 Tim 4:20** Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus.

**Phm 1:22** And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

**1 Tim 1:3** As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer

**1 Tim 3:14-15** Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

**2 Tim 1:18** May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus.

**2 Tim 4:13** When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

**Phil 2:23-24** I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

**Titus 3:12** As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there.

**PAUL'S FOURTH MISSIONARY JOURNEY**  
A semi-speculative/humble/tentative reconstruction  
by Mark Moore & Mark Scott

1. The Pastoral Epistles cannot be adequately fitted into any of Paul's travels that we know of up to this point through the book of Acts.
2. Paul anticipated being released in the year 63 A.D. (cf. Phil. 1:26; 2:24; Phm 22; Acts 28:30)
3. Paul planned on visiting the church at Philippi and then the churches of the Lycus Valley.
4. **Spain:** Some early church history documents allege that Paul visited Spain and possibly even Britain after his release (cf. 1 Clement 5:7; Muratorian Canon; Eusebius, *Church History*, II. 22. 1, 2; Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, XVII. 26; Epiphanius, *Heresies*, XXVII. 6). This is what Paul promised the Romans (cf. 15:24, 28).
5. **Crete:** Left Titus there (cf. Titus 1:5). Winter of A.D. 64-65 (?).
6. **Miletus:** Left Trophimus sick there (cf. 2 Tim 4:20).
7. **Colossae:** (cf. Phm 1:22).
8. **Ephesus:** Took care of Onesiphorus (cf. 1 Tim 1:3; 3:14-15; 2 Tim 1:18).
9. **Troas:** Stayed in the house of Carpus (cf. 2 Tim. 4:13).
10. **Philippi:** (cf. Phil 2:23-24; 1 Tim 1:3).
11. **Nicopolis:** Spent the winter there A.D. 66-67 (?), (cf. Titus 3:12).
12. **Rome:** Second imprisonment in Rome 67-68 A.D.
13. Tradition has Paul martyred by Nero in the last year of Nero's reign in A.D. 68. Supposedly he was beheaded on the Ostian Way.

## The Sea Voyages of Paul

Terry Bowland

1. The journey from Caesarea to Tarsus (280 miles), Acts. 9:30.
2. The journey of Barnabas from Antioch to Tarsus and Paul's return trip with Barnabas (not specifically mentioned), (60 miles), Acts 11:25ff.
3. Paul & Barnabas sailing to Cyprus on the First Mission Journey (125 miles), Acts 13:4
4. The journey from Cyprus to Perga (180 miles), Acts 13:13.
5. The journey from Attaleia to Antioch at the conclusion of the First Mission Journey (300 miles), Acts 14:26.
6. The journey from Troas to Neapolis on the Second Mission Journey (125 miles), Acts 16:1ff
7. Paul's trip from Berea to Athens (200 miles), Acts 17:14.
8. Paul's travels with Aquila & Priscilla from Cenchreae to Ephesus (250 miles), Acts 18:18.
9. Paul ending the Second Mission Journey traveling from Ephesus to Caesarea (650 miles), Acts 18:21ff.
10. Paul probably took a ship up to Antioch after visiting Jerusalem (280 miles), Acts 18:22.
11. From Ephesus (through Troas) to Neapolis on the Third Mission Journey (125 miles), Acts 20:1
12. From Philippi to Troas (125 miles), Acts 20:6
13. From Miletus to back to Palestine (940 miles), Acts 21:1-7
14. From Caesarea to Rome as a prisoner (2300 miles), Acts 27:1.

Conclusion: Excluding items #2 and #10, Paul traveled 5,600 miles by boat alone. This does not include land travel or post-Acts travel by land or sea. **Point:** It's hard to be a missionary without movement.

## **Mega Lessons From Acts:**

By Mark Moore

1. Christ intends to build a kingdom, not merely a church.
  - a. The kingdom is bigger than any one of us or any single organization. Therefore, all glory goes to God and all efforts are for him alone.
  - b. There is room in this global kingdom for a variety of personalities, propensities, gifts, and directions.
  - c. A kingdom is political--it intersects with society, often erupting in opposition.
2. The Holy Spirit is the hero of the story.
  - a. God is sovereign and moves men like pawns on a chessboard. This calls for active optimism. Active since the sovereignty of God still requires our response; optimism because the church may wobble but it won't fall down!
  - b. All of us are role-players. That means (1) there are no heroes other than God, and (2) there are no insignificant people.
  - c. There is a design to history. Prophecies are fulfilled and situations prearranged.
3. The Church grows.
  - a. People are interested in Jesus and willing to give their lives to him in faith, repentance, baptism, and obedience.
  - b. Preaching which is culturally relevant, biblically centered and highlights the resurrection, changes lives, communities and cultures. It is, in fact, dangerous.
  - c. This message is for everyone -- all colors, shapes and sizes. Churches that are color blind are soon colorful.
4. God uses people to accomplish his history making.
  - a. Sometimes desert roads turn out to be our defining moments. We can not evaluate the effectiveness of our daily tasks. We simply need to be faithful and let God worry about being successful.
  - b. As we compare the ending of Acts with the ending of Luke, we are reminded that Paul reenacts the life of Jesus. In fact, that is the lesson for all of us. We are the continuing incarnation of Jesus Christ our Lord.
  - c. There is an Acts 29. We each get to contribute a verse under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.