

# THE GOSPEL GETS CLOSER

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Summer 2022, Acts 16:6-15

July 24, 2022

*The Lord opened [Lydia's] heart to respond to Paul's message.  
When she and the members of her family were baptized,  
she invited [Paul and his companions] into her home.  
Acts 16:14-15*

## **Scene #1: Luke joins Paul and Silas in the missionary band**

<sup>6</sup> Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. <sup>7</sup> When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. <sup>8</sup> So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. <sup>9</sup> During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." <sup>10</sup> After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Acts 16:6-10

1. The gospel has now arrived in Europe, what Isaiah calls "the islands" (see Isaiah 42)
2. The Holy Spirit worked first by closing, and then by opening (Paul finally did get to Ephesus!)

## **Scene #2: Lydia is a very persuasive convert**

<sup>11</sup> From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. <sup>12</sup> From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days.

<sup>13</sup> On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. <sup>14</sup> One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. <sup>15</sup> When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.

Acts 16

1. Philippi represents the history of the "islands"
2. With no synagogue in Philippi, Paul and his companions start where God-fearers gather
3. Lydia is a picture of conversion: gospel, conviction, faith, baptism, fellowship

## Theological key to the text: What does it mean when the Holy Spirit is at work?

<sup>18</sup> Then the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. <sup>19</sup> While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground, and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

Ezekiel 10

<sup>17</sup> “In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people . . . .

Acts 2

1. The “end” of the Old Testament is when \_\_\_\_\_
2. The “sign” of the New Testament is when \_\_\_\_\_
3. We believe the Holy Spirit still closes doors and opens hearts

## Lessons from Lydia

- 1) Paul never forgets Lydia's invitation to “abide”

<sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! <sup>23</sup> I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; <sup>24</sup> but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. <sup>25</sup> Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, <sup>26</sup> so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

<sup>27</sup> Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel . . . .

Philippians 1

- 2) This is the first place Paul's baptizing is recorded, for these two reasons: 1) to show that Lydia is included in the body, and 2) to take the attention away from Paul and put it on Jesus

<sup>13</sup> Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup> I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, <sup>15</sup> so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. <sup>16</sup> (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) <sup>17</sup> For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

1 Corinthians 1

## Resources for further studies in Acts

The Bible Project team has great stuff on Acts at <https://open.life.church/items/179224-poster-jpg>

Spurgeon has fewer sermons on Acts available than I would hope at

[http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/index/r\\_ac.htm](http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/index/r_ac.htm) . His sermon on Acts 16:9 is at

<https://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/0189.htm>

Tim Keller has said much on the topic of mission. See “5 Practices” at <https://brave.is/5-practices-of-a-missional-church-tim-keller/> and <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/gospel-culture-and-mission-an-interview-with-tim-keller/>

Kim Riddlebarger has an interesting article on Acts 15 at <https://www.kimriddlebarger.com/the-riddleblog/three-take-aways-from-the-jerusalem-council-acts-15>

Deffinbaugh has a helpful introduction at <https://bible.org/seriespage/unique-contribution-book-acts>

His Acts series is at <https://bible.org/series/studies-book-acts> His sermons on this text are at

<https://bible.org/seriespage/22-great-debates-acts-161-10> and <https://bible.org/seriespage/23-closer-look-open-and-closed-doors-acts-1611-40>

John Stott’s *The Spirit, The Church and the World: The Message of Acts* (IVP, 1990) and F. F. Bruce’s work: *New Testament History* (Doubleday, 1980) and *The Book of the Acts* (Eerdmans, 1984). For this passage, I also like Kistemaker’s commentary (Baker Book House, 1990).

Harry Boer, *That My House May Be Filled* (Eerdmans, 1957)



- A UNIFIED, HIGH-VOLUME WORK
- FROM THE SAME AUTHOR: LUKE
- A TRAVELING CO-COOKER WITH PHARISEE (LUKE 10:11-12)

# LUKE ACTS

It produced my first account about all the things Jesus began to do & teach.

IMPLICATION: ACTS WHAT JESUS CONTINUED TO DO & TEACH

TRADITIONAL NAME: The Acts of the Apostles  
ACCURATE NAME: ACTS

# The ACTS of Jesus & the SPIRIT

LUKE-ACTS  
HOLD GOD'S KINGDOM CAPTIVE ON EARTH AS IN HEAVEN THROUGH JESUS & HIS SPIRIT & HIS CHURCH  
EXAMPLES OF FAITHFULNESS TO KING JESUS:  
- SHARING THE GOOD NEWS IN WORD & ACTION  
- FORGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE ARE EQUALS  
- TRUSTING IN THE POWER & GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT

### 1 INTRODUCTION

**KINGDOM OF GOD:**  
- JESUS RESTORES GOD'S KINGDOM OVER THE WORLD  
- CALLED CORAL TO FOLLOW HIM  
- ENTROUNCHED AS KING THROUGH HIS DEATH & RESURRECTION

**PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT:**  
- FULFILLS PROMPTIC WORDS (ISAIAH 42, EZEKIEL 36, JOEL 2)  
- NEW TEMPLE IN THE FUTURE (ISAIAH 52, EZEKIEL 43, HIRSHAN 2)

**YOU'LL BE MY WITNESSES:**  
- JERUSALEM, JUDAEA, SAMARIA, CYPRUS, ANTIOCH, ALEXANDRIA, ROME

**ENDS IN THE EARTH:**  
- JESUS IS ENTROUNCHED AS SON OF MAN

**FROM DANIEL c. 7:**  
- JESUS IS EXALTED AS KING OF THE WORLD

### 8-12 JUDEA & SAMARIA

HOLD THE MOSTLY JEWISH, JERUSALEM-BASED COMMUNITY OF JESUS

PHILIP IN SAMARIA (8:14-26)  
CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS (9:1-19)  
PETER & CORNELIUS (10:1-48)  
THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH (11:19-30)  
FIRST MULTI-ETHNIC CHURCH FIRST USE OF "CHRISTIANS" (11:26)

### 21-23 PAUL'S WITNESS SPREADS TO ROME

21-22 PAUL ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM  
HE TRIES TO ARGUE OUR PEOPLE & OUR TEMPLES (21:27-28)  
HE'S THE BARBARIAN FOREIGNER! (21:29)

### 2-7 IN JERUSALEM

**2 PENTECOST:**  
- GOD'S GLORY = FILLING OF TEMPLE IN THE PAST (1 CHRONICLES 14)  
- IN THE FUTURE: EZEKIEL 43, HIRSHAN 2

**3-5 A TALE OF TWO TEMPLES:**  
- A PRACTICE DESCRIBED IN THE TORAH (DEUTERONOMY 12:17) SUPPORTING HIS ANALOGY WITH TEMPLE  
- THE NEW TEMPLE OF JESUS OPPORTUNITY IS AVAILABLE TO ALL WHO ENOUNTER GOD'S KINGDOM & HOLY SPIRIT

**LUKE'S POINT:**  
- JESUS FOLLOWERS SELL POSSESSIONS TO SUPPORT THE POOR  
- PETER HEALS & PREACHES IN THE TEMPLE - ARRESTED & TRIED  
- JESUS DISCIPLES GATHER DAILY IN THE TEMPLE COURTS & HOUSES TO HOUSE

### 13-20 THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

ASIA MINOR (13-14)  
ASIA MINOR & GREECE (16-18)  
ASIA MINOR & GREECE AGAIN (19-20)

CONTINUED PERSION TO ESCAL  
JESUS IS KING OF ISRAEL AND THE HEATHEN  
HE OFFERED THE TORAH  
HE OFFERED THE TORAH

### 23-26 PAUL ON TRIAL BEFORE...

23 THE SANHEDRIN  
24 GOVERNOR FELIX  
25 GOVERNOR FESTUS  
26 KING AGRIPPA  
STAND ON TRIAL BECAUSE OF MY HOPE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE SUFFERING MESSIAH (26:6, 26:8)

### 04-05 FIRST PERSECUTION

STEPHEN  
LAMP DO YOU ALWAYS RESIST GOD'S SPIRIT?  
JESUS FOLLOWERS DRIVEN FROM THE CITY

### THE PARADOX OF THE EARLY CHURCH:

A JEWISH PESSION MOVEMENT, but ethnically diverse  
- MEN & WOMEN, RICH & POOR, SLAVE & FREE - all treated as equals  
- LEVEL TO JESUS ALONE, but not a military threat to Rome

THE CLASH OF CULTURES (14:1-18)  
THE BREAD BREAK IS THE ONE THAT LIVES & FEELS  
NO WAY!  
GODS PLAN WAS ALWAYS TO INCLUDE NON-JEWISH PEOPLE  
MEMBERSHIP IN JESUS' PEOPLE IS NOT BASED ON ETHNICITY OR TORAH OBEYANCE, BUT SIMPLY BY TRUSTING & OBEYING JESUS

ACCUSATIONS OF KEBELLION (16:17, 18)  
IT'S A REVOLUTION  
WE'RE BRINGING DOWN THE ROMAN EMPIRE  
WE'RE BRINGING DOWN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

### 26 UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN ROME

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT ALLOWS TIME TO COMPOSE HIS APOSTOLIC LETTERS  
27 CALDIASAC (PHILIPPI)  
28 BARBARA ANNOUNCED THE KINGDOM OF GOD, SHE WAS TRAINING ALL ABOUT THE LORD JESUS, THE MESSIAH, TRULY PROMISED (28:31)

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