

After **just short** of **ONE Year** - we come today  
to the **CONCLUSION** of our study in **ACTS**

**49 messages** . . . & **I wish** it would have **been more**

I have **LOVED studying** this book - which **I think** I've said  
after studying **EVERY book** of the **Bible** we've ever gone through

As a **Rough Estimate** - I've **spent** somewhere around **680 hours**  
**studying** this book - & I've **LOVED every minute**

**Thank you** for **allowing** me to do that  
& **I pray** you've been **blessed** to go thru it with me

& to the **Word-By-Mail** family - We've already **sent out**  
(at **no charge**) well over **10,000 CD's** **JUST** on our studies in **ACTS**  
& **that's before** we've even **finished** the series

& so **we pray** the **Word-By-Mail family** will continue to be **blessed**  
by our **study** in this **great book** for **many years** to come

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**Today** - we **WRAP it UP** - with **Paul** finally in **ROME**

**Paul** had **1st** made **mention** of **Rome** - back in **CH 19**  
& **God** told Paul he **MUST go** to Rome - back in **CH 23**

& today - **FINALLY** (& that's an understatement) . . .  
**FINALLY**, Paul is in **ROME**

& **What Might** we **Expect** -  
**After** all the **Incredible Buildup** of Paul's **Voyage** to Rome ??

An Appearance before CAESAR himself ??

STIRRING SERMONS in the Roman Courts ??

Maybe a RIOT even Bigger than the one in Ephesus ??

WELL . . . We Don't get ANY of that

Actually just FIFTEEN Vs's cover the events in ROME  
as far as the book of Acts is concerned

& so - after just 15 Vs's in Rome - the book of Acts just . . . STOPS  
Almost MID-SENTENCE - & Definitely in MID-THOUGHT

& all the SCHOLARS have their opinions as to WHY it does  
& as to what happened AFTER Luke Finished writing Acts

Many believe - from church history - that Paul was at some point  
released from THIS imprisonment

& then later RE-IMPRISONED  
and finally EXECUTED under the reign of NERO

& while that History is interesting to me - The SPIRITUAL REASON  
for Acts ending this way - is even MORE INTERESTING

It's pretty easy to see that SPIRITUALLY  
the REASON Acts end so ABRUPTLY  
is because indeed - it HAS NOT ENDED !!

We have referred to this book as -  
The ACTS of Jesus Christ - BY His Spirit - THRU His Church

& Those ACTS - have continued Every Day  
since the last day Luke laid Pen to Parchment in 62 AD

The **WRITING** had to **STOP** - But **the ACTS** of the Church have **NOT stopped** - & they **WILL NOT** stop . . .

**Until** The **Church** is "**SNATCHED AWAY**" in the **Rapture**

**Until then** - the **LIVING** (Ongoing) **book of Acts** **CONTINUES**

**The CANON** is closed - but the **ACTS** of Jesus Christ - **BY** His Spirit - & **THRU** His Church - **CONTINUE today**

& **it's our prayer** that **WE** will always **be a PART** - of the **continuation** of **the Acts** of **N.T. CHURCH** - - - **AMEN ??**

**Let's Pray** - & we'll **wrap up** the **Canonized portion** of **ACTS**

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We left **Paul** having **just arrived** in Rome - **V.16** says He was allowed to **STAY BY HIMSELF** - with the **SOLDIER** who guarded him

& **today** - in Luke's **FINAL Detailed Account** in Acts - FROM Paul's "house Arrest Quarters" -

**We're going to see** one **Last Look** at Paul's Love & Concern for the Jews - & . . .

**We're going to see** one **Last Comparison** of the **Spiritual DULLNESS** brought on by **RELIGION** **Vs's** the **Spiritual LIFE** brought on by a Real **RELATIONSHIP**

**We start in - Acts 28:17-20 (esv)**

***17 After three days (of arriving in Rome) he called together the local leaders of the Jews, . . .***

That's not much of an "Acclamation Period"

*"Man, I've been layin around for THREE days - somebody get me some Jewish Leaders to Witness to"*

**Acts 28:17 . . . and when they had gathered, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.**

**18 When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty (release me), because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case.**

**19 But because the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against my nation.**

**20 For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain."**

So - 3 days into his Rome Vacation  
Paul calls the Jewish Leaders in

& he explains to them he's done NOTHING  
against the Jews or their Customs . . .

He was COMPELLED to appeal to Caesar  
ONLY to keep from being Murdered by the Leaders in Jerusalem  
Not because he had any charge against the Jews

& then he tells them the REAL REASON he's there (end of V.20)

*it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain*

**The HOPE of Israel IS the COMING MESSIAH**

It had been since the Days of the Prophets  
& I'm sad to say - it still is TODAY

But Paul makes it clear Right UP FRONT - 1st Mtg - 3 Days in . . .  
It's because of the MESSIAH of Israel that I'm in these CHAINS

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& then - in V.21 - it seems like the Jewish leaders  
might be getting off to a good start

But you know how they say:  
if something seems TOO GOOD to be true - it probably IS ??

That's probably more of what's really happening here

Acts 28:21 (esv)

*21 And they said to him, "We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you.*

That's Interesting - Since Rome considered itself the HUB of the  
world - & there was a huge travel to & from Rome

But - who knows - they may NOT have heard specifically about Paul

But one thing for sure - they HAD heard about this SECT called  
"Little Christ's" - named after their unlikely leader  
who was a mere carpenter from Nazareth

& we see those true feelings in - Acts 28:22 (esv)

*22 But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.*"

The GREEK word translated "SECT" here  
is the same word we get our word HERESY from

**No Paul** - we **haven't heard** about **YOU**  
but we **HAVE heard** about the **HERESY** you're **PART** of

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That **gives us** a little **INSIGHT** into these **Jewish leaders** -

**but still** - they're **willing** to come **listen** to **Paul**  
& he was **definitely willing** to "**SHARE**" with them

**Acts 28:23 (esv)**

***23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.***

This **must've been SOME KINDA** Home **Bible Study** !!  
**This** was **No** - **25 minute video** & **have some desert**

From **MORNING** till **EVENING** - **That had to be** at least **8-10 hours**

Paul was **EXPOUNDING** - **TESTIFYING** - & **CONVINCING**  
these **Jewish Leaders** - of the truths of **The Kingdom of God**  
**AND** the truths **of Jesus Christ**

Now **THAT** my friends - is a **Bible Study** !!  
**Paul** is **Pouring Out** everything **he's got**

The word **EXPOUNDED** refers to  
the **DETAILS** & the **INTENSITY** in which Paul spoke

& he was **EXPOUNDING** & **TESTIFYING** to **the kingdom of God**  
**and trying to convince them about Jesus**  
**both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets**

That is a **WHOLE BUNCH** of **Expounding & Testifying**

The word **TESTIFY** is **from the word** that we **get** our phrase  
**“UNDER OATH”** - as in **“Testify in a Court of Law”** (Solemn Oath)

& I can **Guarantee** you - He Is Definitely **TESTIFYING** !!  
**Can't you just see** Paul - at the **PEAK of his Ministry** here

It was **from HERE** - as a **Prisoner** - Paul wrote  
**EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, & COLOSSIANS,**  
(as well as **Philemon** & (later) **2Tim**)

& **In those books** are **some** of the most **incredible Truths**  
about **WHO** Jesus Christ **IS** - & **WHAT** he has **DONE** for us

& **Paul** was **PRACTICING** to write **those books**  
by **Testifying** to **THESE** Jewish Leaders

& we'd **say MAN,** it would've **been great** to be a **FLY** on that **WALL**  
**But surprise** . . . we **CAN BE** a **Fly** on that **wall** !!

We can **Listen in** - We can **JOIN** in the **conversation**  
we can **become PART** of Paul's **EXPOUNDING & TESTIFYING**

The **Holy Spirit** has **Preserved ALL of it** for us  
in **the books** Paul **wrote** during this time - & in the **rest of the Bible**

We **can BE PART** - Of what **God was doing** thru Paul **THAT DAY**  
& **thru his DAYS** in Rome

We **can BE PART** of the **continuing story** of **ACTS**

**THAT'S** why there's **NO Conclusion**  
**THAT'S** why the book **doesn't really** come to an **END** . . .

**Because WE are supposed to still be DOING IT !!**

**We have the SAME WORDS Paul used in Rome  
& we have the same people around US who need to hear it**

**You & I can BE PART - of the Continuing ACTS of Jesus Christ -  
BY His Holy Spirit - THRU His Church**

Now THAT - is AWESOME !!

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**If you are a Christian Today - Are you READY to Testify  
to the Kingdom of God in YOUR Life ??**

Guys - The Kingdom of God - *At least for Now*  
is NOT so much A NOUN - as it is A VERB

A NOUN is a PLACE or a THING  
A VERB is an ACTION

**LLOYD OLGILVIE Describes The Kingdom of God as:  
The Purpose, Plan, & Power of GOD**

It's Not so much a PLACE (*not yet anyway*) - It's an ACTION  
The Purpose, Plan, & Power of GOD

**When Jesus Began His Ministry - One of His FIRST Statements was  
*"Repent. For the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand"* (Mat 4:17)**

Jesus wasn't talking about a PLACE . . .

He was talking about the Purpose, Plan, & Power of God  
Being "At Hand" - In their Midst

**When Jesus taught us to pray “*Thy Kingdom Come - Thy Will be Done - On Earth as it is in Heaven*”**

He **wasn't talking** about a **PLACE** . . .

He **was talking** about **PRAYING to BRING**  
**the PURPOSE - PLAN - & POWER** of God **INTO** our lives

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& by **His LIFE, DEATH, & RESURRECTION**  
& **by us** putting our **FULL FAITH** in HIM

**The Kingdom of God** - COMES INTO OUR LIVES  
**The PURPOSE, PLAN, & POWER of God**  
Comes into **OUR LIVES** . . . **to TAKE OVER**

As **True Disciples** - we can **NO LONGER RULE** our own lives  
We have **surrendered** our lives to **The KINGDOM OF GOD**

We have **Surrendered our lives** to  
**the Purpose, Plan, & Power of God**

It is **NO LONGER I** who live (*I'm **NOT** in charge*)  
But **CHRIST LIVES** in me (***HE'S** in Charge Now*)

**The Kingdom of God** - is the **Purpose, Plan, & Power of God**  
**RULING & REIGNING** in our **LIVES** - **TODAY**

**Paul wrote in 1Cor 4:20 (NLT)**  
**20 For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power.**

**The Kingdom of God** - is Living **By God's POWER**

& We CAN Testify to The Kingdom of God in OUR LIVES  
JUST Like Paul did in ROME

& WHEN we Do - THEN WE will become PART  
of the Continuing ACTS of Jesus Christ - THRU His Church

& THAT - is something to get excited about - *isn't it ??*

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So - Paul testified to The Kingdom of God -  
& Proved - by BOTH - the Law & the Prophets  
that Jesus Christ IS God's Promised Messiah

& guess what - the Great Apostle Paul had the  
SAME TWO RESPONSES you & I will have  
when WE Testify to The Kingdom of God in OUR Lives

Acts 28:24 (esv)

24 And some were convinced by what he said, but others  
disbelieved.

If you will JOIN - the Continuing ACTS of Jesus Christ in this World

Then - SOME people around you will be CONVINCED  
& others will NOT BELIEVE

THAT was the Apostle Paul's Results -  
& (Sadly) that is often - OUR Results

Some WILL Believe - & (Sadly) Some - Will NOT

But we HAVE GOT to continue to be a Testimony  
to the PURPOSE, PLAN, & POWER of God in our Lives

We **CANNOT** Grow **DULL**

We **CANNOT** be **Satisfied** with being "**RELIGIOUS**"

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**The thing** that we **MUST** be **FEARFUL** of

**The thing** we **MUST** be on the **LOOKOUT FOR** . . .

Is **the risk** - of **US**

**becoming like those** who Paul **addresses NEXT**

**Acts 28:25-27 (esv)**

*25 And disagreeing (arguing) among themselves, they (Jewish Leaders) departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:*

*26 " 'Go to this people, and say, You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.*

*27 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.'*

This was **God's LAMENT**

of **those** who had **GROWN DULL** by their **RELIGION**

**God first gave** this word to **ISAIAH** in **ISA Ch 6**

**When Isaiah** saw the Lord **HIGH & LIFTED UP**

& **the Train** of His Robe **FILLING the Temple**

& **the Lord** gave **THESE Words** to **Isaiah**

to **let him know** the **True Condition** of God's People

**Their RELIGION** had made them **DULL** to the **things of God**

They **Could NOT receive** the things of God  
**because their Religion** had actually **Closed them off** to God

& **JESUS used** this exact **same Prophecy** to describe the Pharisees -  
Who were also **UNABLE** to **receive** the **Things of God** (**Mat 13**)

**They had SUBSTITUTED** a **LIVING Relationship** with God  
**in exchange** for **Traditions & Customs** - **Rules & Regulations**

**PLEASE** - **DON'T be** like them - **DON'T be** so **DULLED** by **Religion**  
**that** you **CAN'T HEAR** from God **anymore**  
**that** you **CAN'T SEE** what God is **Doing anymore**

Pls - **Protect your Heart** - **Make sure** you can **HEAR from God**  
**DON'T Grow DULL** to the **Wonders** of God

Because **IF you do** - at some point . . .  
you will be **UNABLE to SEE** - & **UNABLE to HEAR** . . .

& then **finally** - **AT SOME POINT**  
You will be **UNABLE to be HEALED** by God

**As Jesus** said Many Times  
**BEWARE** of the **Leaven** of the **Pharisees**

**We've got** to keep our heart **OPEN & LONGING** for God

**We've got** to **LOOK** for Him - & **SEE Him**

**We've got** to **LISTEN** for Him - & **HEAR Him**

We've **got to be** on **The Side** of those who **BELIEVE & RECEIVE**  
**THE KINGDOM OF GOD** into their Lives . . .

**Because** guys - **THAT** is the side - where **Eternal Life Exists**

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**Sadly - The MAJORITY of these Jewish Leaders  
Chose NOT to BELIEVE - & so . . .**

**As if the ISAIAH Prophecy wasn't enough - Now Paul's gonna  
drop the MONSTER BLOW on the Jews**

**Acts 28:28 (esv)**

***28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has  
been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."***

The ISAIAH prophecy was HARD - but saying the Salvation of God  
was being taken to the Gentiles . . .

**That pushed these Religious Jews right over the edge**

& so - **As V.25 says** - They Departed, Arguing among themselves

But Guys - Paul NEVER Gave up his LOVE & CONCERN  
for the Jewish People . . . & NEITHER has GOD

**Altho there's a pretty good chance this was Paul's LAST  
All Day Bible Study with these particular Jewish Leaders**

Altho some DID believe - & became part of the church - PTL

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**& so (just like that) we come to the last two verses  
of the Book of Acts**

**Acts 28:30-31 (esv)**

***30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and  
welcomed all who came to him,***

***31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord  
Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.***

**The fact** that Paul was a **Prisoner in Rome** Didn't **Hinder** the **Gospel**  
**it was** the **LAUNCH PAD** for the Gospel

**The Good News** of Jesus Christ **was brought** to the **city of Rome**  
**thru a Prisoner** chained to a **Guard** - **unable** to **leave his home**

**Paul said** of his situation - **when writing** to the **Philippians**  
**FROM** his **house arrest** in Rome

### **Philippians 1:12–13 (ESV)**

***12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me***  
***has really served to advance the gospel,***

***13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial***  
***guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.***

**what happened** to Paul here - **served to advance the gospel**

& **THAT** has been our **MAIN POINT** today  
**the ADVANCING** of the **Gospel of Jesus Christ**

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### **& BACK in Acts 28:31 . . .**

**I LOVE** that Luke's account **ends** with **PRESENT TENSE Words**  
**Proclaiming** - & **Teaching** . . .

The **last Recorded Event** - in the **ACTS of Jesus Christ,**  
**BY His Spirit - & THRU His Church**

Is the **PRESENT TENSE** Occurrence of  
**PROCLAIMING** The Kingdom of God, &  
**TEACHING** about the **Lord Jesus Christ**

& **WE** have the **Opportunity** to **JOIN**  
the Continuing **ACTS of Jesus Christ THRU His Church**  
**By JOINING** in these **Present Tense Words**

The **Book of Acts** is **NOT** about the **Apostle PAUL**  
It's **NOT** about the **Apostle PETER**  
& It's **NOT ONLY** about the **1st Century NT Church**

**It's about** the Continuing **ACTS of Jesus Christ THRU His Church** -  
**Until** He comes again to **TAKE US** to **BE** where He **IS**

& **UNTIL** that day - the **Continuing ACTS of His Church** are

**PROCLAIMING** the kingdom of God and **TEACHING** about the  
**Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance**

**What** we **leave Paul doing** here - **WE CAN DO TODAY !!**

We have the **SAME Lord**, **SAME Spirit**, **SAME Commission**

**It's What we are Called To**

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**When we started** this book - Back in **Acts 1:8**  
**There was** a Promise if for **EVERY** Believer

**Acts 1:8 (ESV)**

***8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.***

**That includes** - **NUEVO** - **AND** **wherever** you're **listening** to me

The **Apostle Paul** might've been **One-Of-A-Kind** -  
But he **could NOT come** to **Nuevo** - or your **Neighborhood**

**So God Gave YOU the SAME Power & the SAME Commission -**  
**& sent YOU to be His Witness - to the end of the Earth**

**You & I can be PART - of the Continuing ACTS of Jesus Christ,**  
**BY His Spirit - & THRU His Church**

**If we will COMMIT to TESTIFY to The Kingdom of God in our lives**  
**& if we will COMMIT to be a WITNESS for Jesus Christ**

**Following the Great Promise of Acts 1:8 - in the Next 3 Vs's . . .**

### **Acts 1:9–11 (ESV)**

***9 And when he had said these things (v.8), as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.***

***10 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes,***

***11 and said, “Men of Galilee (& those in Nuevo), why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”***

**The implication here is - Hey - There's no time to stand around**

**You have your COMMISSION**

**You have your POWER**

**GO - be PART of the Continuing ACTS of Jesus Christ,**  
**BY His Spirit - & THRU His Church - UNTIL He RETURNS**

**Let's Pray**