

Acts 29 Series – Part 5

The Holy Spirit Still Speaks and Guides

Pastor Brian Coles

It a privilege for me this morning to wrap up our series called Acts 29 several weeks ago Pastor Lester began this journey reminding us that the things that the Holy Spirit was doing in the book of Acts he is still doing.

We have learned that the...

The Holy Spirit Still Empowers

The Holy Spirit Still Strengthens

The Holy Spirit Still Saves

The Holy Spirit Still Sends and Delivers

The Holy Spirit Still Speaks and Guides

1) The Holy Spirit Still

That word has stuck out to me since the moment we started the series. Still...is one of those interesting words. It can mean a lot of different things depending on the context in which it is used.

Cementing in our hearts that the Holy Spirit is still working, is at the very core of our belief as Christians.

2) Walking in step with the Spirit is more about dedicating our lives to a passionate purpose not to rigid obedience.

I'd like to use our time this morning to focus in on three stories...

Acts 16:13-15

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home.

Lydia

Acts 16:16-18

¹⁶ Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” ¹⁸ She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.

Slave Girl

Acts 16:29-33

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized.

Jailor

What do a rich business women, a slave girl, and a night shift Jailor have in common?

Truthfully, nothing. In fact it is most likely that these three people never once saw each other, or knew each other or had anything in common, an yet we find them here memorialized forever in the scripture.

The only thing they had in common was the purpose of God in Paul’s life.

Purpose... Paul’s identity as a person was wrapped up in his calling as a follower of Christ.

3) Our identity as people must be wrapped up in our calling as followers of Christ

Next time someone asks you what you do, tell them you’re a Christian. I am full time applying the things of God to my life. Following in Jesus footsteps, resisting the temptation to follow my own way, asking and seeking God for his will. That’s what I do. I also happen to be a pastor, electrician, wood smith, farmer, driver, business owner, student, stay at home mom.

4) We are Followers of Christ because he is constantly on the move.

Go make disciples, I came to seek and save the lost. A God of action. For some of us that simply not in our theology. Paul ended up at a river bank because God wanted to save a rich lady. Paul was followed by a demon because God wanted to free a slave girl. Paul was put in prison because God wanted to save a jailor. And start a Church.

(Ask the worship team to come forward)

Close with the story of Paul and Silas in Prison



Discussion Questions:

September 17th 2017

Acts 29

Message by Pastor Brian Coles

ICE BREAKERS:

- One of the things I most appreciate about my family is...
- One of the ways I've seen God's faithfulness lately is...

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Is there any one truth you've been learning from the Acts 29 sermon series that has impacted you or challenged you? In review here were some of the message titles: The Holy Spirit Still Empowers; ... Still Makes Us Brave; ...Still Saves; ...Still Sends; ...Still Guides.

2. Is there one practical way that your life needs to change as a result of that truth?

3. Read Acts 16:11-15

- Notice in verse 13 how Paul and the others shared Jesus with the women through conversation. What are some of the difficulties you face having conversations about Jesus?
- Have you found any effective questions, or conversation-paths that help open people up to talking about faith?
- What are the hurdles you run into when sharing your faith through conversations? And how can you overcome them.
- In verse 15 notice how quickly Lydia shares her home with the other believers. What are some ways that we can use our homes as a hub for God's activities?

4. We've been learning that God wants to use us like He did the first church in the book of Acts. Does that...

- a. Scare you? And why?
- b. Excite you? And why?
- c. Feel impossible to you? And why?
- d. Sound like a fantasy? And why?
- e. Sound like hard work? And why?

5. Read Acts 16:16-40

- Why do you think Paul was troubled in verse 18? After all, they were getting free publicity?
- Verse 19, notice the reason the owners were angry at Paul and Silas. Not all reasons for persecution are theological. There are many reasons people don't want to hear the gospel message or are antagonistic towards Christians. Have you encountered any opposition to you or the message of Jesus? For what reason?
- In verse 20, notice the tension between the Roman crowds and the Jews. See how the crowd exploited those stereotypes and segregation. What are some of the stereotypes that Christians face today? And how are those stereotypes exploited? Do you think it's our job to combat people's stereotypes?
- In verse 25 Paul and Silas responded to persecution and hardships with prayer and worship. This is a lesson we learn in the book of Psalms as well. Do you have a situation in your life right now that you just need to worship and pray and trust God in the midst of hardship?
- When you worship and pray in the midst of hardships how does it positively affect your emotions and spirit?
- If someone asked you "what must I do to be saved," like the jailor did, do you feel like you'd know how to answer them and how to follow up with them? As a group talk about how exactly to lead someone to Jesus, how to pray that prayer, and how to follow up with them after their salvation; what should be their next steps. (Note: This may feel obvious to some people. But it's still worth going through the exercise just to rehearse it and keep it fresh in people's minds.)

WORSHIP AND PRAYER

As a large group, make a list of some of the hardships some of your group members are currently facing. Then have a time of worship and prayer.

- You can give thanks to God for who He is
- Look up some scriptures and declare those scriptures over your situation
- Lay hands on each other and speak life to each other