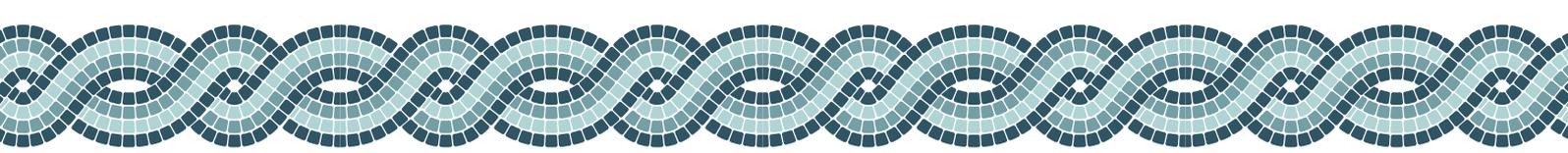


Adjusted for City

# ACTS 12-28

THE UNSTOPPABLE KING



# Introducing our Growth Group Series

I'm not sure where you sit when it comes to history, are you a history buff who listens to podcasts for fun, or are you someone who left the past behind in your last compulsory Year 10 class?

I probably sit somewhere in the middle...

However, when I visit other countries and hear about their pasts, and the way they tell and own their histories, I am struck by the importance it can hold in shaping who you think you are, and who you think your community is.

In Australia, the past is often put in the “too hard basket”, and I think it actually does reflect in our individualistic, live-for-the-now, culture.

But I don't think that is our biggest issue with history.

I think we miss out on an incredible assurance, confidence, connectedness, and courageousness when we forget our adopted history. When we forget the book of Acts.

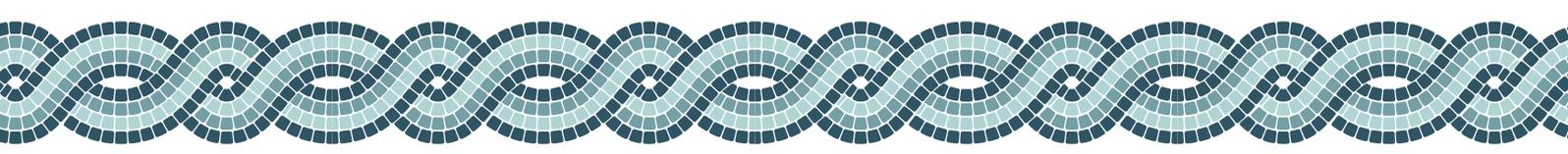
As individuals and as the church, you could argue that Acts chronicles the first reformation, as the Holy Spirit works to convict people of their sin, and Christ's righteousness. As the Gospel goes out reforming the Jewish expectations and redrawing the boundaries between Jew and Gentile, the story of our hope and inheritance comes to life!

Acts 12–28 is not simply “more stories about Paul.” It is Luke's carefully shaped sequel to the story of the risen King Jesus continuing His work (Acts 1:1).

The final chapters show the Kingdom of God advancing unhindered despite every obstacle. These chapters are meant to convince the early church, and us today, that Christ truly is the reigning King and that His mission cannot fail. It's written to give confidence and confirm what the truth about Christ and His plans are, then and now.

I hope you are as excited as I am, to rejoice in what our Kind Jesus has done, and remember what His plans and purposes are for us now.

AISHA



# Acts 23:11-24:27

## OPENING UP

Have you ever been asked why you believe in Jesus? How did you feel, what did you say?

## OBSERVE

### Read Acts 23:11-35

Look at some neoclassical art: Benjamin West's *The death of General Wolfe*, Jaques-Louis David's *The Oath of the Horatii*.

Sketch out the characters (Stick figures is fine, the above are just examples of composition.) The aim is to use a similar format to show the story. You could give the simple facial expressions as well.

## UNDERSTAND

How do we see Christ's rule, his sovereignty and power to deliver on his promises?

## OBSERVE

### Read Acts 24:1-24

Split the group into 3.

Get each group to outline one of the following person/persons positions and their tact in how they go about asserting them :

1. Tertullus and the Jews
2. Paul
3. Felix

## UNDERSTAND

Paul is straight forward, clear and confident.

### Unpack:

1. What he is clear about: the importance and divisiveness of the resurrection
  - a. Read 1 Cor 15:13-29 and 50-58,
    - i. Why does the resurrection matter so much?
    - ii. What does the resurrection have to do with the establishing of God's Kingdom?
2. The source and result of his confidence
  - a. Look at 1 Cor 4:3-5; why is Paul so confident before people who literally hold his life in their hands?

## APPLY: REALISING WHICH COURT WE'VE LEFT AND KINGDOM WE LIVE IN

If God has judged us righteous in Christ; what might this change about telling others the Gospel?

If Jesus is the resurrected King, what might this change about telling others the Gospel?

### PRAY

Watch this video from one of our global partners, let their prayer shape yours.

[Alternative link here](#)



### LOOKING AHEAD

Read or listen to Acts 25-26 before you meet again next week.

# Acts 25-26

## OPENING UP

Have you ever been asked why you believe in Jesus? How did you feel, what did you say?

## OBSERVE

This is a very large chunk of text, and Paul appears before kings and authorities, and often gives similar testimony.

In order to break it up and get a good understanding of what's going on you'll be developing TV/Magazine style answers for each of the characters.

Split the group to cover the following passages Acts 25:1-12, 26:1-29.

### **PART 1 Paul**

Answer the following questions as if Paul was answering.

1. What are you on trial for?
2. What is true or false about the accusations made against you?
3. What do you want?

Summarise this together.

### **PART 2 Everyone else**

Split the group to cover the following characters.

- The High Priest and the Jews
- The tribune
- Felix the governor and Drusilla
- Festus
- Agrippa and Bernice

For each of them answer the following questions:

1. Why is Paul on trial?
2. What do you know about the Way?
3. What should happen to him?

Each group present, one person pretending to be the character, and the other the interviewer.

## UNDERSTAND

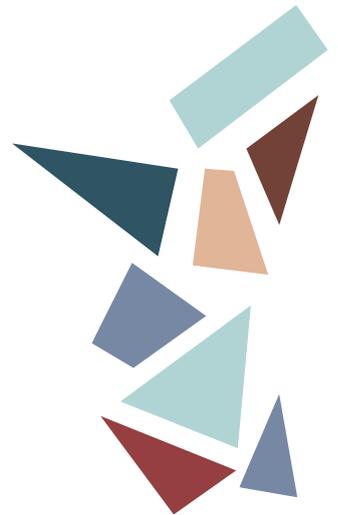
Why has Luke included all these accounts?

Why might these accounts give the early believers assurance or confidence?

## APPLY: RESETTING EVANGELISTIC EXPECTATIONS

These events took place over many years! What was the fruit of it? Why does Paul keep going?

What do we expect when we approach evangelism? Why should we keep going?



## PRAY

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## LOOKING AHEAD

Read or listen to Acts 27-28 before you meet again next week.

## THE UNSTOPPABLE KING

# Acts 27-28

### OPENING UP

When are you most likely to give up on a goal? Do you have any 'hacks' to get you over an obstacle?

### OBSERVE

Listen to Chapter 27-28:16 being read aloud: Maybe find a dramatic reading...

- Using the map below, have people draw the journey as it is being read.
- Retell the narrative in the round. Every person has to begin their sentence with "But then..."

- 1 Jerusalem
- 2 Caesarea
- 3 Sidon (27:3)
- 4 Myra (27:5)
- 5 Cnidus (27:7)
- 6 Fair Havens (27:8)
- 7 Malta (28:1)
- 8 Syracuse (28:12)
- 9 Rhegium (28:13)
- 10 Puteoli (28:13)
- 11 Forum of Appius (28:15)
- 12 Three Taverns (28:15)
- 13 Rome (28:16)



### UNDERSTAND

What do you notice about that series of events?

How are the promises of the Kingdom coming to fruition?

## OBSERVE & UNDERSTAND

### 28:17-20

What is Paul's reason for speaking to the Jewish leaders in Rome?

### 28:21-22

What do the Jewish leaders in Rome know of Paul and his message?

### 28: 23-24

What is the message Paul brings, how is the message and their response different or similar to what we've seen previously in the book of Acts?

### 28:25-31

What previous themes in Acts does this section pick up?

## APPLY: REALISING OUR HISTORY IN ACTS

Split into 3 groups: Imagine it's the day after Theophilus and the local church have read this account.

- What are they confident about?
- What are they praising God for?
- What are they prepared for?

Personal reflection: Are these things what **you** are confident of, praise filled for, and prepared for upon realising our history in Acts.

### PRAY

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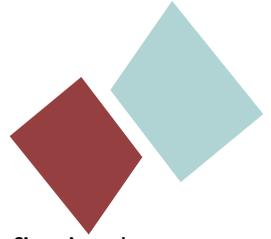
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### LOOKING AHEAD

Read or listen to Acts 27-28 before you meet again next week.

# Acts: An Overview



## WHO

Written by Luke, author of the Gospel of Luke. Travelled with Paul.

Written to Theophilus (one who loves God), for assurance and evidence of the truth.

## WHERE

Acts follows a geographical and spiritual trajectory; "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" - Acts 1:8

## WHY

Luke writes Acts as a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. A continued account that confirms that the events during Christ's earthly ministry, and after his ascension really are the work of God; fulfilling the saving promises given to Israel long ago.

Acts answers questions like:

- What is life like in the Kingdom of God now that his Son is reigning?
- How can the nations (the Gentiles) be included in God's kingdom?
- How does Christ rule and judge? Where does the law fit? What about the Spirit?

## WHAT

Acts is a historical narrative. It fits in the same category as books like Exodus and 1&2 Samuel as it records the story of God's people and His actions towards and through them.

It is also a theological, missional and training book.

## WHEN

Acts continues the narrative of the Gospel of Luke, from Christ's ascension to Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

It was probably written sometime before AD 70. Covering around 30-35 years of history.

A map of the time



# Maps



- 16 Corinth (18:1)
- 17 Cenchrea (18:18)
- 18 Ephesus (18:19)
- 19 Rhodes?
- 20 Caesarea (18:22)
- 21 Jerusalem? (18:22)
- 1 Syrian Antioch (18:22)

END OF THE 2ND MISSIONARY JOURNEY



- 1 Syrian Antioch
- 2 Ephesus (19:1)
- 3 Macedonia (20:1)
- 4 Greece (20:2)
- 5 Troas (20:6)
- 6 Assos (20:13)
- 7 Mitylene (20:15)
- 8 Chios (20:15)
- 9 Samos (20:15)
- 10 Miletus (20:15)
- 11 Cos 21:1
- 12 Rhodes (21:1)
- 13 Patara (21:1)
- 14 Tyre (21:3)
- 15 Ptolemais (21:7)
- 16 Caesarea (21:8)
- 17 Jerusalem (21:17)

THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MISSIONARY JOURNEY

