

# A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

UNDER THE EXALTED CHRIST, THE GOSPEL BEGINS TO SPREAD

# THE ACTS

† THE BOOK OF ACTS

## OF THE APOSTLES

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, Associated

*An overview of the Book of Acts, by Given O. Blakely*

### ACTS 5:31-32

*"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."*

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

### Lesson # 107

### COMMENTARY ON: 28:23-31

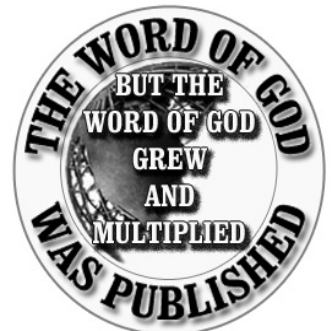
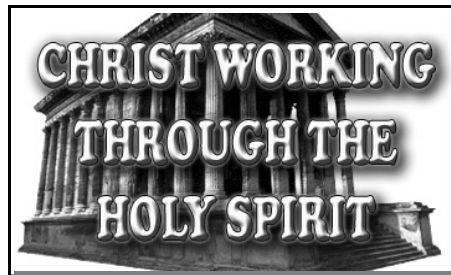
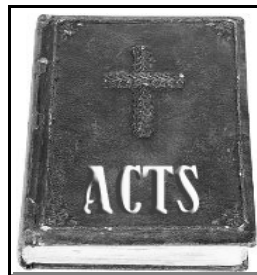
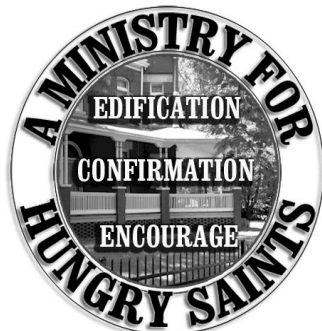
#### PAUL PREACHING IN ROME

In a grand display of the Sovereign direction of the Lord, Paul is granted a single day to speak particularly to the Jews. He seizes the opportunity, and many come to his lodging on that day. During the day he expounded and testified of the Kingdom of God, persuading them of Jesus out of Moses and the Prophets. He continued to do this from morning until evening. Because some believed and some did not, Paul delivers a word of solemn warning, which was followed by the departure of the Jews. They reasoned among themselves concerning what they had heard that memorable day. Paul is then said to have continued for two consecutive years in his own hired house, receiving everyone that came to him. This method of disseminating the Word had also been employed in Ephesus, as compared with a formalized outreach program so common in our time. The substance of Paul's preaching and teaching is identified, together with a special notation that he did this with confidence, with no man forbidding him.

### ACTS 17:26-27

*"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."*

"... and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)



Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ

The Book of Acts

Lesson Number 107



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GNB=Good News (1966), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = UBS Lexicon, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon, LEH = LEH Lexicon, GINGRICH = Gingrich Lexicon

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF HOW THE ENTHRONED CHRIST, BY MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WORKED THROUGH HIS HOLY APOSTLES AND GODLY MEN, TO SPREAD THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD, AND TO BRING EDIFICATION AND STABILITY TO MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

FINAL LESSON

PAUL PREACHES IN ROME

FINAL LESSON

“ 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. 30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” . . . . . (Acts 28:23-31)

INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY OF HOLY ACTIVITY

The book of Acts is summation of the activity of the church for the first thirty-five years of its existence (29-64 A.D.). During that time the mandate of the King was being carried out in the manner He desires, with repeated accounts of His direction (1:7-8; 2:4; 4:8,31; 8:26,29; 9:5-17; 10:4,19; 11:28; 12:8, 17; 13:2,9; 16:9; 22:10,14,21; 23:11; 26:15, 16;7:23). Precisely what kind of activities were the object of our

Lord's direction? What kind of people were the focus of attention? Where did the apostles spend most of their time?

It is not unusual to hear men present the book of Acts as though reaching the lost was nearly the only thing that was done? That this is was done cannot be denied – but was that the thrust of recorded efforts of the early church? Where was the quality time spent, and who was generally the focus

of attention?

The following two pages records the majority of contacts recorded in the book of Acts. They speak for themselves. I provide them here with full knowledge that I may have inadvertently missed some. However, they will be representative of the kind of thrust, or emphasis, that occupied the early church that filled the earth with the Gospel by the middle of the first century.

In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely

**A Ministry for Hungry Saints, Series on the Book of Acts, Lesson #107, Meeting #445**

#	TEXT	PERSON	PLACE	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	RECIPIENTS AND RESULTS
1	2:14-41	Peter	House	Jerusalem	Preached to Jews	3,000 Jews converted
2	3:12-4:4	Peter	Temple	Jerusalem	Man Healed	5,000 Jewish men believed
3	4:8-12	Peter	Council	Jerusalem	Accountability	Jews
4	4:19-20	Peter & John	Council	Jerusalem	Accountability	Jews
5	5:20-21	Apostles	Temple	Jerusalem	Commanded	Jews
6	5:29-32	Peter & Apostles	Council	Jerusalem	Accountability	Jews
7	5:42	Apostles	Temple/Houses	Jerusalem	Continuance	Jews
8	6:9-10	Stephen	Synagogue	Jerusalem	Disputing	Jews
9	7:2-53	Stephen	Council	Jerusalem	Defense	Jews
10	8:4	Those scattered	Everywhere	Nations/Regions	Preaching	Jews only (Acts 11:19)
11	8:5-8,12	Philip	City	Samaria	Preaching	Samaritans
12	8:25	Peter & John	Villages	Samaria	Preaching	Samaritans
13	8:26-39	Philip	Desert Road	To Gaza	Preached	Ethiopian Eunuch
14	8:40	Philip	Cities	Azotus	Preached	Everyone in Palestine
15	9:17-19	Ananas	House	Damascus	Called apostle	Saul
16	9:20-22	Saul	Synagogues	Damascus	Preached	Jews
17	9:29	Saul	City	Jerusalem	Disputed	Jews
18	10:26-48	Peter	House	Caesarea	Preached	Gentiles – Cornelius
19	11:19-21	Those scattered	Cities	Phrycia/Cyprus/Antioch	Preached	Citizenry, with emphasis on Jews
21	11:26	Barnabas & Saul	City	Antioch	Taught	Believers
22	13:4-5	Barnabas & Saul	Synagogues	Salamis	Preached Word	Jews
23	13:12	Saul	Governor's house	Paphos	Doctrine	Governor
24	13:14-41	Saul	Synagogue	Antioch	Preached	Jews/Gentiles
25	13:43-48	Barnabas & Saul	City	Antioch	Persuaded	Jews/Gentiles
26	13:49	Many	Region	Antioch	Word published	Jews/Gentiles
27	14:1-3	Paul & Barnabas	Synagogue	Iconium	Preached	Jews/Greeks
28	14:6-18	Paul & Barnabas	Cities	Lystra/Derby/Lyconia	Preached	Citizenry
29	14:21	Paul & Barnabas	City	Derbe	Preached	Citizenry
30	14:21-23	Paul & Barnabas	Cities	Lystra/Conium/Antioch	Confirmed	Believers
31	14:25	Paul & Barnabas	City	Perga	Preached	Citizenry
32	15:3	Paul & Barnabas	Cities	Phenice/Samaria	Reported	Believers
33	15:32	Judas & Silas	City	Antioch	Confirmed	Believers
34	15:35	Paul & Barnabas	City	Antioch	Preached/Taught	Believers
35	15:41	Paul & Silas	Region	Syria/Cilicia	Confirming	Churches
36	16:5	Paul & Silas	Cities	Syria/Cilicia	Established	Churches
37	16:6	Paul & Silas	Regions	Phrygia & Galatia	Established	Churches
38	16:13-15	Paul & Silas	City	Philippi	Taught	Jewish women
39	16:30-34	Paul & Silas	City	Philippi	Spoke Word	Gentile Jailer & House
40	16:40	Paul & Silas	House	Philippi	Comforted	Believers
41	17:1-9	Paul & Silas	Synagogue	Thessalonica	Preached	Jews/Greeks
42	17:10-12	Paul & Silas	Synagogue	Berea	Preached	Jews/Greek
43	17:17-18	Paul	Synagogue/Market	Athens	Disputed	Jews/Devout men
44	17:17-19	Paul	Market Play	Athens	Disputed	Devout men
45	17:22-33	Paul	Areopogus	Athens	Preached	Certain devout men clave to him
46	18:4-6	Paul	Synagogue	Corinth	Reasoned	Jews
47	18:7-8	Paul	House	Corinth	No details	Jews, Cripus/house believed
48	18:11-18	Paul	City	Corinth	1-1/2 yrs teaching	Believers
49	18:19-20	Paul	Synagogue	Ephesus	Reasoned	Jews
50	18:22	Paul	"The church"	Jerusalem	Saluted	Church
51	18:23	Paul	Region	Galatia & Phrygia	Strengthening	Disciples
52	18:24	Apollos	Synagogue	Ephesus	Spoke boldly	He was taught by Aquila/Priscilla
53	18:26	Aquila/Priscilla	Home	Ephesus	Taught more perfectly	Apollos increased
54	18:27	Apollos	Region	Achaia	Strengthened	Disciples
55	18:28	Apollos	Synagogue	Corinth	Mightily convinced	Jews
56	19:1-7	Paul	City	Ephesus	Taught	Disciples baptized
57	19:8-9	Paul	Synagogue	Ephesus	Disputed 3 mths	Mixed results – Jews
58	19:9-10	Paul	School	Ephesus	Continued for 2 yrs	All in Asia heard (Jews/Gentiles)
59	19:11-12	Paul	School	Ephesus	Special miracles	Jews/Gentiles: Many healed

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#	TEXT	PERSON	PLACE	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	RECIPIENTS AND RESULTS
60	19:17-20	Paul	School	Ephesus	Word of God spread	Citizenry: Great book burning
61	19:22-41	Paul	Asia	Ephesus	True God declared	Idol worshipers opposed
62	20:1-2	Paul	Macedonia	Various parts	Gave much exhortation	Believers
63	20:6-12	Paul	Upper chamber	Troas	Preached	Ministered to disciples
64	20:17-38	Paul	Unknown	Miletus	Exhorted elders	Disciples wept when he departed
65	21:3-6	Paul	Unknown	Tyre	Tarried with disciples	Disciples accompanied to ship
66	21:8-16	Paul	Philips house	Caesarea	Tarried certain days	Disciples spoke, some joined Paul
67	21:17-20	Paul	Unknown	Jerusalem	Declared his ministry	Disciples glorified the Lord
68	21:21-39	Paul	Temple	Jerusalem	Joined Jews in vow	Falsely charged by Asian Jews
69	22:1-22:21	Paul	Steps of barracks	Jerusalem	Testified to Jews	Zealously opposed by Jews
70	23:1-10	Paul	Barracks	Jerusalem	Testified to Council	Great dissension arose among Jews
71	23:33-24:23	Paul	Governor's mansion	Caesarea	Gave testimony to Felix	Incarcerated Paul, giving liberty
72	24:24-25	Paul	Governor's mansion	Caesarea	Reasoned with Felix	Felix trembled, sought another time
73	25:6-12	Paul	Before Festus	Caesarea	Appealed to Caesar	Festus ordered he go to Caesar
74	26:1-29	Paul	Before Agrippa	Caesarea	Testified to Agrippa	Agrippa concluded Paul innocent
75	27:3	Paul	Visited brethren	Sidon	Was refreshed	Continued on journey to Rome
76	27:9-12	Paul	Ship	At Sea	Gave counsel	His counsel was ignored
77	27:21-26	Paul	Ship in storm	At Sea	Related vision	Continued journey
78	27:30-31	Paul	Ship in storm	At Sea	Spoke to centurion	Had to remain on ship to be saved
79	27:33-36	Paul	Ship in storm	At Sea	Urged people to eat	People cheered up and ate
80	28:7-8	Paul	House of Publius	Island of Melia	Healed father	Gentiles: sick healed
81	28:9-10	Paul	House of Publius	Island of Melita	Healed sick of island	Gave them needed supplies
82	28:14	Paul	Unknown	Puteoli, Italy	Found certain brethren	Spent seven days with brethren
83	28:15	Paul	Unknown	Three Taverns, Appii Forum	Roman brethren met	Paul thanks God and took courage
84	28:17-29	Paul	Special house	Rome	Called chief Jews	Testified to Jews
85	28:30-31	Paul	Rented house	Rome	All who came to him	Testified of Kingdom for two years

**A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT**

In a grand display of the Sovereign direction of the Lord, Paul is granted a single day to speak particularly to the Jews. He seizes the opportunity, and many come to his lodging on that day. During the day he expounded and testified of the Kingdom of God, persuading them of Jesus out of Moses and the Prophets. He continued to do this from morning until evening. Because some believed and some did not, Paul delivers a word of solemn warning, which was followed by the departure of the Jews. They reasoned among themselves concerning what they had heard that memorable day. Paul is then said to have continued for two consecutive years in his own hired house, receiving everyone that came to him. This method of disseminating the Word had also been employed in Ephesus, as compared with a formalized outreach program so common in our time. The substance of Paul's preaching and teaching is identified, together with a special notation that he did this with confidence, with no man forbidding him.

**SPIRITUAL CONSISTENCY**

There is a certain spiritual consistency that is seen throughout the book of Acts. The substance of preaching is invariably Christ and/or the Kingdom of God. This could be called theo-centricity, or God-centeredness. The focus of attention is never

placed upon human duty. Whenever the requirements for men are addressed, it is always within the context of the Gospel and man's accountability to God.

**The church itself is never at the heart of the proclamation.** There is no report of an effort to increase her numbers, or to plant new churches, or to restore the one that was first found in Jerusalem. There is no emphasis placed upon the family, the government, social equity, or the state of society in general. Political issues were never emphasized, nor was the social inequities of the day – like slavery.

There was no stress placed on personal problems, domestic issues, or the general state of young people, or men, or women. Worldly authorities were not consulted or used to buttress what was being preached and taught. Higher education was not accentuated among the people of God. There was no plea for funds having to do with outreach, or the maintenance of an institutional agenda. The only special offering that was gathered from the churches was for the support of the "poor saints" which were at Jerusalem. **There was no promotion of Christian music, or teaching concerning "praise and worship."** There was no call for the general support of the poor nations of the world, or

for the socially deprived.

The record of the activities of the early church and its leaders is available to every literate person in the world. There is no need for surmising and speculation on matters that have so captured the attention of modern Christians.

This observation is not to be construed as an expression of opposition to philanthropic works that target the poor and oppressed of this world. God forbid that such a conclusion should be drawn. **It is meant to affirm that such works are not primary ones, nor are the people of God to be judged in regard to their response to such promotions.** They are not to be foisted upon the church as though heaven had placed such an obligation upon the saints of the living God. It is enough to say that we are to "do good unto all men," but it is also necessary to add, as does the Spirit, "especially to them that are of the household of faith" (Gal 6:10).

All of these things are lived out in the book of Acts. **The main people are obviously the people of God, and the main message pertains to the Gospel of Christ.** If those emphases are not reflected in the modern church, it is walking outside of the will of God, and is competing with the

God-revealed emphasis for His people. These observations are plain enough to be seen and received by all who are of humble spirit.

## THEY APPOINTED HIM A DAY

### CONTENTS

- THEY APPOINTED HIM A DAY (28:23)
- HE EXPOUNDED AND TESTIFIED (28:24a)
- SOME BELIEVED AND SOME DID NOT (28:24b)
- THEY AGREED NOT AMONG THEMSELVES (28:25a)
- THE CATALYST FOR DEPARTURE (28:25b-28)
- THEY HAD GREAT REASONING AMONG THEMSELVES (28:29)
- TO FULL YEARS IN HIS OWN HIRED HOUSE (28:30)
- PREACHING AND TEACHING (28:31)
- CONCLUSION

“<sup>28:23</sup> *And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging . . .*”

#### THEY APPOINTED HIM A DAY

“*And when they had appointed him a day . . .*” Other versions read, “*set a day for him,*”<sup>NASB</sup> “*arranged to meet Paul on a certain day,*”<sup>NIV</sup> “*when a day had been fixed,*”<sup>BBE</sup> “*they arranged a day with him,*”<sup>CJB</sup> “*on a designated day,*”<sup>GWN</sup> “*So a time was set,*”<sup>NLT</sup> “*Paul and the Jewish leaders set a day for a meeting,*”<sup>LIVING</sup> “*They agreed on a time to meet with Paul,*”<sup>CEV</sup> “*So they set a date with Paul,*”<sup>GNB</sup> and “*They agreed on a time.*”<sup>MESSAGE</sup>

This was a formal arrangement – a special day, a special time, and a special place. Who did the appointing? The Roman authorities? The guard assigned to him? Paul himself? The Jews? Or was it something jointly done between Paul and the Jews. All of the versions, and all of the commentators I reviewed assume the time was set by Paul and the Jews. I am not sure this is the case. When they came to Rome, it is written that the authorities “*permitted him to dwell by himself with a soldier who guarded him*” (Acts 28:18). If this is the same house he rented, which is mentioned in verse 30, it is

probable that Paul had been allowed to set times when he could be visited. It is also possible that this was cleared by the Roman authorities, which, to me, seems more reasonable. However a person looks at this text, there did have to be an agreement between the Jews and Paul.

There was doubtless some sense in which both parties had to be prepared for the meeting, for everything was to be done in a day. The fact that this could happen seems to me to require Divine intervention. The willingness on the part of the Jews is itself most remarkable. The fact that no one interfered with this meeting suggests that Satan was restrained at this time. He was not able to foment agitation as he did in the Temple, on the stairs of the barracks, in the judgment hall of Felix, and before Festus. But at this time, when Paul, by the direction of Jesus Himself, was to bear witness of Him to Rome, Satan is shackled, and able to “*do nothing against the truth*” (2 Cor 13:8).

Satan, then, although “*as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Pet 5:8), is **still restrained**. He cannot venture one millimeter beyond the boundary of Divine permission. That is a precious piece of knowledge to stow away in our hearts as we journey through this world. **You are not the only one with limitations! Your adversary has them also.** They have been imposed upon him by the same Lord whose heel he bruised.

Satan has never been able to operate without Divine limitation, as confirmed in the case of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7). That circumstance has not been solidified even more. Not only is he strictly subject to the will of the Lord, but the children of God

can successfully “*resist*” Him (1 Pet 5:7-8; James 4:4). They have been given “*the whole armor of God,*” and weapons of “*warfare*” that are capable or repulsing his vicious attacks (Eph 6:10-18; 2 Cor 10:3-4).

Yet, in the employment of this weaponry, we are wholly dependent upon the Lord. This does not mean that we can live trouble-free lives. Paul had all of these weapons available to him, in this three-year episode, yet he endured beating, incarceration, being shackled with a chain, enduring an unprecedented storm, and being bitten by an extremely venomous snake. Yet, even “*in all these things,*” he continued “*more than a conqueror through Him that loved*” him (Rom 8:37). His survival, and also this appointment to meet with the Jews proved that it is precisely the truth: “*greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*” (1 John 4:4).

#### THERE CAME MANY INTO HIS LODGING

“*. . . there came many to him into his lodging . . .*” Other versions read, “*they came to him at his lodging in large numbers,*”<sup>NASB</sup> “*came in even larger numbers,*”<sup>NIV</sup> “*came to him at his lodgings in great numbers,*”<sup>NRSV</sup> “*a larger number of influential Jews than expected,*”<sup>GWN</sup> and “*they came back to his home with a number of their friends.*”<sup>MESSAGE</sup>

When the Jews came to Paul, they were larger in number than when he first met them. These were not mere children or casual Jews (if there be such a thing), but chief men of the Jews. I gather than those who came were devoted to the Law, and were expert in the contents of Scripture. Their motivation for coming was to hear what Paul

**But from the higher perspective, they were gathered together by the Lord to be exposed to the Gospel. This was the same kind of circumstance that existed on that memorable day of Pentecost. There were “Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” gathered in Jerusalem.**

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thought, and to learn more of this sect that was everywhere spoken against. **But from the higher perspective, they were gathered together by the Lord to be exposed to the Gospel.** This was the same kind of circumstance that existed on that memorable day of Pentecost. There were “*Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven*” gathered in Jerusalem. They thought they were there to observe the feasts of the Passover and Pentecost. However, they had really been drawn together by the Lord to hear the inaugural address of the day of salvation. The disciples had not brought them together. It was the work of the Lord.

Similarly, Paul had agreed to meet with a certain group of Jews, but more came than he at first expected. **This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes** (Psa 118:23).

**A Spiritual Application**

Those who live by faith can expect

I understand that this does not happen all of the time. But it is possible where there are people who are living by faith and walking in the Spirit. Take, for example, our own fellowship here in Joplin: The Word of Truth Fellowship. There are thousands of people who have believed and been baptized because of the message that has sounded from this place. In Pakistan alone the number is in the hundreds of thousands. While there is one “Word of Truth Fellowship” in Joplin, there are about 567 in Pakistan. The message has also reaped large numbers in Burkina Faso, West Africa. The message God has given us to see and declare has reaped far greater results in Kenya Africa than it has in Joplin, Missouri.

And why is this so? It is certainly not traceable to any expertise we have had. It is not because we developed strategies to reach these people. Christian leaders from these areas came to us, and men from other regions continue to come to us (i.e.

of the body (Rom 8:13).

- ⇨ Presenting your body a living sacrifice unto God (Rom 12:1-2).
- ⇨ Maintaining fellowship with the Son (1 Cor 1:9).
- ⇨ Keeping the Gospel in memory (1 Cor 15:2).
- ⇨ Standing fast in the Lord (1 Thess 3:8).
- ⇨ Walking in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7).
- ⇨ Setting our affection on things above and not on things on the earth (Col 1:1-2).
- ⇨ Continuing in the faith, grounded and settled (Col 1:23).
- ⇨ Fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12).
- ⇨ Running the race with patience that has been set before us, while looking unto Jesus (Heb 12:1-2).
- ⇨ Holding fast the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end (Heb 3:6).
- ⇨ Holding the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end (Heb 3:14).

**The same Lord and the same power that brought this large number of leading Jews to Paul is still at work. However, to enjoy the benefits of such power, men must be within the circumference where it is made known.**

the Lord to do more than they can “ask or think” (Eph 3:20). Babylon the Great has taught men to rejoice when their own plans appear to have been brought to fruition. But there is a rejoicing that transcends such meager pursuits. It happens when in a moment of time, and entirely apart from human plans, the number of disciples explodes from 120 to 3,120, and a few days later 5,000 men are added to the number (Acts 2:41; 4:4). It is the kind of rejoicing that results from a deacon going down to the city of Samaria when the disciples are scattered owing to persecution. When he preaches Christ there, the entire city “with one accord” give heed to his message (Acts 8:5-8).

Philippines, Ghana, and Myanmar).

**The same Lord and the same power that brought this large number of leading Jews to Paul is still at work.** However, to enjoy the benefits of such power, men must be within the circumference where it is made known. This involves:

- ⇨ Living by faith (Heb 10:38).
- ⇨ Walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25).
- ⇨ Abiding in the Son (John 15:4,7; 1 John 2:24).
- ⇨ Through the Spirit mortifying the deeds

**These are things to which Paul had devoted himself. They, and other things related to them, are what keeps one within the circle of usability.**

This is also why Paul sought brethren wherever he went, preferring them and spending extended periods with them wherever possible. Such fellowship is one of the means of maintaining the perspective reflected in the above listing. It is why the exhortation is given, “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Cor 15:58). Let every soul meditate on that!

**HE EXPOUNDED AND TESTIFIED**

*“ . . . to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of*

*the prophets, from morning till evening.”*

Remember, the Jews said they

wanted to know what Paul thought, and more concerning the sect that “*everywhere is spoken against*” (Acts 28:22). It is worthy of extended consideration to note how Paul

responded to this request. He does not commence by telling them what he thought about this or that. Neither, indeed, does he launch into a discourse about the group with which he had been identified. He was so wholly devoted to the Lord that he could speak about the what was contained in Scripture, and by doing so would precisely answer both of these requests. He will not draw their attention to himself or to the body of believers – even though he was fully devoted to the Lord, together with all those who called upon the name of the Lord. This clearly confirms that he was not engaged in promoting a certain group – even the one truthfully referred to as “*the body of Christ*.” His thinking was in strict concert with the Scriptures, and thus it could best be explained by drawing their attention to those Scriptures.

**It ought to be noted that the Scriptures are not designed to promote a sect.** Those who endeavor to use them in such a manner, attempting to confirm their superiority, have not conducted themselves wisely. **If the Scriptures do not define what the people see in us, then we are living in error and hardness of heart.** If we say Christ is “*over all*” (Rom 9:5), yet we live without due regard to that circumstance, we will not be able to use the Scriptures to define what we think and who we are. In such a case, the Scriptures, at the very best, will be appealed to as an “ought to” manual of conduct.

**HE EXPOUNDED AND TESTIFIED**

“... to whom he expounded and testified...” Other versions read, “*explained and solemnly testified,*”<sup>NKJV</sup> “*explaining to them and solemnly testifying,*”<sup>NASB</sup> “*explained and declared,*”<sup>NIV</sup> “*testifying to,*”<sup>NRSV</sup> “*gave them teaching, giving witness,*”<sup>BBE</sup> “*explained... giving a thorough witness,*”<sup>CJB</sup> “*testifying of,*”<sup>DARBY</sup> “*expounded his position,*”<sup>NAB</sup> “*expounding, testifying fully,*”<sup>YLT</sup> and “*He explained to them the truth.*”<sup>IE</sup>

**He Expounded**

The word “*expounded*” has the following lexical meaning: “*to place or set out, expose... set forth, declare,*”<sup>THAYER</sup> “*to set up in public, exhibit publicly,*”<sup>LIDDELL-SCOTT</sup> “*to make manifest; to publish,*”<sup>LEH</sup> and “*to explain, set forth.*”

**He Testified**

As used here, the word “*testified*” means “*to testify, i. e. earnestly, religiously to charge... to attest, testify to, solemnly affirm... to confirm a thing by (the interposition of) testimony, to testify, cause it to be believed,*”<sup>THAYER</sup> “*to make a serious declaration on the*

basis of presumed personal knowledge - ‘to declare, to assert, to testify,’<sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup> and “charge, warn, adjure... testify to, hear witness (to) solemnly.”<sup>GINGRICH</sup>

This was not a mere academic lecture, word study, or lectureship. This was the passionate testimony of a spiritual man who had understanding of the subject.

Even more than this, the truth of God had so permeated the heart and mind of Paul that his words accurately revealed how he thought. The Jewish leaders had said, “*we desire to hear from you what you think*”<sup>NKJV</sup> (Acts 28:22). Therefore, he spoke out of the abundance of his heart, telling him how he thought about the matter of “*the Kingdom of God*.” He was not among those sophists who tell us what the Bible says, then add that its words were not the way they would have said it, but they made themselves believe it, so to speak, because God had said it – i.e. it really did not make sense to them, but their deep humility caused them to publically to acquiesce with the truth of God. Such men are miserable representatives of the Lord of glory!

**THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

**He was not among those sophists who tell us what the Bible says, then add that its words were not the way they would have said it, but they made themselves believe it, so to speak, because God had said it – i.e. it really did not make sense to them, but their deep humility caused them to publically to acquiesce with the truth of God.**

And what was the theme of Paul’s expounding and testifying? It was “*the Kingdom of God*.” Other versions read, “*about the Kingdom of God,*”<sup>NASB</sup> “*the reign of God,*”<sup>YLT</sup> and “*the truth about the kingdom of God.*”<sup>IE</sup>

The expression “*the Kingdom of God*” is unique to the New Covenant writings. There are indirect references to this kingdom in the Prophets. There are references to “*His Kingdom*” (2 Sam 5:12; Psa 103:19; 145:12; Isa 9:7; Dan 4:3,34; 6:26; 7:14,27). A Kingdom was revealed to Daniel that would “*never be destroyed,*” would “*break in pieces and consume*” all the kingdoms of the world, and “*stand forever*” (Dan 2:44). This was the same Kingdom of which our text speaks, though not revealed to the extent it is now made known.

⇨ The Gospels refer to the “*kingdom of God*” fifty-five times.

- ⇨ The Gospels refer to the “*the Kingdom of heaven*” thirty-four times.
- ⇨ Jesus referred to “*My Kingdom*” three times (Mk 6:23; Lk 22:30; John 18:36).
- ⇨ Jesus referred to “*the Kingdom*” fourteen times (Matt 4:23; 6:13; 8:12; 9:35; 13:19; 13:38,43; 19:12-24:14; 25:34; Mk 11:10; Lk 12:32; 18:29; 19:16).
- ⇨ He spoke of the saints and “*the Kingdom of their Father*” (Matt 13:43).
- ⇨ Relating it to the Father, He referred to “*Thy Kingdom*” (Lk 11:2).
- ⇨ Referencing the Father, Jesus referred to “*His Kingdom*” (Matt 13:41).
- ⇨ Connecting it with the Son, He referred to “*His Kingdom*” (Matt 16:28; Lk 11:18).
- ⇨ The insightful proclamation of this Kingdom began it John the Baptist (Matt 3:1; Mk 1:14-15)
- ⇨ This continued throughout Jesus’

prodigious ministry (Lk 4:43).

- ⇨ The book of Acts refers to “*the Kingdom of God*” seven times (Acts 1:3; 8:12; 14:22; 19:6; 20:25; 28:23,31).
- ⇨ The epistles refer to it eight times (Rom 14:17; 6:9,10; 15:50; Gal 5:21; Col 4:11; 2 Thess 1:5).
- ⇨ There is also reference to “*the Kingdom of Christ and of God*” (Eph 5:5).
- ⇨ It is referred to as “*the Kingdom of His dear Son*” (Col 1:13).
- ⇨ There is also “*the Kingdom which He hath promised*” (James 2:5).
- ⇨ Add “*the Kingdom of our God*” (Rev 12:10).
- ⇨ There is also “*His Kingdom*” (1 Thess

2:12; 2 Tim 4:1).

- ⇒ Included is *“His heavenly Kingdom”* (2 Tim 4:18).
- ⇒ There is *“Thy Kingdom”* (Heb 1:8).
- ⇒ There is also *“a Kingdom which cannot be moved”* (Heb 12:28).
- ⇒ Who can forget *“the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Pet 1:11).
- ⇒ There is also *“the Kingdom and patience of Jesus”* (Rev 1:9).

**All of these are speaking of the same Kingdom.** When referring to the heavenly government, Kingdom never appears in the plural.

Ponder what is said of this Kingdom that Paul preached.

- ⇒ This Kingdom belongs to the poor in spirit (Matt 5:3).
- ⇒ This Kingdom belongs to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt 5:10).
- ⇒ Men are to seek this Kingdom *“first”* (Matt 6:33).
- ⇒ He that is least in this Kingdom is greater than John the Baptist (Matt 11:11).
- ⇒ It is given to some to know the mysteries of this Kingdom (Matt 13:11).

- ⇒ There is entering the Kingdom *“through much tribulation”* (Acts 14:22).
- ⇒ This is a Kingdom that is *“in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit”* (Rom 14:17).
- ⇒ It is not merely in word, but in power (1 Cor 4:20).
- ⇒ It is a Kingdom that is inherited (1 Cor 6:9,10; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:5).
- ⇒ Flesh and blood cannot inherit this Kingdom (1 Cor 15:50).
- ⇒ Men are translated into this Kingdom (Col 1:13).
- ⇒ There are those who work for this Kingdom (Col 4:11).
- ⇒ We are called unto this Kingdom (1 Thess 2:12).
- ⇒ Suffering for righteousness sake qualifies for this Kingdom (2 Thess 1:5).
- ⇒ This Kingdom will appear when Jesus appears (2 Tim 4:1).
- ⇒ We are preserved unto this heavenly Kingdom (2 Tim 4:18).
- ⇒ We have received this Kingdom (Heb 12:28).
- ⇒ We are heirs of this Kingdom (James 2:5).
- ⇒ An abundant entrance into this Kingdom will be ministered to us (2 Pet

have little interest in the subject, and have little understanding of it. There is some talk about Christ's *“soon coming Kingdom,”* a Kingdom that will dominate for one thousand years, and a Savior that is *“coming to reign.”* However, there is a suspiciously small amount of teaching about the Kingdom of Christ, into which all believers have already been translated (Col 1:13). Something is seriously wrong with an approach to Christianity that leaves out such a glaringly inspired subject.

**What Is the Kingdom of God?**

Because more will be said on this matter in the commentary on verse 31, I will here make only a few introductory statements.

- ⇒ This is the Kingdom that Isaiah prophesied would be placed upon Christ's shoulder. *“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”* (Isa 9:7). The angel Gabriel revealed to Mary that this would fulfilled in Jesus, the Son to whom she would give birth (Lk 1:31-33).
- ⇒ It is the Kingdom Daniel prophesied would be set up during the times of the Kingdoms of Babylon, Medes-Persians, Greece, and Rome. *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever”* (Dan 2:44). Paul taught that commensurate with Christ's enthronement in heaven, this dominion was set in place (Eph 1:20-22).

**With so much being said through the Holy Spirit concerning the Kingdom of God, one wonders why do very little is being said about it in the modern church. An unbelievable number of Bible College and Seminary graduates appear to have little interest in the subject, and have little understanding of it.**

- ⇒ We can be instructed concerning this Kingdom (Matt 13:62).
- ⇒ It is difficult for a rich man to enter this Kingdom (Matt 19:23-24).
- ⇒ There are *“things concerning the Kingdom”* (Acts 8:12; 9:8).

1:11).

**Why???**

With so much being said through the Holy Spirit concerning the Kingdom of God, **one wonders why do very little is being said about it in the modern church.** An unbelievable number of Bible College and Seminary graduates appear to

- ⇒ It is the Kingdom that was given to Jesus when He returned to heaven in the clouds. *“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”* (Dan 7:13-14).
- ⇒ It is described by David as the Messiah

ruling in the midst of His enemies. *“LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies”* (Psa 110:1-2). Peter said this was fulfilled following the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:34-36).

⇒ This is the Kingdom of which David spoke, declaring the righteousness would be its scepter. *“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter”* (Psa 45:6). The writer of Hebrews affirms this prophecy has been fulfilled in Christ (Heb 1:8).

**From these few texts, we may conclude the following concerning “the Kingdom of God.”**

- ⇒ It relates specifically to Christ’s redemptive role, being associated with His birth and ascension into glory.
- ⇒ This is a Kingdom noted for sure increase, judgment, and stability.
- ⇒ It is a government of peace.
- ⇒ It will eventually, in the process of time, decimate all other kingdoms.
- ⇒ It is a universal dominion, over all people, nations, and languages. None of them can operate independently of the government of Jesus.
- ⇒ Having been exalted to the right hand or God, Jesus is presently ruling in the midst of His enemies, bringing His purposes to culmination in spite of seeming opposition.
- ⇒ The sign of the rule of Jesus is not an overt show of power, but righteousness – a righteous that is found in those who were previously the enemies of God, alienated from Him through their ignorance.

This Kingdom belongs to God, and He has given it to Christ, laying its government upon His shoulder. For this reason, it is referred to as *“the Kingdom of Christ and of God”* (Eph 5:5).

**This is the Kingdom Paul expounded, and to which he testified.** He showed the Jews that the Kingdom of which the prophets prophesied had been

placed in the hands of Jesus.

**PERSUADING THEM CONCERNING JESUS**

*“ . . . persuading them concerning Jesus . . . ”* Other versions read, *“trying to persuade them concerning Jesus,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“tried to convince them about Jesus,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“having discussions with them about Jesus,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“He persuaded them concerning Jesus,”*<sup>CSB</sup> *“persuading them those things that concern Jesus,”*<sup>GENEVA</sup> *“persuading them also of the things concerning Jesus,”*<sup>YLT</sup> *“taught them about Jesus,”*<sup>LIVING</sup> *“endeavoring from morning till evening to convince them about Jesus,”*<sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> *“try to win them over to Jesus,”*<sup>CEV</sup> and *“trying to persuade them all about Jesus.”*<sup>MESSAGE</sup>

As used here, the word

entering the world in order to obtain the Kingdom over which He presently presides.

In other words, the Kingdom of God is presently being administered by *“the Man Christ Jesus”* (1 Tim 2:5) – and that is precisely why Jesus was *“born,”* to become a man! **He certainly did not become a Man in order to be dominant over all, for He fully occupied such a position before coming into the world.** Further, His Kingdom was not of this world, but was to be an administration of righteousness, not overt power. That as a Man Jesus was, in fact, superior to all other men was fully demonstrated during His earthly life. **There was not situation over which He did not preside** – the single exception being found in His death, to which He acquiesced in order that might *“destroy him that had the power*

**One of the acid tests of genuine rule is the ability to rule over the god of this world and the powers of darkness. While in a humbled state, Jesus did precisely that. For the first time in history, Satan confronted a Man who did not yield to his finely crafted temptations**

*“persuading”* means, *“persuasive power, persuasion,”*<sup>THAYER</sup> *“convince,”*<sup>FRIBERG</sup> *“win over,”*<sup>UBS</sup> and *“convince someone to believe something and to act on the basis of what is recommended.”*<sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

I gather that Paul particularly related Jesus to the prophecies of God’s Kingdom, and generally to all of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. I will comment on the latter when we touch upon verse thirty-one.

When Pilate asked Jesus if He was a King (and a king has a kingdom), Jesus answered, *“Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice”* (John 18:37). Prior to this statement Jesus affirmed, *“My Kingdom is not of this world . . . but now is My Kingdom not from hence”* (John 18:36).

**Behold how Jesus associated His kingship with His birth, and entrance into the world.** He did not say He would come again to be king, as some teachers and songs affirm. He did not say that he would come the second time to reign, but that He was born for this purpose,

*of death”* (Heb 2:14).

**Jesus Ruled Over Nature**

Nature itself was subordinate to the Man Christ Jesus. He stilled storms (Mk 4:39), walked on a raging sea (Matt 14:25), effectively cursed a fig tree (Matt 21:19), multiplied bread (Matt 14:17; 15:36), commanded catches of fish (Lk 5:4; John 21:6), and commanded a fish to deliver a coin to Peter (Matt 17:27). He also turned water into wine (John 2:8-9).

**Jesus Ruled Over Domain of Satan**

One of the acid tests of genuine rule is the ability to rule over the god of this world and the powers of darkness. While in a humbled state, Jesus did precisely that. For the first time in history, Satan confronted a Man who did not yield to his finely crafted temptations (Matt 4:1-14). With his finger, Jesus cast out demons, commanding them to leave those they were controlling (Lk 11:20). Demons acknowledged His superiority over them (Matt 8:29; Mk 1:24). Spirits that caused people to be unclean, blind, deaf, dumb, epileptic, and wild, left people at Jesus’ command (Mk 1:6; 5:8; 9:25; Lk 4:35; 8:29; 9:42,55). And finally, in His death, when He was at His weakest state, He

“spoiled principalities and powers” (Col 2:15), and “destroyed” the devil (Heb 2:14).

### He Healed All Manner of Disease

There was no disease that stymied Jesus. He healed all kinds of sickness and disease (Matt 4:23): deafness (Matt 11:5; Mk 7:32-25), blindness (Matt 9:27-29; 11:5; 20:30; 21:14; Mk 8:22-23; 10:46-51; John 9:1-7), dumbness (Matt 15:31; Mk 7:32-35), impotence (John 5:7-8), flowing blood (Mk 5:25-29), fever (Matt 8:14-15), a withered hand (Mk 3:1-5), the maimed (Matt 15:30), the lame (Matt 21:14), and plagues (Lk 7:21).

### He Raised the Dead

Jesus was noted for raising the dead (Matt 11:5). Three specific people are mentioned whom Jesus raised from the dead: Jairus’ daughter (Lk 8:52-55), the only son of a widow of Nain (Lk 7:11-15), and Lazarus (John 11:37-44).

### He Forgave Sins

Again, in His humble state, prior to His exaltation, Jesus forgave sins. He forgave a man sick of the palsy (Matt 9:2), a sinful woman who anointed His feet (Lk 7:47-50), and a woman taken in the act of adultery (John 8:11).

### He Was Impervious to Aggressive Opposition

While in this world, Jesus faced aggressive opposition and evil intentions, yet His enemies were totally and completely frustrated in all of their attempts, until God gave them an hour to do their worst (Lk 22:53). They sought to kill Him, but could not do so (John 5:16-18; 7:1). They sought to lay hands on Him, but could not do so (Matt 21:46; Mk 12:12; John 7:30; 10:39). Once they sought to cast him off the brow of a hill, but Jesus simply walked through them and went His way (Lk 4:29-30).

### He Knew the Thoughts of Men

Unlike any other man who had ever lived, Jesus knew the thoughts of men, and what was inside of them (Lk 6:8; John 2:24-25; 13:11).

### Summation

Peter summarized Jesus’ earthly ministry with these words: “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). This was done in spite of the devil’s opposition, and the seeming dominancy of the powers of darkness.

Let me again emphasize, that all of these manifestations took place when Jesus was in a humbled state. He had come “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3), humbled Himself by laying aside His equality with God (Phil 2:6-7), taking upon Himself the form of a servant (Phil 2:7), submitting to the experience of temptation (Heb 2:18; 4:15), and becoming “obedient unto death” (Phil 2:6).

But Jesus is no longer in a humbled state. **Who is the person who imagines that He is waiting to exert His power, when He was able to do so in a humbled state, and with not a single case of failure.** Now He has been exalted, and it is not possible for Him to be glorified any more than He is at this present time. It is not possible for Him to be Lord in any more fully than He is at this very hour. It only remains for it to be made known, or unveiled. Apostolic doctrine confirms that God is going to make known what Jesus is at this present time. “Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen” (1 Tim 6:15-16).

Paul’s words “concerning Jesus” had to do with what and who He IS, not what is was going to be. They were affirmations, not suppositions, declarations, not a philosophical analysis. They were not a representation of what the people were seeking, but the avowal of whom the Father had given, and why He had done so.

### OUT OF THE LAW AND OUT OF THE PROPHETS

“... both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets . . .” Other versions read, “both from the law of Moses and from the prophets,”<sup>NKJV</sup> making use of both the Torah of Moshe and the Prophets,”<sup>CJB</sup> “from Moses’ Teachings and the Prophets,”<sup>GWN</sup> “Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets,”<sup>NLT</sup> “from the five books of Moses and the books of prophecy,”<sup>LIVING</sup> “quoting from the Law of Moses and the writings of the prophet,”<sup>GNB</sup> and “what Moses and the prophets had written about him.”<sup>MESSAGE</sup>

There are several references to Moses and the Prophets.

⇨ **ABRAHAM SPEAKING TO THE RICH MAN IN HELL.** “Abraham saith unto him, They have **Moses and the prophets**; let them hear them . . . And

he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:-31).



⇨ **JESUS TO THE TWO ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS,** “And beginning at **Moses and all the prophets**, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27).

⇨ **JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES.** “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in **the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me**” (Luke 24:44).

⇨ **PHILIP TO NATHANIEL.** “Philip findeth **NATHANIEL**, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom **Moses in the law, and the prophets,**

did write, *Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph*” (John 1:45).

- ⇒ **PAUL TO AGRIPPA.** *“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come”* (Acts 26:22).
- ⇒ **PAUL TO THE JEWISH LEADERS IN ROME.** *“And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening”* (Acts 28:23).

It is said of the Lord God, *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets”* (Amos 3:7). This is particularly true in regards to the coming of Christ into the world, His vicarious death, His resurrection, His ascension, and His enthronement in glory. So far as His entrance into the world is concerned, there were numerous prophecies that were detailed enough to enable the faithful to recognize Him. A Jesus who does not precisely match the words of Moses and the Prophets concerning Him is *“another Jesus”* (2 Cor 11:4). **Those who lack familiarity with Moses and the Prophets have yet to establish that they have, in fact embraced the real Jesus.** They may very well have done so, but they will not know it for sure until they obtain some understanding in this area.

Some of the Scriptural proofs that

- 1:23).
- ⇒ He was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matt 2:1,5).
- ⇒ He was called out of Egypt (Hos 11:1; Matt 2:15).
- ⇒ He was reared in Nazareth, which was spiritually *“dry ground”* (Isa 53:1-2; Matt 2:23; John 1:46).
- ⇒ His ministry was in Galilee (Isa 9:1-2; Matt 4:13-15).
- ⇒ He healed the sick (Isa 53:4; Matt 8:17).
- ⇒ He spoke in parables and uttered things that had not been known since the foundation of the world (Psa 49:4; Matt 13:34-35).
- ⇒ He rode into Jerusalem on a colt during a high time (Zech 9:9; Matt 21:2-10).
- ⇒ In the hour of trial, His disciples forsook Him (Zech 13:7; Matt 26:56).
- ⇒ They parted His vesture when He was crucified (Psa 22:18; Matt 27:35; John 19:24).
- ⇒ Even though He had done many miracles, the people did not believe on Him (Isa 29:10; 53:1; John 12:37-41).
- ⇒ The choosing of Judas, and His betrayal of Jesus (Psa 41:9; John 13:18; 17:12).
- ⇒ The people hated Jesus without a cause (Psa 7:4; 35:19; 69:4; 109:3; John 15:25).
- ⇒ The safe-keeping of the disciples even

- ⇒ Jesus being thirsty on the cross (Psa 22:15; 69:21; John 19:28).
- ⇒ None of Jesus’ bones being broken when He died, even those who were crucified with him had their bones broken (Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Psa 34:20; John 19:33-36).

**Outward Manifestations Any Person Could Examine and Ponder**

All of these things were outward manifestations. There are a host of other proofs that are confirmed by the experience of faith. Those will be covered in verse 31.

**Reasoning out of Moses and the Prophets involved a correlation of what they foretold of the Messiah and Jesus of Nazareth.** Although few considered Jesus to be that Messiah, He was, in fact, the very One God had promised.

- ⇒ He was the *“Prophet”* of Moses (Deut 18:15,18).
- ⇒ He was Isaiah’s *“Man”* (Isa 32:2), *“Servant”* (Isa 42:1), *“Sanctuary”* (Isa 8:14), *“Nail in a sure place”* (Isa 22:23-25), and *“Redeemer”* (Isa 59:20).
- ⇒ He was the *“Righteous Branch”* (Jer 23:5), *“The Lord our Righteousness”* (Jer 23:6), and *“David”* (Jer 30:9) of Jeremiah.
- ⇒ He was the *“Plant of Renown”* of Ezekiel (Ezek 34:29).
- ⇒ He was Daniel’s *“the Son of Man”* (Dan 7:14) and *“Messiah”* (Dan 9:24-25).
- ⇒ He was *“David their King”* (Hos 3:5), and God’s *“Son”* of Hosea (Heb 11:1).
- ⇒ He was Micah’s *“Ruler of Israel”* (Mic 5:2).
- ⇒ He was *“the Desire of all nations”* of Haggai (Hag 2:7).
- ⇒ He was Zechariah’s *“Branch”* (Zech 3:8), *“Shepherd”* (Zech 13:7), and *“King over all the earth”* (Zech 14:9).
- ⇒ He is *“the Messenger of the Covenant”* (Mal 3:1), and *“the Sun of Righteousness”* (Mal 4:2) of Malachi.

**FROM MORNING UNTIL EVENING**

*“ . . . from morning till evening.”*  
Other versions read, *“from dawn to dusk,”*  
CSB *“from early morning unto evening,”* <sup>DARBY</sup>

Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah include the following.

- ⇒ His precise fleshly lineage could be traced through the woman (Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4).
- ⇒ He was born of a virgin (Isa 7:14; Matt

during the tumultuous time of Christ’s arrest and death (Psa 109:6-19; John 17:12; 18:8-9).

- ⇒ The kind of death Jesus died (Deut 21:23; Psa 22:16; John 18:31-32).

**Those who lack familiarity with Moses and the Prophets have yet to establish that they have, in fact embraced the real Jesus. They may very well have done so, but they will not know it for sure until they obtain some understanding in this area.**

*In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely*

“from morning to night,”<sup>GENEVA</sup> “He began lecturing in the morning and went on into the evening!,”<sup>LIVING</sup> “all day long,”<sup>IE</sup> and “all day, from morning to evening.”<sup>MESSAGE</sup>

As ordinarily perceived, this would have been twelve hours. Jesus asked, “Are there not twelve hours in a day?” (John 11:9). I gather, therefore, that this discussion filled the entire day.

### Other Extended Gatherings

While this is not intended to set a precedent for all generations, there have been occasions when the people of God spent extended times in holy activities, including being taught and discussing the Word of God. This was driven more by interest than by law, and were required by appetite rather than requisite.

⇨ In Nehemiah’s day, when they had kept a seven-day feast, “the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and

the iniquities of their fathers” (Neh 9:2). During that time, they stood up and heard the Law read “one fourth part of the day” (6 hours). This was followed by another “fourth part of the day” (6 hours), when they “confessed, and worshiped the Lord their God” (Neh 9:3).

⇨ The multitudes spent three days with Jesus prior to being miraculously fed by Him (Mk 8:2).

⇨ After having Jesus joined them early in the day, the two on the road to Emmaus spent the rest of the day with Him, extending into the night. Immediately following the departure of Jesus, the two returned to Jerusalem where they “found the eleven gathered together, and them with them.” During that time, and after confirming He was really risen from the dead, Jesus appeared to them, and “opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures”

(Lk 24:13-49)m.

⇨ Paul spent the first day of the week with the brethren at Troas, and “continued his speech until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

Sharing his thinking, and speaking of “the way” were matters that could be expounded at length. **In all of these cases, and more, the gatherings were tailored for the concerned and interested, not the unconcerned and disinterested.**

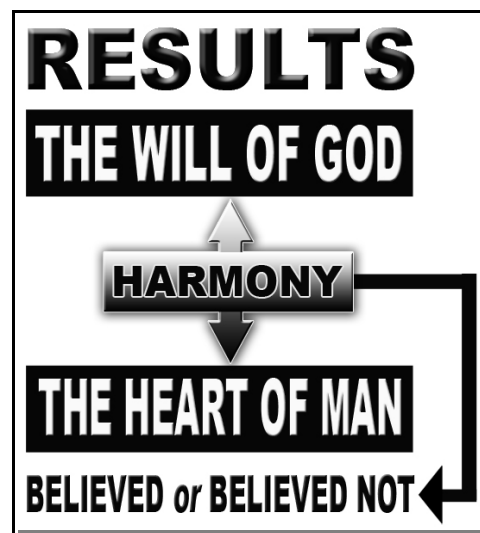
If this kind of approach was adopted by the churches of our time, the impact would no doubt be startling. I do not question that many facilities would have to be sold for lack of use, and church staff numbers would be significantly reduced, if not altogether dissolved. If these assessments are true, the churches at Sardis and Laodicea have been successfully restored – characterized by lifelessness and lukewarmness.

## SOME BELIEVED, AND SOME BELIEVED NOT

“<sup>24</sup> And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.”

The results of this single day are recorded. They were not produced by a growth program. Paul did not speak with a mind to increase the number of disciples, although he was certainly not averse to obtaining such results. His objective was first to give as faithful witness of Jesus Christ, that is what Jesus said he would do: “Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome” (Acts 23:11).

**The interest of the people was strictly secondary.** That is because the power is in the Gospel of Christ (Rom 1:16), the Convicting One is the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11), and the Lord Jesus is “the Author and Finisher” of faith (Heb 12:2). Jesus is the One who gives repentance (Acts 5:31), and sheds forth the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33). God is the One who opens the heart (Acts 16:14), and who gives men “in the behalf of Christ . . . To believe” (Phil 1:29). **The results, therefore, essentially confirm what God did and did not do.** This perfectly synchronizes with the purpose of God, and how He perceived the people



themselves.

The responses of men reflect two things which are synchronized by the manner in which the Gospel is received. The first preeminent and driving factor is the will of God – what He determines. **There is a sense in which this determination is made independent of human response.** Thus we read, “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according

to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Tim 1:9). If it were not for the inclusion of “called us with a holy calling,” men might be able to conclude the whole of Divine determination is driven by human response. **Those words, however, indicate that more is involved in our calling than mere human aptitude.**

Jude also speaks of us being “kept for Jesus Christ”<sup>NASB</sup> before we were called (Jude 1:1). In the epistle to the Romans, Paul speaks of being “called” according to God’s “purpose,” not according to human achievement or desire (Rom 8:28). Additionally, Paul also speaks of this in language of great loftiness. “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will” (Eph 1:4-5).

In his letter to the Thessalonians, he further affirms that the power of the Gospel toward them, their reception of that Gospel, were evidence of God’s election, and not the cause of it.; “Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto

you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (1 Thess 1:3-6). And again, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess 2:14).

For many, this is a difficult thing to receive, and yet there is very plain teaching on the subject that is to be believed.

### SOME BELIEVED

What is it that distinguished those who believed, and why did they believe. From the lower point of view, it was because the message appealed to them, and resonated most favorably upon their hearts. From the high viewpoint, it was the same as with those Gentiles in Antioch: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). Other versions read, "all who were appointed for eternal life," NIV "as many as had been destined for eternal life," NRSV "marked out for eternal life," BBE "had been prepared for," GWN "pre-destined to the life of the Ages," WEYMOUTH "being arranged for," ABP "destined (appointed and ordained) to eternal life," AMPLIFIED and "having been set into." INTERLINEAR Unable to accept the meaning clearly suggested by the text, the Living Bible reads, "as many as wanted eternal life believed" – which is a gross distortion.

When Paul traveled to Thessalonica, he "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures" for three Sabbaths. Although he was forced out of that area, yet it is written that "some of them believed, and consorted," or joined with, Paul and Silas (Acts 17:4).

This description of the legitimate response to the Gospel – "believed" – is repeatedly reported in the book of Acts.

- ⇒ In the beginning "all that believed were together" (Acts 2:44).
- ⇒ Later, five thousand were among "them which heard the Word and believed" (Acts 4:4).
- ⇒ The city of Samaria "believed Philip

preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ," and "were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12).

- ⇒ When Peter raised Dorcas from the dead, people in that region heard it "and many believed in the Lord" (Acts 9:42).
- ⇒ When reporting what took place at the house of Cornelius, Peter said the gift of the Spirit was given to those "who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 11:17).
- ⇒ When the Word was preached in Antioch, "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord" (Acts 11:21).
- ⇒ On the Island of Cyprus, when the governor heard what Paul preached, and witnessed the judgment of Elymas, he "believed" (Acts 13:12).
- ⇒ In Antioch, the Gentiles who were ordained unto eternal life "believed" (Acts 13:48).

And how is it that these people "believed?" It was because God gave them, "in the behalf of Christ," to "believe" (Phil 1:29). From the high vantage point, the proper message was preached, and the proper people heard it. In that context, God gave them to believe. Elsewhere it is said of those who believed that they "had through grace" (Acts 18:27).

### What Does It Mean to Believe?

Believing does involve the intellect, yet it is not primarily intellectual. It is not mere intellectual assent. It is not simply accepting what was said, and not engaging in disputation.

Here, the word translated "believed" (ἐπίθουτο) means "to persuade, i. e. to induce one by words to believe: absolutely to cause belief in a thing," THAYER "convince," FRIBERG "satisfy," UBS "to convince someone to believe something and to act on the basis of what is recommended – 'to persuade, to convince,'" LOUW-NIDA "to prevail upon, win over, persuade," LIDDELL-SCOTT and "be convinced, be sure, certain." GINGRICH

This particular word is used fifty-eight times in Scripture. It is translated in

**Believing does involve the intellect, yet it is not primarily intellectual. It is not mere intellectual assent. It is not simply accepting what was said, and not engaging in disputation.**

- ⇒ In Iconium "a great multitude both of Jews and also of Greeks believed" (Acts 14:1).
- ⇒ In Berea, upon hearing the Gospel, "many of them believed" (Acts 17:12).
- ⇒ In Athens "certain men clave unto" Paul, and believed: "among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (Acts 17:34).
- ⇒ In Corinth Cripus and his household, and "many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized" (Acts 18:8).
- ⇒ In Ephesus "many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds" (Acts 19:18).

different ways (KJV).

- ⇒ "PERSUADED" (Matt 27:20; 28:14; Lk 16:31; Lk 20:6; Acts 13:43; 14:19; 18:4; 19:8,26; 21:14; 26:26,28; 28:23,24; Rom 8:38; 14:14; 15:14; 2 Cor 5:11; Gal 1:10; 2 Tim 3:5; 2 Tim 1:12; Heb 6:9; 11:13)
- ⇒ "TRUSTED" (Matt 27:43; Mk 10:24; k 11:22; 18:9; 2 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 10:7; Phil 2:24; 3:4; Heb 2:13; 13:18)
- ⇒ "OBEYED" (Acts 5:36,37; Rom 2:4; Gal 3:1; 5:7; Heb 13:17; James 3:3)
- ⇒ "AGREED" (Acts 5:40)
- ⇒ "WITH ONE ACCORD . . . MADE" (Acts 12:20)
- ⇒ "BELIEVED" (Acts 17:4; 27:11)
- ⇒ "YIELD" (Acts 23:21)

*In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely*

- ⇒ **“CONFIDENT”** (Rom 2:19; 2 Cor 2:3; Gal 5:10; Phil 1:6,14,25; Phil 3:3; 2 Thess 3:4; Phile 1:21)
- ⇒ **“ASSURE”** (1 John 3:19).

This is not the same word used for believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, or the believing through which eternal life is obtained. It is the persuasion of the mind, as compared with the heart. Some of the ways in which it is used confirms this to be the case. The same original word is used in the following texts is the same used in our text.

- ⇒ Chief priests *“persuaded”* the multitude to release Barabbas (Matt 27:20).
- ⇒ Chief priests said they would *“persuade”* Pilate the Jews stole the body of Jesus (Matt 28:14).
- ⇒ Jesus spoke of men who would *“trust in riches”* (Mk 10:24).
- ⇒ Jesus spoke of a man who *“trusted”* in his armor (Lk 11:22).
- ⇒ There were people who *“trusted in themselves”* (Lk 18:9).
- ⇒ The enemies of Jesus spoke of those who might *“trust”* John the Baptist was a prophet (Lk 20:6).
- ⇒ They were people who *“obeyed”* the false prophet Theudas (Acts 5:36-37).
- ⇒ The Jewish leaders *“agreed”* to the counsel of Gamaliel, beat the apostles, and let them go (Acts 5:40).
- ⇒ Certain Jews from Antioch *“persuaded”* the people to stone Paul (Acts 14:19).
- ⇒ Julius *“believed”* the pilot of the ship and its owner above Paul (Acts 27:11).
- ⇒ Certain *“obeyed unrighteousness”* (Rom 2:8).
- ⇒ Some were *“persuaded”* they were godly guides, yet were blind (Rom 2:19).
- ⇒ Paul was not among those who *“trusted in themselves”* (2 Cor 1:9).
- ⇒ Paul warned about the man who *“trusted in himself”* (2 Cor 10:7).
- ⇒ Horses *“obey”* (James 3:3).

The kind of believing that took

place in this text was intellectual persuasion. It was not the kind of believing of which it is written, *“with the heart man believeth unto righteousness”* (Rom 10:10). When Abraham is said to have been *“fully persuaded”* that God was able to do what He had promised, yet another Greek word was used (πληροφορηθείς). The lexical meaning of this word is, “to make one certain, to persuade, convince . . . fully convinced or assured.” <sup>THAYER</sup> There *“fully persuaded”* was the prelude to acting upon



what was promised, not doubting it, and framing his life around it.

This is more than a mere academic diversion. **It is my persuasion that many professed believers in Christ have only believed at the intellectual level – apparently like some to whom James wrote** (James 2:19). They appear to not yet have believed with their heart, for they have not acted upon the truth.

Here again we witness the inferiority of the English language. There are words and word-distinctions that are in the Greek and Hebrew language, but are not reflected in the English language. *“Love”* in another work like this. This is the reason one must be familiar with the doctrine of Scripture, which will spell out the difference – i.e. demons believing, versus believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of the hearers of our text were intellectually convinced that what Paul said was the truth. Yet, they did not cry out, *“What shall we do?”* (Acts 2:37), or *“What must I to do be saved?”* (Acts 16:30).

You may recall that Luke compares the response of the Berean Jews with those of the Thessalonians. The passage has, in my judgment, **not** been seen properly. The Jews

believed (same word as used in our text), and joined themselves to Paul and Silas. Others *“believed not,”* and set the city in an uproar, finally forcing Paul and Silas to leave (Acts 17:1-9). Going to a Berean synagogue, the Jews did not react in such a manner. Rather than opposing Paul, they searched the Scriptures to see if what Paul was saying was true (Acts 17:11). They did not assume he was wrong like the majority of the Jews at Thessalonica.

When writing to those who had believed in Thessalonica, Paul described their response without regard to the objecting Jews. *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews”* (1 Thess 2:14). **The Bereans were not “more noble” than those who are so described.** In fact, on the surface, they appear to have come behind them. The Thessalonians who believed received Paul’s word as it was spoken, while the Bereans had to verify it. The comparison is with the Thessalonian Jews who did not believe, and opposed Paul.

**How people respond to the Word of God, particularly the Gospel, is a critical matter.** Giving intellectual assent to it is necessary and good, but the response must go further than that. To cause the individual to be accepted, believing must be *“from the heart”* (Rom 10:10).

#### SOME BELIEVED NOT

Other versions read, *“disbelieved,”* <sup>NKJV</sup> *“would not believe,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“refused to believe.”* <sup>NRSV</sup>

Some of the Jewish leaders, having heard Paul, did not agree with what he said. They did not intellectually assent to his words. They did not see them as being the truth of God, and thus would make no further inquiry into them – at least not for that time.

The Law specified that God was to be loved *“with the mind”* (Matt 22:37). The text in Deuteronomy says *“with all thy soul”* (Deut 6:5; 10:12; 30:6). That speaks of natural aptitude, particularly as it relates to thinking and emotion. **The men of our**

text who **“believed not” did not acquiesce with the truth in their minds.** Paul’s testimony conflicted with their way of thinking, and thus they rejected what he had to say. This kind of rejection is

extant in our day as well, and it is at staggering levels.

**If more of the Word of God was declared, men would find that as**

**astounding level of unbelief exists in most churches.** The mere mention of some pivotal statement of truth will verify that this is the case.

## THEY AGREED NOT AMONG THEMSELVES

**“<sup>25a</sup> And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed . . .”**

Here the same thing happened that took place when the Sanhedrin heard Paul. Owing to Paul’s wisdom in identifying that they were fundamentally disagreed among themselves, he spoke so they would turn upon each other rather than himself (Acts 23:6-8). In that case, the contention was over the resurrection of the dead. In this text it was over Jesus being identified with the prophecies of Moses and the Prophets.

### THEY AGREED NOT AMONG THEMSELVES

*“And when they agreed not among themselves . . .”* Other versions read, *“they disagreed among themselves,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“there was a division among them,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“unable to agree among themselves,”*<sup>GWN</sup> and *“after they had argued back and forth.”*<sup>NLT</sup>

**Here is confirmation that light and darkness cannot be joined. Ignorance and understanding cannot journey together.** One thing that Babylon the great has accomplished is the blurring of the line between truth and the lie, illumination and deception, and righteousness and unrighteousness. Actually, it has introduced a kind of church in which demons can easily sit with men, perpetrating their doctrines. The professed followers of Jesus are encouraged to make friends with the carnally minded, and there is no thought about such an effort producing contamination and variance that cannot be resolved in the flesh.

The Jewish leaders evidently talked among themselves about what Paul had declared, seeking some common ground. But they were unable to find it, for the ones who had been persuaded of the truth of what Paul said refused to compromise that persuasion.

Those who were not convinced refused to accept the notion that they had embraced something wrong, or that it was remotely possible that their view of Jesus of Nazareth was incorrect. It even appears as though their dialog began while Paul was speaking, as the remainder of this verse will confirm.

### THEY DEPARTED

*“ . . . they departed . . .”* Other versions read, *“began leaving,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“as they were leaving,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“they went away,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“they left,”*<sup>CJB</sup> *“went out from him,”*<sup>MRD</sup> *“were ready to leave,”*<sup>IE</sup> *“they at last left him,”*<sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> and *“they started to leave.”*<sup>WILLIAMS</sup>

They had spent a full day with Paul, and had heard much. But at the end of the day, they were no closer to Paul than at the moment they entered where he was staying. The Word of God, as we will see, finally drove them from the one who cared for them.

## THE CATALYST FOR DEPARTURE

**“<sup>25b</sup> . . . after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,<sup>26</sup> Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:<sup>27</sup> For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.<sup>28</sup> Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.”**

Now we will be exposed to how an inspired man of God addresses a mixed audience – one where what he says is intellectually acknowledged as true, while others in the audience refuse to do so. Paul’s

response will not fit into man-made methodologies that have been invented by religious bigots, or others who attempt to pass along their worldly way of thinking to professed believers.

### AFTER PAUL HAD SPOKEN ONE WORD

*“ . . . after that Paul had spoken one word . . .”* Other versions read, *“began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“after Paul had made this final statement,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“as they were leaving, Paul made one further statement,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“after Paul made one statement,”*<sup>RSV</sup> *“after Paul had said this one thing,”*<sup>BBE</sup> *“left after Paul had quoted this particular passage to them,”*<sup>GWN</sup> and *“Paul had one last thing to say to them.”*<sup>NJB</sup>

Keep in mind that we are talking about a single day, obviously chocked full of weighty considerations. Paul had not taught

them of family relationships, the way to realize your personal dreams, how to manage your finances, the various nuances required for a happy marriage, or how to raise your children. Make no mistake about this – this is what a significant number of contemporary Christian leaders would have addressed. If there was some political issue, they might have spoke to it, or some matter related to poverty, disease, social disorder, or moral trends. Rather than running down some such convenient path of thought, Paul had spoken to the people, expounding and testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus. With a theme like that, there is less tolerance for unbelief!

**One of the chief difficulties with the current agendas of the modern church is that what they talk about is of little or no consequence.** It simply does not fit into the environment of eternity. If it was not for the news, social

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issues, and a variety of worldly problems, such men would have nothing to say. By way of comparison, Paul preached a message that was relevant in good or bad times, to the rich and the poor, to male and female, in good governments of despotic ones. His message transcended the affairs of this world – all of them. In view of that, he will, have zero tolerance for the despising of his message, just as he did in other places.

- ⇒ Antioch (Acts 13:43 – one message).
- ⇒ Athens (Acts 17:33 – one message)
- ⇒ Corinthian synagogue (Acts 18:5-6 – unknown number of Sabbaths).
- ⇒ Ephesian synagogue (Acts 19:9 – (after three months).

It is apparent that Paul spoke as long as there was some level of genuine interest. Further, he made no effort to stir up interest by carnal means. There is also no evidence that he ever attempted to form friendships prior to preaching the Gospel.

**WELL SPAKE THE HOLY GHOST**

*“Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers . . .”* Other versions read, *“The Holy Spirit spoke rightly,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“The Holy Spirit spoke the truth,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“The Holy Spirit was right in saying,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“The Holy Spirit correctly spoke,”*<sup>CSB</sup> and *“The Holy Spirit beautifully expressed.”*<sup>WEYMOUTH</sup>

Note that in quoting from the book of Isaiah, Paul said *“the Holy Spirit spoke.”* This reflects the same perspective declared by Peter: *“for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”*<sup>NKJV</sup> (2 Pet 1:21). This was said of a text that was written prior to the Babylonian captivity – well over 750 years prior to event Luke is reporting. The text had probably been copied numerous times, and even translated into Greek in the Septuagint version, which was written and completed prior to 132 B.C. Yet, there was no question about the integrity of the text, which had been in use for over 175 years, and probably copied numerous times as well. O, that there was such trust in the integrity of Scripture in our time, when re-translation (not copying) has become so popular!

By saying Isaiah prophesied *“well,”* *“rightly,”* or *“correctly,”* Paul is saying that what he said was still taking place – and it is today as well.

Remember, this is a Divine assessment. There is no chance that it is not

precise in every detail, whether men can see it or agree with it or not.

**HEARING YE SHALL HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND**

*“ . . . Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand . . .”* Other versions read, *“You will keep on hearing, but will not understand,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“you will be ever hearing but never understanding,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“you will indeed listen, but never understand,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“Though you give ear, you will not get knowledge; and seeing,”*<sup>BBE</sup> and *“You will hear clearly but never understand.”*<sup>GWN</sup>

In other words, Isaiah was to tell the people they would not comprehend what he was saying – but he was to say it anyway. Isaiah’s commission was much like that delivered to Ezekiel: *“For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost*

Isaiah spoke to a people who had been locked into their condition. They were in a position where they could hear truth in its purity, addressed to understanding, and yet they would not understand.

**Spiritual Understanding**

Spiritual understanding requires being submitted to the Scriptures, but that will not enable a person to understand. The Jews who were with Paul had been subjected to the Scriptures, hearing them read every Sabbath (Acts 13:27; 15:21), and personally searching them, for their entire lives. Add to of that, they had been exposed to a proper exposition of those Scriptures, and still they did not understand. In fact, the more they heard, the more they were repulsed by the truth. Like the Hebrew\ believers who received the Epistle to the Hebrews, they were *“dull of hearing”* (Heb 5:11). **They just could not take hold of the truth, even though they heard a lot of it.** What does Paul say to a people like this?

**SEEING YE SHALL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE**

*“ . . . and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive . . .”* Other versions read, *“you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive,”*

**Those who advocate tolerance of the religious ungodly, and gentle and forbearing speech with those who refuse what is provided in Christ Jesus need to pay particular attention to what is said in this text.**

*dwel among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious”* (Ezek 2:4-7).

**Those who advocate tolerance of the religious ungodly, and gentle and forbearing speech with those who refuse what is provided in Christ Jesus need to pay particular attention to what is said in this text.** This was spoken by an Apostle of Christ to those who had heard, so far as this record is concerned, one proclamation of the Savior as prophesied by Moses and the Prophets. Further, these people were Jews who had been cultured by Moses and the Prophets to receive the Lord’s Christ.

<sup>NASB</sup> *You will be ever seeing, but never perceiving,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“?you will indeed look, but will never perceive,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“see but not understand,”*<sup>LIVING</sup> *“You will certainly see, but you won’t understand!”*<sup>IE</sup> *“will look and look, and by no means see,”*<sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> and *“you will indeed look and look with your eyes but will not see [not perceive, have knowledge of or become acquainted with what you look at, at all].”*<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

**It would make no difference how deeply they looked into the words of the prophet, or how diligently they considered them, they would not be able to discern their meaning.** Words set before them diligently and with frequency would not change their condition.

**THEIR HEARTS ARE WAXED GROSS**

“... For the heart of this people is waxed gross...” Other versions read, “have grown dull,”<sup>NKJV</sup> “has become calloused,”<sup>NIV</sup> “has become fat,”<sup>BBE</sup> “has grown thick,”<sup>CJB</sup> “waxed fat,”<sup>GENEVA</sup> “is stupefied,”<sup>MRD</sup> “are hardened,”<sup>NLT</sup> “is grown obtuse,”<sup>MONTGOMERY</sup> and “has grown dull (stupid, hardened, and calloused).”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

A gross, or fat, heart is an uncircumcised one. It has been covered over with the fat of sin and transgression, and is impervious to the prods of truth. There was no goad available to men that could pierce through the layer of fat that had enclosed their hearts. They were spiritually stupid, having been deprived of all wisdom and understanding.

**The irony of the whole situation is that their religion had made them this way.** As they mechanically went through the ordinances and ceremonies of the Law, it only anesthetized them, making it more and more difficult to understand.

**THEIR EARS ARE DULL OF HEARING**

“... and their ears are dull of hearing...” Other versions read, “hard of hearing,”<sup>NKJV</sup> “they scarcely hear,”<sup>NASB</sup> “Hardly hear,”<sup>NIV</sup> “heavy of hearing,”<sup>RSV</sup> “slow in hearing,”<sup>BBE</sup> “they barely hear,”<sup>CJB</sup> “hear heavily with their ears,”<sup>DARBY</sup> “Cannot hear,”<sup>NLT</sup> and “thick of hearing.”<sup>TNT</sup>

Dull ears are also “uncircumcised ears” (Acts 7:51; Jer 6:10). When the

**Dull ears are also “uncircumcised ears.” When the trumpet of warning was sounded, they could not hear it. When the shout of exhortation was lifted up, they were impervious to the sound of it.**

trumpet of warning was sounded, they could not hear it. When the shout of exhortation was lifted up, they were impervious to the sound of it.

What is more, the more they heard, the more they were repulsed by what they heard. They were completely incapable of hearing a word that could save them, a promise that could retrieve them, and a power that could deliver them. And how does the free will of man fit into that scenario?

**THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED**

“... and their eyes have they closed...” Other versions read, “shut their eyes,”<sup>NRSV</sup> “their eyes are shut,”<sup>BBE</sup> “you have closed your eyes against understanding,”<sup>LIVING</sup> and “shut tight their eyes.”<sup>WILLIAMS</sup>

**Isaiah’s prophecy states that God closed their eyes.** “For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath He covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid” (Isa 29:10-14).

Referring to this very passage, Paul told the obstinate Jews in Antioch, “Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in

no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you” (Acts 13:40-41).

How is it that Isaiah said God closed their eyes, and Paul quotes the text as saying the Jews closed them? This is the same kind of thing that took place in Pharaoh. God told Moses HE would harden Pharaoh’s heart (Ex 4:21; 7:3; 14:4,17). God, then, is said to have “hardened Pharaoh’s heart” (Ex 7:13-14,22; 9:12; 10:1; 10:20,27; 11:10; 13:8).

Pharaoh’s heart is said to have been hardened, just as the Lord said (Ex 8:19; 9:7).

Pharaoh is also said to have hardened his heart (Ex 8:15,32; 9:34,35).

Some view this as Pharaoh hardening his heart, and after doing this several times, God ratified his action, making it irreversible. However, in God’s words to Moses, He never did say Pharaoh would harden his heart, but rather that He (God) would harden Pharaoh’s heart (Ex 4:21; 7:3; 14:4,17). **Pharaoh hardening his heart was the result of Divine judgment, not the cause of it.**

**An Overview**

The condition of which Isaiah spoke, and to which Paul referred is most arresting. It is vividly described as hearing but not understanding, and seeing but not perceiving. The condition is described as hearts being gross, or overgrown with fat, the people having closed their eyes, and being dull, or incapable, of hearing.

**All of this is a description of Divine judgment.** That is, the people closed their eyes because they had been given up to their own desires, as in Romans. “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day” (Rom 11:7-8). From this higher perspective Isaiah said, “For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered” (Isa 29:10).

**LEST THEY SHOULD**

“... lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them...” Other versions read, “Otherwise they might,”<sup>NIV</sup> “so that they might not,”<sup>NRSV</sup> “for fear that they might,”<sup>BBE</sup> “otherwise they might,”<sup>CSB</sup> “lest perhaps,”<sup>DOUAY</sup> “so that they might not,”<sup>NAB</sup> “to avoid using,”<sup>NJB</sup> “For you don’t want to,”<sup>LIVING</sup> “to prevent their ever,”<sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> and “so that they may never.”<sup>ISV</sup>

The condition described is one not only one of Divine judgment, but of human preference as well. The absolute willingness of the people to close their eyes, ignore the words they heard, and stumble on in

darkness confirms that God's judgment was righteous. They did not close their eyes because they had to, but because they wanted to – and that is because God, in judgment, gave them over to **their own** reprobate desires. Whereas they could have received grace to resist such unholy inclinations, now such grace is put truth beyond their reach.

The word "lest" is translated from a word (μήποτε) meaning, "a prohibitory conjunction; lest ever, lest at any time, lest haply," THAYER and "in order that not (at all), lest." FRIBERG

From the human point of view, the people closed their eyes so they would not yield to the powerful constraints of the Gospel. **From the Divine point of view, God caused this condition in order to put the truth beyond their access.**

This is most difficult for some to comprehend, seeing it is revealed that God would have "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). The idea here is that all races, nations, and peoples have been included in the provision of salvation. That is why the Gospel is to be preached "to every creature" (Mk 16:15). All of this is not as simplistic as it appears on the surface. There are "vessels of wrath PREPARED for destruction" <sup>NIV</sup> (Rom 9:22). They are "vessels . . . unto dishonor" (Rom 9:21; 2 Tim 2:20). There are people who do not receive the "love of the truth," to whom God sends "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess 2:11-12).

Isaiah was sent to people with a legitimate message, yet it would prove to be the means by which their obstinance would be revealed. God gave him this commission, "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. **Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.** (Isa 6:9-10).

Here, then, are three most arresting perspectives of the hardness of men's hearts.

⇒ First, the condition is depicted as Divine judgment – the appointment to a state from which man is totally incapable of recovering himself. Isaiah said it was God pouring out the spirit of deep sleep upon the people, closing the eyes of the people, their prophets, and their rulers.

He also covered the "seers" so they were unable to see the truth (Isa 29:10).

⇒ The means by which this determination was implemented was the preaching, or declaration of the truth. It was through his words that Isaiah made the heart of



the people "fat," shutting their eyes so they could not see, hear, understand, convert, and be healed (Isa 6:9). Paul and Barnabas told the rejecters at Antioch that "it was necessary" that the Word of God should first have been preached to them (Acts 13:46). This was not merely a "Jew first" technicality, but was also the means of discovering their real condition.

⇒ The revelation of the appointment is seen in the response of the people to the preaching of the Word..

In this way the righteousness of God was made known. His judgment was precise. The people demonstrated their disinterest in His provisions. Further, His great salvation remained available to "whosoever will" (Rev 22:17).

**BE IT KNOWN UNTO YOU**  
 "... Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

God did not "send" the Gospel to the Gentiles until the Jews, as a whole, had rejected it. In this way He would also fulfill the word He delivered through Moses: "They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation" (Deu 32:21). Paul confirmed that this is precisely why the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles. "But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, **I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people**" (Rom 10:19-21).

Thus the emphasis was changed from Israel to the Gentiles. This by no means indicates that God had abandoned Israel altogether. He did not totally cast away His people, nor has He voided His promise to them (Rom 11:1-11). He did, however, deliver a generation – the non-remnant – to reprobation, while reserving the remnant who exist because of "the election of grace" (Rom 11:5).

#### THE THEOLOGICAL DILEMMA

This entire circumstance has created a theological dilemma for many Bible students and professed believers. The difficulty comes because of the teaching of men concerning "free will." This teaching exists even though there is not a syllable of Scripture that affirms the will of men, or another part of the nature make-up of man, is free. In the Authorized Version, in all but a single verse, the word "freewill" applies to offerings given over above the tithe (Lev 22:18,21,23,38; Num 15:3; ; 29:39; Deut 12:6,17; 16:10; 23:23; 2 Chron 31:14; Ezra 1:4,3;5; 7:16; 8:28; Psa 119:108). The exception is Ezra 7:13, where the Israelites from the Babylonian captivity were told by Cyrus, "of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem."

The words "free will" occur four times in the NKJV (Lev 1:3; 19:5; 22:19, 29) – all referring to offerings.

"Free will" occurs a single time in the NASB version, referring to Philemon consenting to receive Onesimus back (Phile 1:14).

The NIV and NRSV versions do not contain the words “free will.”

The RSV versions uses “free will” two times (2 Cor 8:3; Phile 1:14). The first has to do with taking a special offering, and the second to Philemon receiving Onesimus.

**There is no doctrine concerning the will of man in all of the Bible. Moses, the Prophets, the Psalmists, John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles, nor Luke, Mark, James, or Jude delivered any teaching on this subject.**

Yet, uninspired and sectarian men have developed a doctrine of their own on this theme. On the basis of this spurious doctrine, they reject the Scriptural teaching and concept of predestination, election, and Divine foreknowledge. However, after they have presented all of the human reasoning, the Word of God still speaks of people being “chosen . . . to salvation” (2 Thess 2:13), an “election of grace” (Rom 11:5), being “predestinated unto adoption” (Eph 1:5), and having “obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph 1:11). We still read of people being “appointed” to “obtain salvation” (1 Thess 5:9), and being “ordained to eternal life” (Acts 13:48). We refuse to pretend these texts are not in the Scriptures, nor will we gloss them to make people feel comfortable with the doctrines and traditions of men. If hearing the Word of God is the juncture in time when the hearts of men are made manifest, and the appointments of God are carries out, then how is it possible to ignore those who balk at texts such as the ones we have mentioned?

**The Line Upon Line Principle**

Religious sophists tell us that men are slow learners, and for that reason there is frequent representation, going over the truth again and again, until it finally sinks in. Some speak of this as teaching “line upon line, and precept upon precept.”

The words “line upon line” are found two times in Scripture. The phrases “precept upon precept” and “here a little and there a little” are included in both references. What do they mean? Here are the texts. Both are found in the twenty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, which was the general context of the passage from which Paul quoted in our text.

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand

*doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line*

Divine judgment upon them.

It is then that the Lord uses this statement to Israel, confirming that it is the means by which He drove them deep into the darkness which they preferred. “Therefore the word of the Lord will be to them [merely monotonous repetitions of]: precept upon precept, precept upon precept, rule upon rule, rule upon rule; here a little, there a little—that they may go and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken”

**The parallel in our time is staggering. There is such froth coming from the pulpits and literature of the land that it boggles the mind. Endless repetitions of what is required to be saved, have a successful marriage, the elemental details of holiness, etc. are pouring forth like an uncontrollable deluge – and that is the best teaching. The people are being taught as though they really had no capacity to learn.**

*upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken” (Isa 28:9-13).*

The first mentioning of the phrase follows the question, “Whom, shall He teach knowledge? And whom, shall He make to understand doctrine?” (Verse 9). The Amplified Bible reads, “To whom will He teach knowledge? [Ask the drunkards.] And whom will He make to understand the message? Those who are babies, just weaned from the milk and taken from the breasts? [Is that what He thinks we are?]” That is, this is the response of the Israelites to Isaiah and the Prophets. It is like saying, “They are addressing us as though we were unlearned and ignorant, teaching over and over with simplistic teaching.”

However, as the next verse reads, “No, but [the Lord will teach the rebels in a more humiliating way] by men with stammering lips and another tongue will He speak to this people [says Isaiah, and teach them His lessons]. To these [complaining Jews the Lord] had said, This is the true rest [the way to true comfort and happiness] that you shall give to the weary, and, This is the [true] refreshing—yet they would not listen [to His teaching]”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup> (verses 11-12). This was a prophecy of he Babylonian captivity, in which they would become vassals to those whose speech they did not understand. This was a

<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup> (verse 13).

By using this way, God closed their eyes by means of repeated elemental teaching. Yet, they also closed their eyes themselves, for the truth declared to them was nothing more than monotonous repetition to them. If they had good hearts, they would have asked for more

**THE PARALLEL IN OUR TIME**

The parallel in our time is staggering. There is such froth coming from the pulpits and literature of the land that it boggles the mind. Endless repetitions of what is required to be saved, have a successful marriage, the elemental details of holiness, etc. are pouring forth like an uncontrollable deluge – and that is the best teaching. The people are being taught as though they really had no capacity to learn.

**The result of it all is that the modern church, just like Israel, has closed its eyes. Further, it is being done with religion in which there are some rudimentary principles being taught.** Such elemental teaching is referred to as “the weak and beggarly elements of the world” (Gal 4:9). These were religious teachings –specifically from the Law, centering in circumcision, the observance of days, etc (Col 2:16-20).

**Not A Time to Teach As Moses Did**

This is “the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:2a), when the message of the Gospel is to

*In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely*

be preached and expounded – a message that is not only transcendent to the Law of Moses, but yields results that glorify God. It is a message that is tailored for those who will, and do, believe. It is not a message addressed to unbelief or the flesh. This is “*the acceptable year*” (2 Cor 6:2b). **This is not the time to teach after the manner of Moses and the Prophets.** They were sent to a “*stiffnecked people*” (Ex 32:9; Deut 9:13), and those who were “*impudent and hardhearted*” (Ezek 3:7).

**From one point of view, the Lord closed the eyes of the their Prophets and rulers.** From the practical point of view, those same prophets lisped to the people in baby talk, teaching elemental things over and over. That was the Divinely appointed means of driving them back, until finally they were “*broken, and snared, and taken.*”

**Paul’s warning to the Jews**

**who came to him in Rome, was to take care that this did not happen to them. Should they reject his message, God would see to it that, at the very best, they would be shut up to a monotonous and repetitious religion that would finally drive them into spiritual oblivion.** O, what dangerous times are those in which we are living! It is tragic that so many are not cognizant of the situation.

## THEY HAD GREAT REASONING AMONG THEMSELVES

**“<sup>29</sup> And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.”**

The following versions **omit** this verse: NIV, NRSV, RSV, BBE, CJB, ESV, ERV, GWN, NAB, NET, NJB, NLT, LIVING, IE, WEYMOUTH, WILLIAMS, MONTGOMERY, CEV, GNB, MESSAGE. They are **included** in the following versions: KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, CSB, DARBY, DOUAY, GENEVA, MRD, NAS, NIB, PNT, RWB, TNT, WEB, YLT, ISV, AMPLIFIED, EMTV, LITV. **It is not possible that this chasm of difference could exist if it were certain from the truly best manuscripts that it should be omitted.**

### WHEN HE HAD SAID THESE WORDS

*“And when he had said these words.”* When Paul quoted the words from the prophet Isaiah, a change in the setting took place. It is then that he said, “*Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it*” (Acts 28:28). These were the specific words that precipitated the breakup of the meeting. It seems to me that it was apparent to Paul that some of the listeners had misgivings about what he had said. His words were not at all clear to them, even though, from an enlightened point of view, they were very plain and spiritually elemental.

### THE JEWS DEPARTED

*“... the Jews departed...”* Other versions read, “*The Jews went away,*”<sup>DARBY</sup> “*the Jews went out from him.*”<sup>DOUAY</sup> “*the Jews retired,*”<sup>MRD</sup> “*the Jews left,*”<sup>NIB</sup> “*went forth the Jews*”<sup>ABP</sup>

All of the versions that omit this verse include the departure of the Jews in verse twenty-five: after Paul said something – “*And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers*” (Acts 28:25).

The difference in the approaches is that the inclusion of verse twenty-nine has the Jews leaving after Paul said he was going to the Gentiles instead of after his quotation of Isaiah. The inclusion of verse twenty-nine is more in harmony with Paul’s experience when speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 22:21-23), and at Antioch (Acts 13:46-50). In both of these instances, it was Paul’s reference to being sent to the Gentiles that aroused the Jews.

### THEY HAD GREAT REASONINGS

*“... and had great reasoning among themselves.”* Other versions read, “*had a great dispute among themselves,*”<sup>NKJV</sup>

*“having mich disputing among themselves,”*<sup>ASV</sup> “*engaging in a prolonged debate among themselves,*”<sup>CSB</sup> “*much reasoning among themselves,*”<sup>DOUAY</sup> “*great disputations among them,*”<sup>MRD</sup> “*arguing vigorously among themselves,*”<sup>NIB</sup> “*arguing intensely among themselves,*”<sup>ISV</sup> “*arguing and disputing among themselves,*”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup> “*having among themselves debating,*”<sup>ABP</sup> and “*having much discussion among themselves.*”<sup>LITV</sup>

This is an elaboration of the statement made in verse twenty-five: “*they agreed not among themselves.*”

This was a disputation that centered in Scripture, and was the kind of discussion that was common among the Jews (Acts 6:9; 9:29; 15:2,7; 17:2,17; 18:4,19; 19:8,9; 24:12). Although they lapsed into human traditions, the Jews were a people who took their religion seriously.

This kind of discussion was also common when I was young, but has largely faded from the Christian scenes of our time. **The truth of the matter is that growing numbers of people have no settled convictions about Scripture, and have very little interest in the affirmations made therein.** It seems to me that this reveals a decadent religious environment.

## TWO FULL YEARS IN HIS OWN HIRED HOUSE

**“<sup>30</sup> And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him...”**

The last words of the book of Acts devote two sentences to a two year period of

Paul’s activity. By way of experience **sixty** verses were devoted to ship voyage from Caesarea to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16). Among other things, this confirms that Luke is not merely providing a chronology of events that took place after Jesus’ ascension into heaven.

He covers a period of at least thirty five years (Christ’s ascension until the conclusion of this text). The events have more to do with Divine direction than historicity. The establishment of the church under the leadership of Peter, the inclusion of the

Gentiles, and the spreading of the Gospel under Paul were major epochs. The consistency of what was preached from the beginning is seen, and the application of that Gospel to both Jew and Gentile.

Now, Luke concludes the book by leaving us thinking about Paul in Rome – how long he was here, and what he was consistently found doing.

### HIS OWN HIRED HOUSE

*“And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house . . .”* Other versions read, *“his own rented house,”* <sup>NKJV</sup> *“at his own expense,”* <sup>NRSV</sup> *“Paul was living in the house of which he had the use,”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“a place he rented for himself,”* <sup>CJB</sup> *“his own hired lodging,”* <sup>DARBY</sup> *“rented a place to live,”* <sup>GWN</sup> and *“[at his own expense] in his own rented lodging.”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Here is a most marvelous thing. First, that the government would allow one of its prisoners to dwell in his own house. Second, that Paul was supplied the resources to rent his own house – apparently large enough to host more than small numbers.

It is generally considered that Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon were written during this two year period. Paul refers to his imprisonment in Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon (Eph 3:1; 4:1; Phil 4:22; Phile 1:1,9). Both Luke and Aristarchus are mentioned in the letters to Philemon and the Colossians (Col 4:10,14; Phile 1:23,24). They are not mentioned in Ephesians and Philippians, which suggest they had left prior Paul’s letters to them from Rome. It appears that these were very productive years for the apostle Paul.

In his epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, he never pleads for funds, citing the great work that he is doing. He acknowledged that the Philippians had supported him (Phil 4:1-18). Yet, the Lord who had said he would *“testify”* of Him in Rome, saw to it that he was provided with the needed resources.

**With the rise and prominence of financial advisors and fund raisers, it seems to me that this manner of the Kingdom has been largely forgotten – if it ever was believed.** Financial campaigns have become so common that some view them as part and parcel of the Christian economy. But they are purely a human invention. Their use is at least to be questioned, and it is imperative that the fruit coming from them be carefully examined.

### HE RECEIVED ALL THAT CAME UNTO HIM

*“ . . . and received all that came in unto him . . .”* Other versions read, *“welcoming all who came to him,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“had talk with all those who went in to see him,”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“continued receiving all who came to see him.”* <sup>CJB</sup>

This is the same amount of time Paul spent in the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus. The people also came to him there, and the outcome was that *“all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks”* (Acts 19:10). One man, one place, and *“all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord.”* It was not because Paul went to Asia, but people from there, or who were going there, came to Paul, heard what he said, and published it abroad.

When Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Melita, the people brought their sick to Paul (Acts 28:9).

Now, **there** is a fresh and God-honoring approach to missions! It suggests that when a person really has some God-honoring message and perspective, the Lord will bring the people to him – even if he is under house arrest!

This is not unusual. The people came to John the Baptist, even traveling significant distances to get to him (Matt 3:5-6; 11:8-10; Mk 1:5; Lk 3:7; John 3:23). The same was true of the Lord Jesus. The people came to him (Matt 4:24-25; 5:1; 8:1,16; 9:2,32; 12:15; 13:2; 15:30; 19:2; Mk 1:32; 6:33; 9:20,25; 10:13; Lk 4:42; 5:1,15; 6:17; 9:37; 14:25; 18:15; 21:38; John 6:24; 8:2; 12:9).

People came where Peter was on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:6). They brought the sick to where Peter was (Acts 5:15-16). I understand that this is not the only way contact was made with God’s messengers. Philip went to Samaria and the eunuch. Paul and those with him went to Crete, Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Troas, and other places. But there were key times when the people came to where the message was being delivered.

### Not Coming to Paul

In our time, there are a number of professing Christians who have apparently never considered coming to Paul – specifically to the inspired writings that have come from his hand to the church. Here are three rather broad categories covered by

Paul.

⇨ **CONCERNING THE LORD’S SUPPER** – 1 Corinthians 11:23-32.

⇨ **CONCERNING THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST** – Ephesians 3:4-7.

⇨ **CONCERNING THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST** – Ephesians 3:7.

I have compiled a partial listing of teachings that are, for the most part, unique to Paul. I list them here in order to emphasize the extensive revelation that was vouchsafed to Paul.

### PAUL’S UNIQUE TEACHING THINGS GIVEN FOR ALL MEN TO HEAR

1. That the church is the body of Christ (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4,12-16; 5:23,30; Col 1:16; 2:19; 3:15).
2. Jesus Christ as the Head of the body (Eph 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:19).
3. The merging of Jew and Gentile in Christ (Eph 2:15-16,19).
4. The exposition of justification by faith (Rom 3:20-5:18; Gal 2:16-17; 3:8-24).
5. The distinction between the Old and New Covenants (2 Cor 3:6-14; 7:22; 8:8-13; 10:16-17; Gal 3:15-17; 4:22-28; Heb 9:15-20).
6. The reality of *“the old man”* and *“the new man”* (Rom 6:6; Eph 5:22-24; Col 3:9-10).
7. The inner warfare experienced by those who live by faith (Rom 7:15-25; Gal 5:17).
8. The spiritual logic that declares the coming conversion of the Jews (Romans chapters 9-11).
9. The High Priesthood of Christ (Heb 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:5,10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11; 10:21).
10. The relation of Abraham to those who believe (Rom 4:1-16; Gal 3:6-18).
11. The significance of Melchizedec (Heb 5:6,10; 6:20; 7:1, 10-21).
12. The eternal purpose of God (Rom 8:28; Eph 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9).
13. What took place behind the scenes when Jesus died (Col 1:20; 2:14-15; Heb 2:14; 9:26).
14. The whole armor of God (Rom 13:12; 2 Cor 6:7; Eph 6:10-18).
15. Spiritual weaponry (2 Cor 10:4-5; Eph 6:17).
16. Believers battling with principalities and powers (Eph 6:12).
17. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:9).
18. The works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21).
19. The office of a Bishop (1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:7-11).
20. The office of a deacon (1 Tim 3:10-13).
21. The exposition of spiritual gifts, and how they are administered (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-31; 14:1-12; Eph 4:11-16).
22. Why men cannot be justified by works (Rom 3:26; 4:2;

- Gal 2:16; 3:2-5).
23. The imputation of righteousness upon the basis of faith (Rom 1:7; 3:22-25; 4:5-25; 10:6-10; Phil 3:9).
  24. Extensive teaching concerning baptism into Christ (Rom 6:1-23; Gal 3:27; Eph 4:5; Col 2:11-15).
  25. The comparison of Adam and Christ (Rom 5:14-21; 1 Cor 15:22,45).
  26. Extensive teaching on the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor 15:15-57).
  27. The ministry of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:11-14, 26-27; 2 Cor 3:3-18; Gal 4:6, 29; 5:5,16-18,22-24; 6:8; Eph 2:22; Eph 5:9).
  28. The intercession and mediation of Christ Jesus (Heb 7:25; 1 Tim 2:5; Heb 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).
  29. The intercession of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26-27).
  30. Predestination and election (Rom 8:29-33; 9:11; 11:5-7,28; Eph 1:5,11; Col 3:12; 1 Thess 1:4; 2 Tim 2:10; Tit 1:1).
  31. The body being for the Lord (Rom 12:1-2; 1 Cor 6:13-20).
  32. God's objective for believers (Rom 8:29-30; Eph 3:15-30; 4:12-16; Col 1:9-11).
  33. The resurrection body (2 Cor 5:1-5).
  34. The accomplishments of the cross (Eph 2:16; Phil 2:8; Col 1:20; 2:14-15).
  35. Extensive teaching concerning the Lord's Table (1 Cor 10:21; 11:23-29).
  36. Types and shadows (Gal 4:24; Col 2:17; Heb 8:5; 9:24; 10:1).
  37. Extensive teaching of the grace of God (Rom 3:24; 4:4,16; 5:2, 15-17, 20-21; 6:14-15; ; 11:5-6; 12:3-6; 1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 8:9; Gal 1:15; Eph 2:5-8; 2 Thess 2:16; 1 Tim 1:14; 2 Tim 1:9; Tit 2:11-12; Tit 3:7; Heb 2:9; 4:16; 12:28).
  38. Heavenly hosts being tutored concerning God's wisdom through the church (Eph 3:10).
  39. Angels being present in the assembly of the saints (1 Cor 11:10; Heb 12:22).
  40. How the church is to respond to immoral people among them (1 Cor 5:1-9).
  41. With the exceptions of six references to the "Gospel" in the book of Acts, and five references in the epistles and Revelation, every mention of that word from in Romans through Revelation (seventy-five) is found in Paul's writings.
  42. The ascension of Jesus and its bearing on the gifts given to the church (Eph 1:20; 4:8-11; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:3; 4:14; 9:14).

43. The use of the word "heavenly" (1 Cor 15:48,49; Eph 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 3:1; 6:4; 8:5).
44. The degeneracy of the Gentile world without Christ (Rom 1:19-32).
45. With the exception of two references in First Peter, and one in Third John, the remaining teaching concerning Gentiles is given by Paul (48 references).
46. The fact that some of the Jewish branches were broken off, and some Gentiles were grafted into the Jewish olive tree (Rom 11:11-24).
47. The "man of sin" and the "son of perdition" (2 Thess 2:3).
48. The destruction of the man of sin at the coming of the Lord (2 Thess 2:3-10).
49. Receiving the love of the truth, and the consequences of not doing so (2 Thess 2:10-12).
50. What was involved in the condescension of Christ coming into the world (Phil 2:5-8).
51. What we are "come to" in Christ Jesus (Heb 12:22-24).
52. In showing the folly of seeking to be justified by Law, the allegory of Hagar and Sarah in explaining the distinction of the New Covenant (Gal 4:21-31).
53. The circumcision of Christ and of the heart (Rom 2:29; Col 2:11-12).
54. Newness of life and newness of spirit (Rom 6:4; 7:6).
55. The church is the Temple of God (1 Cor 3:16-17).
56. The church is built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph 2:22).
57. A warning to take heed how one builds upon the foundation of Christ (1 Cor 3:10-11).
58. Products of preaching referred to as wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, and precious stones – some to be ultimately rejected, some to be received (1 Cor 3:12-16).
59. Whoever defiles the temple of God with inferior converts will be destroyed (1 Cor 3:17).
60. Delivering a professing Christian to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (1 Cor 5:5).
61. The means of supporting the proclaimer of Word as being typified under the Law (1 Cor 9:11-14).
62. The faithful receiving praise from God (1 Cor 4:5).
63. The purpose for civil government (Rom 13:1-7).
64. That the grace of God teaches the saved to reject ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world (Tit 2:11-12).
65. That "the flesh," or the "old man" is to be crucified

- (Rom 6:6; Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14).
66. That we can walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25).
  67. That is we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Gal 5:16,25).
  68. That there is "no condemnation" to them which are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1).
  69. That we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 5:1).
  70. All of the teaching on reconciliation to God (Rom 5:10; 11:15; 2 Cor 5:18-20; Eph 2:16; Col 1:20-21; Heb 2:17).
  71. With the exception of two brief references by Peter (1 Pet 1:2; 3:15), and one by Jude (Jude 1:1), all of the doctrine concerning sanctification comes from Paul (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 1:2,30; 6:11; Eph 5:26; 1 Thess 4:3-4; 5:23; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:21; Heb 2:11; 10:10,14,29; 13:12).
  72. A comparison of the glory of the Old Covenant as compared with the glory of the New Covenant (2 Cor 3:7-11).
  73. That those who indulge the flesh will have no part in the inheritance reserved for those in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5-7).
  74. On the subject of reprobacy (Rom 1:18; 2 Cor 13:5-6; 2 Tim 3:8; Tit 1:6).

The fact that the vast majority of Christendom is abysmally ignorant of nearly all of these subjects confirms that the ministry of Paul has been largely rejected in our day. These revelations were given to him to make them known, particularly to the church. Jesus did what He said He was going to do – show Paul many things. Paul did what he was supposed to do – make them known. **Now it is the solemn responsibility of every believer to not be ignorant in these areas.** To remain in a state of ignorance after such a phenomenal outpouring of Divine wisdom and insight is inexcusable!

**May a new day come to the professed church in which they will seek the wisdom that was given to Paul, and avail themselves of the rich resources given to him.**

## PREACHING AND TEACHING

<sup>31</sup> ***Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.***

Now, we come to the subject matter provided in the teaching of Paul. It is summarized under two grand headings: "the

*Kingdom of God,"* and "those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." This summation is a fitting way to close the book of Acts.

**PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD**  
*"Preaching the kingdom of God . . ."*  
 Other versions read, "the message about

*God's Kingdom,"*<sup>GWN</sup> "the reign of God"<sup>YLT</sup>  
 All other versions that I have in my possession read "Kingdom of God."

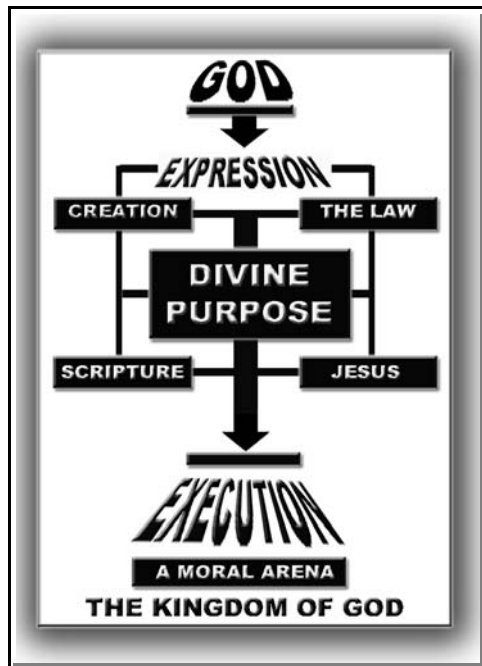
The word "Kingdom" is lexically defined as, "royal power, kingship, dominion, rule . . . the territory subject to the rule of a king . . . the rule of God."<sup>THAYER</sup>

I find this definition hardly acceptable, because it is so rudimentary. In fact, there is a certain poverty concerning this subject in Christian literature. This is largely owing to the dominance of false doctrine concerning the end times. I have chosen to here include an excerpt from my book, "God's Everlasting Kingdom," from the chapter, "Defining the Kingdom of God."

"The kingdom of God, in its simplest implication, means the reign of the Almighty, the exercise of His authority. This is a rule maintained with specific objectives in mind. It is an intelligent reign, being characterized by perceptible reason. God does nothing "without a cause" (Ezek. 14:23). He always works with "purpose" in mind (Eph. 1:11). When the power or authority of God is devoted to a specific objective, it is a revelation of His Kingdom!

The kingdom of God functions by divine objective, and objective is implemented by work – effectual work. Work speaks of productivity but in this case of even more – of purposeful productivity – work with a purpose, an objective, and an aim. Work denotes divine initiative– the thrust of God's influence and His power. The divine kingdom is technically "over all" (Ps. 47:2). The inhabitants of the earth and the armies of heaven together are governed by God – but with objective in mind. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35).

The kingdom of God is not houses and lands, meat and drink, or military exploits. It is the fulfillment of divine objective, accomplished in a moral arena in an intelligent manner." CHAPTER ONE



**So far as the extent of God's Kingdom is concerned, there is no place, people, or domain which is not under His control.** The Psalmist exclaimed, "His Kingdom ruleth over all" (Psa 103:19). There is a majesty about it that must be proclaimed. "To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Psa 145:13). God revealed to Nebuchadnezzar the nature of His Kingdom, and Nebuchadnezzar published it to the entire world: "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation" (Dan 4:3). And again, "whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation" (Dan 4:34). King Darius also made a global decree announcing the nature of God's Kingdom. "His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end" (Dan 6:26).

However, that is not the substance of what Paul preached. Rather his message identified the purpose God was executing – which purpose cannot possibly fail of fulfillment. All of the hosts of heaven, of earth, and under the earth are employed in the fulfillment of this objective – some willingly, and some who are completely oblivious of what is happening. The purpose being executed in this Kingdom pertains to the salvation of God, and it is being administered by the exalted Christ.

That salvation is the overall theme of all revelation, all inspired preaching, and all writing accomplished by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit of God. The fulness of this revelation has been realized following the death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus Christ.

- ⇒ Philip preached "the things concerning the Kingdom of God" (Acts 8:12).
- ⇒ Barnabas taught the believers that "we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22);
- ⇒ Paul spoke for three months in the Ephesian synagogue "the things concerning the Kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8).
- ⇒ Paul reminded the elders from Ephesus that he had going among them "preaching the Kingdom of God" (Acts 20:25).

- ⇒ Previous to our text, Paul had spent an entire day testifying "the Kingdom of God" (Acts 28:23).
- ⇒ Paul taught that the Kingdom of God consisted of "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:17).
- ⇒ He reminded the Corinthians that "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor 4:20).

**These texts all related to what God is doing through Jesus Christ.** They have to do with His "eternal purpose" (Eph 3:11), and how it is being carried out within the framework of His great salvation.

- ⇒ From one standpoint, He is showing His manifold wisdom to heavenly principalities and powers (Eph 3:10).
- ⇒ From another perspective, He is preparing a bride for His Son (Rev 21:2,9).
- ⇒ From yet another view, He is bringing many sons to glory through Jesus (Heb 2:10).
- ⇒ He is carrying out His determined purpose in the domain of the enemy, calling those He predestinated, justifying them, and readying them for glorification (Rom 8:29).
- ⇒ He is working everything together for the good of those who love Him, and have been called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28).
- ⇒ He is redeeming a people "from all iniquity, and purifying unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

**The message that is to be preached and taught pertains chiefly to what God is doing, not what man should do!** The power is in the message of God's accomplishments, not the message of man's obligations (Rom 1:16).

**The vast majority of the preaching of our day has to do with the kingdoms of men – what they should be doing, and how God can help them do it.** While there is room for speaking concerning such matters, they are not to be the thrust of what is declared. Preaching the Kingdom of God is not affirming what ought to be, but what IS!

**TEACHING THOSE THINGS WHICH CONCERN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

“ . . . and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ . . . ” Other versions read, “about the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>NIV</sup>

What does it mean to teach “those things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ,” or “about the Lord Jesus Christ?” Is there really a person of sound mind who does not readily know what this means? This is not teaching about men, but teaching about Christ. It is not teaching about health and wealth, but teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not teaching about the church, the home, the family, the government, or anything else centering in men. It is teaching that finds its center and substance in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That means that the thrust of teaching is concerning who Jesus is, not what men can be. It is about what Jesus has accomplished, not what man should achieve.

**When teaching majors on men and minors on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is wrong, no matter how Biblical it may appear to be.** No preaching should center in Proverbs. Further, any use of the Proverbs of Solomon should be within the context of the Lord Jesus Christ. The **subject** of teaching is not to be the end of the world, the reign of an antichrist, or the danger of a global government. **It is to be the Lord Jesus Christ.**

There is a mentality present in the professing church that perceives the preaching of Christ to be very limited in scope. Unless Jesus Himself is limited, this is a very foolish and dangerous assumption.

**CONSIDER WHAT THE LORD JESUS HAS ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED**

- ⇒ He has made the appointed offering to God that has satisfied Him (Isa 53:11).
- ⇒ He has perfected forever them that are sanctified (Heb 10:14).
- ⇒ He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Heb 9:26).
- ⇒ He has opened up a new and living way to God (Heb 10:20).

- ⇒ He has destroyed the devil through His death (Heb 2:14).
- ⇒ He has made the first covenant “Old” (Heb 8:13).
- ⇒ He has reconciled men to God (Col 1:20-21).
- ⇒ He has spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them in His cross (Col 2:15).
- ⇒ He has ended the Law as a means to righteousness (Rom 10:4).
- ⇒ He was tempted in all points like as we are, and remained without sin (Heb 4:15).
- ⇒ He has conquered death, taking back His life, after He offered it to God in death (John 10:17-18).
- ⇒ He has redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal 3:13).
- ⇒ He has delivered us from this present evil world (Gal 1:4).
- ⇒ He has made us free (Gal 5:1; John 8:36).
- ⇒ He destroyed the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).
- ⇒ He brought in everlasting righteousness (Dan 9:24).
- ⇒ He brought life and immortality to light (2 Tim 1:10).

**PONDER WHAT CHRIST IS CURRENTLY DOING**

- ⇒ He is bringing us to God (1 Pet 3:18).
- ⇒ He is bringing many sons to glory (Heb 2:10).
- ⇒ He is making intercession for those who are coming to God through Him (Heb 7:25).
- ⇒ He is mediating the New Covenant (Heb 9:15; 12:24).
- ⇒ He is giving repentance (Acts 5:31).
- ⇒ He is pouring forth His Spirit (Acts 2:33; Tit 3:6).

- ⇒ He is functioning as the Head of the church (Col 1:18).
- ⇒ He is nourishing and cherishing the church (Eph 5:29).
- ⇒ He is authoring and finishing faith (Heb 12:2).
- ⇒ He is administering the Kingdom into which we have been translated (Col 1:13).
- ⇒ He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords (1 Tim 6:15).
- ⇒ He is the Great High Priest (Heb 4:14).
- ⇒ He is the One Mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5).
- ⇒ He is giving us an understanding, that we might know Him who is true (1 John 5:20).
- ⇒ He is teaching His people (Eph 4:20-21).
- ⇒ He is sending grace, mercy, and peace (2 John 1:3).
- ⇒ He is dwelling in our hearts by faith (Eph 3:17).
- ⇒ He is manifesting Himself to those who love Him (John 14:21).

**CONSIDER WHO JESUS IS**

- ⇒ The Son of God (Acts 8:37; 1 John 5:10).
- ⇒ The Christ (Matt 16:16; 1 John 2:22).
- ⇒ The Lord of all (Acts 10:36).
- ⇒ The Good Shepherd (John 10:11,14).
- ⇒ The Great Shepherd of the Sheep (Heb 13:20).
- ⇒ The Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (1 Pet 2:25).
- ⇒ The Chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4).
- ⇒ The One Mediator (1 Tim 2:5).
- ⇒ The Only Potentate (1 Tim 6:15).
- ⇒ The Son of Man (Acts 7:56).

- ⇒ The Last Adam (1 Cor 15:45).
- ⇒ The Second Man (1 Cor 15:47).
- ⇒ The First and the Last (Rev 1:11).
- ⇒ The Beginning and the End (Rev 21:6).
- ⇒ The Alpha and the Omega (Rev 1:8).
- ⇒ The Word of God (Rev 19:13).
- ⇒ The King of kings and Lord of Lords (1 Tim 6:15).
- ⇒ The Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).
- ⇒ The True Vine (John 15:1).
- ⇒ The True Bread (John 6:32).
- ⇒ The Living Bread (John 6:51).
- ⇒ The Light of the world (John 8:12).
- ⇒ The Door of the sheep (John 10:7).
- ⇒ The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25).
- ⇒ The Root and Offspring of David (Rev 22:16).
- ⇒ The Bright and Morning Star (Rev 21:16).

These few examples reveal something of what is involved in teaching *“those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.”* **One of the great tragedies of our times is that so many other things are the subjects of preaching and teaching – things that really have little to do with the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Other valid considerations only make sense within the context of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Remove Him as the center and emphasis of preaching and teaching, and men are pushed into the domain of spiritual confusion and**

**diversion.**

**WITH ALL CONFIDENCE**

*“... with all confidence ...”* Other versions read, *“with all openness,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“boldly,”* <sup>NIV</sup> *“without fear,”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“with full boldness,”* <sup>CSB</sup> *“all freedom,”* <sup>DARBY</sup> *“very boldly,”* <sup>GWN</sup> *“with complete assurance,”* <sup>NAB</sup> *“complete boldness,”* <sup>NET</sup> *“complete fearlessness,”* <sup>NJB</sup> *“perfect boldness,”* <sup>ISV</sup> and *“with boldness and quite openly.”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Lexically, the word confidence means, “1) Freedom in speaking, unreservedness in speech a) openly, frankly, i.e without concealment b) without ambiguity or circumlocution c) without the use of figures and comparisons 2) free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, assurance 3) the deportment by which one becomes conspicuous or secures publicity.” <sup>THAYER</sup>

*“With all confidence”* is a weighty expression, indeed. This is something that cannot be taught by procedure. No man can make another man possess this kind of confidence. It is an authoritative confidence that comes from knowing the truth, and how to handle the word of God *“aright”* (2 Tim 2:15). Those who so speak are intellectually familiar with the panorama of Scripture, and have been illuminated from above. They have the overall picture of things so they can summarize and conclude at the right points and with the proper emphasis. This caliber of preachers and teachers have never been plentiful, but in our time they are **exceedingly rare.**

If a person has received the love of the truth, they will be able to recognize those who speak *“with all confidence”* – the chief of which was the Lord Jesus Himself. The people were *“astonished”* at His doctrine (Matt 7:28; 22:33; Mk 1:22; 11:18; Lk 4:32). They observed that He taught them *“as one having authority, and not as the scribes”* (Matt 7:29; Mk 1:22). This is because He knew what He was talking about, and the honest people sensed it.

Paul had *“the mind of Christ”* in his preaching and teaching (1 Cor 2:16). Not only did he have a grasp of the text itself,

but he knew how to correlate various Scriptural expressions, associating them with the purpose of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and God’s *“great salvation.”* If he spoke or wrote of anything, he knew how to frame it, like a jeweler knows how to set precious stones.

**NO MAN FORBIDDING HIM**

*“... no man forbidding him.”* Other versions read, *“unhindered,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“without hindrance,”* <sup>NIV</sup> *“no orders were given that he was not to do so,”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“without prohibition,”* <sup>DOUAY</sup> *“no one stopped him,”* <sup>GWN</sup> *“without restriction,”* <sup>NET</sup> *“no one tried to stop him,”* <sup>NLT</sup> *“quite unmolested,”* <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup> and *“without being molested or hindered.”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Herein is a marvelous thing – no hindrance in preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ! Paul was hindered in:

- ⇒ Jerusalem (Acts 9:29; 21:27)
- ⇒ Paphos (Acts 13:8)
- ⇒ Antioch (Acts 13:45,50)
- ⇒ Iconium (Acts 14:2)
- ⇒ Lystra (Acts 14:19)
- ⇒ Philippi (Acts 16:2)
- ⇒ Ephesus (Acts 19:8-9)
- ⇒ Thessalonica (Acts 17:5)
- ⇒ Berea (Acts 17:13)
- ⇒ Athens (Acts 17:32)
- ⇒ Corinth (Acts 18:6,12).

**Yet in Rome, for a period of two years, no person forbade him to speak of the Kingdom and Jesus, nor is there any recorded opposition against him during that time.** Although Jews were present in Rome, according to the record, they did not launch any initiative against him.

Because his ways pleased the Lord, He made *“even his enemies to be at peace with him”* (Prov 16:7). While this may be owing, in part, to the protection of Rome, the underlying cause of Paul’s freedom and safety was the working of the Lord. God was, so to speak, *“for”* him (Rom 8:31). **Consequently, none could be against him.**

**CONCLUSION**

Thus, we have completed a most insightful excursion through the book of Acts. We have seen the church instituted and

growing in the power of the Lord. We have seen *“the newness of life”* fleshed out in human experience. A number of Kingdom

realities have been lived out in this book. In closing, I will make mention of some them, as I am able to recall them. A profitable reading

*In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely*

of this precious book will be realized when these things are perceived. I have listed 169 confirmations. There are many more, but time forbids a further development of this closing word. Suffice it to say, it illustrates the abundance of things made known in this marvelous record.

- ⇒ Angels, Appearances of
- ⇒ Angels, Deliverance by
- ⇒ Angels, Direction by
- ⇒ Angels, Involvement in the Kingdom
- ⇒ Boldness, In Proclaiming the Truth
- ⇒ Believers, Finding in unknown places
- ⇒ Believers, How quickly can mature
- ⇒ Believers, United together in one accord and with one mind
- ⇒ Brethren, The concern that have for one another
- ⇒ Brethren ,The preference of the people of God for
- ⇒ Brethren ,The propensity of to gather together
- ⇒ Christ, Appearance of glorified Christ
- ⇒ Christ, Giving a special commission
- ⇒ Christ, Preaching of
- ⇒ Christ, Revealing the circumstances
- ⇒ Christ, Teaching things concerning
- ⇒ Christ, The centrality of
- ⇒ Christian institutions, The total absence of
- ⇒ Churches, Being comforted
- ⇒ Churches, Being exhorted
- ⇒ Churches, Being instructed more perfectly
- ⇒ Churches, Exposed to false teaching
- ⇒ Churches, How churches are established in the faith
- ⇒ Churches, The superiority of care for the
- ⇒ Confession, That Jesus is the Son of God
- ⇒ Convenience, The absence of a preference for
- ⇒ Corruption, In doctrine
- ⇒ Corruption, The danger of religious
- ⇒ Corruption, The potency of religious
- ⇒ Deliverance, From circumstances
- ⇒ Deliverance, From enemies
- ⇒ Deliverance, Miraculous
- ⇒ Divine approval
- ⇒ Divine control, Of people
- ⇒ Divine control, Of circumstances
- ⇒ Divine direction
- ⇒ Divine disapproval
- ⇒ Divine empowerment
- ⇒ Divine protection
- ⇒ Divine revelation
- ⇒ Enemies, How the saints respond to them
- ⇒ Enemies, How they oppose the preaching of the Gospel
- ⇒ Enemies, How they attempt to use governmental influences
- ⇒ Exhortation, To believers
- ⇒ Exhortation, To sinners
- ⇒ Faith, The boldness of
- ⇒ Faith, The confidence of
- ⇒ Faith, The nature of
- ⇒ Faith, The obedience of
- ⇒ Faith, The response of to persecution
- ⇒ Faith, The responsiveness of
- ⇒ Faith, The sensitivity of
- ⇒ Faith, The superiority of
- ⇒ Faith, The unquenchable initiative of
- ⇒ Faith, The willingness of
- ⇒ Faith, Unity of the
- ⇒ Falling away
- ⇒ Favor, Of the Lord
- ⇒ Favor, With the people
- ⇒ God, Causing the enemies of the saints to be at peace with them
- ⇒ God, How reacts to evil influences within the church
- ⇒ God, How reacts to political rulers who refuse to give Him glory
- ⇒ God's involvement, The explanation of in the death and resurrection of Christ
- ⇒ Godly Counsel
- ⇒ Godly men, How react to the introduction of false teaching
- ⇒ Gospel, How God's enemies view
- ⇒ Gospel, Suffering for preaching of
- ⇒ Gospel, The content of
- ⇒ Gospel, The power of the
- ⇒ Gospel, The preaching of
- ⇒ Gospel, The spread of
- ⇒ Gospel, The superiority of to the Law
- ⇒ Growth, Spiritual
- ⇒ History, Spiritually expert review of
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, Being filled with
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, The comfort of
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, The illuminating of
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, The power of
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, The convicting ministry of the
- ⇒ Holy Spirit, The directing of
- ⇒ Hope, Giving an answer for
- ⇒ Hope, The dominancy of
- ⇒ Hope, The nature of
- ⇒ How holy men react to the rejection of their word
- ⇒ How to, Encourage the saints
- ⇒ How to, Respond to those clinging to the Old Testament manner
- ⇒ Intervention, Heavenly, to reveal
- ⇒ Intervention, Heavenly, to judge
- ⇒ Intervention, Heavenly, to bless
- ⇒ Intervention, To direct
- ⇒ Jesus, Direction of
- ⇒ Jesus, How is expounded
- ⇒ Jesus, Preaching of
- ⇒ Jesus, Response to
- ⇒ Judgment, Of the Lord
- ⇒ Kindness, Brotherly
- ⇒ Kingdom, Preached
- ⇒ Kingdom, The absence of a worldly pattern in the matters of the
- ⇒ Knowledge of the Lord, Advancing in the
- ⇒ Lord, The protection of
- ⇒ Love of God, Showing that suffering and difficulty cannot separate us from
- ⇒ Love, Of the brethren
- ⇒ Love, Of the truth
- ⇒ Martyrdom, Attitude in
- ⇒ Martyrdom, Prayer in
- ⇒ Ministries, Effective brief
- ⇒ Ministries, Effective long-term
- ⇒ New creation, The
- ⇒ New man, Putting on the
- ⇒ Newness of life, Walking in
- ⇒ Obedience, Of faith
- ⇒ Obedience, The instant nature of true
- ⇒ Obedience, Willingly rendered
- ⇒ Old man, Putting off the
- ⇒ One accord, Disciples of
- ⇒ One heart, Disciples of
- ⇒ One mind, Disciples of
- ⇒ One soul, Disciples of
- ⇒ People, Being drawn to come to the people having the message
- ⇒ People, Believing after a single exposure to the Gospel
- ⇒ People, Divided in their response to truth
- ⇒ People, Moved to have favor toward the servants of God
- ⇒ Philosophy, Inferiority of worldly
- ⇒ Philosophy, Skeptical nature of
- ⇒ Prayer, For boldness to preach the Word
- ⇒ Prayer, Gathering to pray
- ⇒ Prayer, In one accord
- ⇒ Prayer, The effects of
- ⇒ Prayer, The power of
- ⇒ Preaching, The emphasis true
- ⇒ Preaching, The substance of
- ⇒ Preaching, To believers
- ⇒ Preaching, To idolaters
- ⇒ Preaching, To philosophers
- ⇒ Preaching, To sinners
- ⇒ Promises, The fulfillment of God's
- ⇒ Prophets, Expounding the
- ⇒ Reasoning, With believers
- ⇒ Reasoning, With hardened sinners
- ⇒ Reasoning, With inclined sinners
- ⇒ Repentance, How God gives
- ⇒ Repentance, What men do when they repent
- ⇒ Reports, Faithful of the working of the Lord
- ⇒ Resurrection, Examples of
- ⇒ Resurrection, Of the dead, Doctrine of
- ⇒ Resurrection, The significance of Christ's
- ⇒ Saints, Faithful and timely communication among
- ⇒ Saints, Responding to threats
- ⇒ Saints, Responding to the needs of the

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ brethren</li> <li>↪ Saints, Responding to good reports</li> <li>↪ Saints, Responding to bad reports</li> <li>↪ Saints, Responding to the rejection of the Gospel</li> <li>↪ Saints, The importance of establishing</li> <li>↪ Satan, How enters into the heart</li> <li>↪ Satan, How moves people to oppose the Gospel</li> <li>↪ Sinner, The swiftness with which can</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ be turned</li> <li>↪ Spirit, Unity of the</li> <li>↪ Spiritual life, The absence of naivete in mature</li> <li>↪ Spiritual Life – The beginnings, when believers find favor with the people</li> <li>↪ Teaching, The substance of</li> <li>↪ Temptation, Being tempted and responses to it</li> <li>↪ Unbelief, The aggressiveness of</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↪ Unbelief, The persecuting nature of</li> <li>↪ Waiting upon the Lord – The virtue of</li> <li>↪ Will of God, Properly interpreting the</li> <li>↪ Willingness, Being to forgive one's enemies</li> <li>↪ Willingness, Being willing in the day of His power</li> <li>↪ Wisdom, Practical</li> <li>↪ Wisdom, Spiritual</li> <li>↪ Wisdom, Spiritual</li> </ul> |
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**Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 11/19/10. We will begin our new series of lessons on the book of Genesis. The first lesson will introduce the book of Genesis, capitalizing on the first four words of verse of 1:1: "WHO WROTE GENESIS? FIRST THINGS, AND ITS IMPORTANCE." We will introduce various quotations from Genesis to confirm its importance, and cite the FIRST things that are recorded therein. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.**

# 2010 PREACHING FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2010

THEME

**PERSPECTIVES OF SALVATION**

**ACCENTING THE PREACHING OF THE WORD  
FOCUSING ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST  
TARGETING THE EDIFYING OF THE SAINTS**



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## THE WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Additional Website for Word of Truth Fellowship: <http://www.forministry.com/USMOINDPTWOTFW>

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**WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>**

### BROTHER BLAKEY'S ON-LINE COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY on Nehemiah: <http://wotruth.com/nehindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hosea: <http://wotruth.com/hoseaindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Romans: <http://wotruth.com/Romans.htm>

COMMENTARY on Second Corinthians: <http://wotruth.com/2Corinthians.htm>

COMMENTARY on Philippians: <http://wotruth.com/philippiansdindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Colossians: <http://wotruth.com/Colossians.htm>

COMMENTARY on First Thessalonians: <http://wotruth.com/1sthessindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Second Thessalonians: <http://wotruth.com/2ndthessindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hebrews: <http://wotruth.com/hebindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on First Peter: <http://wotruth.com/1stpetindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on First John: <http://wotruth.com/1stjohnindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Revelation: <http://wotruth.com/revelationindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Mark: <http://wotruth.com/Mark.htm>

COMMENTARY on Titus: <http://wotruth.com/Titus.htm>

COMMENTARY on Acts: <http://wotruth.com/Acts.htm>

COMMENTARY on Malachi: <http://wotruth.com/Malachi.htm>

COMMENTARY on Galatians: <http://wotruth.com/Galatiansindex-new.htm>

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## PARTICIPATING BROTHERS AND SISTERS

### A DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES DURING OUR GATHERINGS

"Openings and Introductions" = 7-10 minute exposition of truth to promote spiritual focus; "Lead Singing" – AM Songs selected by Leader, PM Songs Lead in favorites by the brethren; "Calling" = 7-10 minute exposition of truth designed to provoke disciplined thought; "Sermon" = 45 minute exposition of the things of God as revealed in Scripture; "Exhortation" = 5-8 minute challenge to act upon the truth we have heard; "Table Meditation" = 8-12 minute exposition of matters relating to Christ's role in salvation; "Lead Scripture shower" = Leading of the quoting/reading of Scripture without comment; "Lead prayer session" = Presentation of three matters for prayer that are taken from the Word of God; "Lead Intercessory Prayer" = A time of focused prayers for personal needs; "Closing Scripture/Benediction" – Closing of the AM Gathering

## SPEAKING/LEADING/MINISTERING IN THE ASSEMBLY

The Word of Truth Fellowship, Joplin, MO  
DURING OCTOBER, 2010

1. *Blakely, Given O.* (PM Sermon).
2. *Blakely, Jonathan* (Lead AM Singing, PM Introduction, PM Sermon #2).
3. *Blakely, June* (Lead PM Prayer Session, Teach AM Class).
4. *Blakely, Mattie* (Lead PM Singing).
5. *Blakely, Michael* (AM Exhortation, AM Sermon, AM Table Meditation, Teach AM Class, PM Table Meditation).
6. *Blakely, Michele* (Play Piano, PM Introduction).
7. *Burlingame, Brett* (PM Intercessory Prayer).
8. *Cobb, Matthew* (PM Sermon #1).
9. *Cobb, Nicole* (AM Calling, Lead Scripture Shower).
10. *Cobb, Robert* (AM Exhortation, Teach AM Class, AM Sermon, PM Exhortation).
11. *Hutchcraft, Aaron* (Teach AM Class, AM Exhortation, PM Exhortation, PM Table Meditation, PM Exhortation, PM Table Meditation, PM Table Meditation).
12. *Hutchcraft, Barbara* (Lead AM Singing, AM Opening Word, Lead PM Singing, Lead PM Prayer, PM Introduction, Lead PM Singing).
13. *Hutchcraft, Debbie* (Lead PM Singing, PM Introduction).
14. *Hutchcraft, Gene* (Lead PM Intercessory Prayer, AM Exhortation, Teach AM Class, PM Sermon, PM Exhortation, PM Exhortation).
15. *Hutchcraft, Judah* (Read AM Sermon Text, Read PM Sermon Text, PM Sermon Introduction, Read PM Sermon Text).
16. *Hutchcraft, Silas* (Closing Scripture/Benediction).
17. *Parker, Melissa* (Lead AM Singing, AM Opening Word, Lead PM Singing).
18. *Parker, Tony* (AM Table Meditation, AM Opening Word, AM Opening Word, PM Sermon).
19. *Sims, Annie* (Closing Scripture/Benediction, Lead Scripture Shower, Read PM Sermon Text).
20. *Sims, Baylie* (Read AM Sermon Text, Final Scripture/Benediction, Read PM Sermon Text).
21. *Sims Girls-Annie, Hannah, Rachel* (Read AM Sermon Text).
22. *Sims Hannah* (Closing Scripture/Benediction).
23. *Sims, Ricky* (AM Table Meditation, AM Sermon, AM Table Meditation, AM Table Meditation).
24. *Sims, Tasha* (Lead Scripture Shower, Lead AM Singing, AM Calling, PM Introduction).
25. *Stuhlman, Laura* (Lead AM Singing).
26. *Williams, Jeremy* (AM Opening Word, PM Table Meditation).
27. *Williams, Logan* (Play AM/PM Lord's Table Interlude, AM Calling, Read PM Sermon Text).
28. *Williams, Sydney* (Read AM Sermon Text, Closing Scripture/Benediction).
29. *Preparing Lord's Supper* (Various sisters).

### THE BODY OF CHRIST

It is a fact: "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (1 Cor 12:18). He did not set them in the home, but "in the body." He did not place them in society, but "in the body." They are functioning members of the body who fill necessary functions – edifying roles in the solemn assembly (1 Cor 12:19-27). The functioning value and ministry of "the body" is realized when it is "together," not when the people are separated. The ministry of each member is determined by their faith – "a measure of faith" that has been given to them in order to the "profit" of the entire body (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:7). This is how the Lord has put together "the church, which is His body" (Eph 1:22-23). We make no apologies for the ministry of the entire body – publicly, in the assembly, and in order to the edification of the saints. This is all done in an orderly manner, with due thoughtfulness and regard for those who are in Christ Jesus, and who, in faithfulness to God who gave these various abilities. Our assemblies are designed to allow for the various expressions and insightful responses of all who are of honest and good heart, have faith, and are in, and living for, the Lord Jesus.

*In this grand conclusion of the book of Acts, we are left with the vivid memory of Paul preaching and teaching – by Given O. Blakely*