

The background of the book cover is a photograph of ancient ruins, likely the Theatre of Ephesus, featuring stone structures and a hillside under a clear blue sky.

# **PAUL'S DECISION MAKING IN ACTS**

**ANTI-CHARISMATIC  
PRO-JEWISH  
COMMENTARY ON ACTS**

**WAYNE  
ODONNELL**

**PAUL'S  
DECISION  
MAKING  
IN ACTS**



Paul's Decision Making in Acts  
Anti-Charismatic, Pro-Jewish  
Commentary on Acts

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May 15, 2020

Wayne ODonnell

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To  
Garry Friesen

for his book  
*Decision Making and the Will of God:  
A Biblical Alternative to the Traditional View*

## About the Cover Photo

Paul ministered in Ephesus for several years. It was the crowning point of his ministry, and the completion of his mission to evangelize the Gentiles of the Aegean. Paul certainly must have walked the street that went from the harbor to the amphitheater, shown in the cover photo, many times during those years.

Acts 19:9-12, 18-20. [Paul was] disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus, and this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia [Eph+] heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought to the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. ... And many that believed, ... which [had] used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver, so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Paul also went on an evangelistic trip to Crete and Albania during his time in Ephesus. He left his assistant Timothy to minister there while he was away, and wrote him a letter with the following advice.

1 Tim. 1:3-7. As I entreated you to stay at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], so that you would charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith; so do. Some ... desir[e] to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Later, as Paul made his final departure from Ephesus, he recounted his ministry there to the elders of the Congregation.

Acts 20:18-35. You know, from the first day that I came to Asia [Eph+], after what manner I have been with you

at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews [Paul was a Jew too, but he's referring to the unbelieving Jewish majority]. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Messiah. ... Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God. ... Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Soon after he left Ephesus, Paul was arrested and imprisoned in Judaea, and wrote a letter back to the Ephesian Congregation, saying ...

Eph. 4:1-3; 6:18-24. I ... the prisoner of the Lord beseech you, that you walk worthy of the vocation which with you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ... Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints, and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.

The apostle John probably ministered in Ephesus later, bringing Mary with him, if she was still living at the time.

Jn. 19:26-27. Jesus [on the cross] ... said to his mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple [whom he loved], "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

John later wrote the book of Revelation to seven Congregations in Asia (Eph+) that had grown out of Paul's ministry in Ephesus.

Rev. 2:2-4. To ... the Congregation of Ephesus, write, ...  
“I know your works and your labor and your patience.  
... Nevertheless, I have somewhat against you, because  
you have left your first love.”





# Contents

About the Cover Photo ..... 6

Contents.....10

Paintings .....16

Poems..... 17

Maps ..... 17

Tables.....18

Quotes (Excluding Appendix) ..... 20

Introduction to this Book ..... 23

Ch 1. Introduction to Acts ..... 29

    Topic ..... 30

    Message.....37

    Purpose ..... 40

    Author .....42

    Title .....45

    Mission.....46

    Outline and Structure ..... 48

    Geography.....54

    Judaism and Christianity - or What? .....56

Part 1. Acts 1:1-6:7. The Jewish Congregation..... 65

    Ch 2. Acts 1:1-2:40. Holy Spirit Power .....67

        Acts 1:9-14. Waiting in Jerusalem..... 68

        Acts 1:15-23. Matthias ..... 68

        Acts 1:24-26. Casting Lots..... 74

        Inward Impressions ..... 78

        Fleeces and Bible Roulette ..... 89

        Logic ..... 94

        Acts 2:1-3. The Baptism, Filling, & Gifts of the Spirit..... 95

        The Cessation of Miracles and Revelation .....111

        Acts 2:4b-11. Tongues Then and Now ..... 119

        Is Pentecost Normative? .....124

Ch 3. Acts 2:41-5:42. Hebraic Jews .....	131
Acts 2:41-47. Early Congregation Life .....	132
Acts 4:1-31. When To Disobey Authorities .....	135
Acts 4:32-37. Like the Birth of Israel.....	137
Ch 4. Acts 6:1-7. Hellenized Jews .....	143
Acts 6:1-7. The First Deacons .....	144
Part 2. Acts 6:8-12:24. Paul's Prep.....	147
Ch 5. Acts 6:8-9:43. Judaeans and Samaritans.....	149
Acts 6:8-8:4. Going into Judaea and Samaria.....	149
Acts 9:32-35. Peter at Lydda and Joppa.....	150
Ch 6. Acts 10:1-12:24. God-Fearing Gentiles.....	153
Acts 10:1-11:18. Peter and Cornelius.....	154
Acts 11:28-30. Antioch Syria's Gift for Jerusalem.....	157
Acts 12:4-12:19. Peter's Deliverance from Prison.....	158
Part 3. Acts 12:25-19:20. Paul's Mission.....	163
Ch 7. Acts 12:25-14:28. Gentiles in Galatia .....	165
Acts 13:1-2 (Antioch Syria). 1) Go!.....	166
Acts 13:2-3 (Antioch Syria). 2) Work with Others.....	169
Acts 13:4 (Cyprus). 3) Start at Home.....	172
Acts 13:5a (Cyprus). 4) To the Jew First.....	175
Acts 13:5b-13 (Cyprus). 5) On-the-Job Training .....	179
Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 6) New Territory .....	188
Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 7) Contiguous Territory ...	190
Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 8) Focus on Cities .....	192
Acts 13:50-52 (Antioch Galatia). 9) Flee Persecution ....	196
Acts 14:13-21a (Lystra). 10) Preach! .....	198
Acts 14:21c-22 (Galatia). 11) Defense Before Offense....	209
Acts 14:23 (Galatia). 12) Plant Congregations.....	212
Acts 14:26-28 (To Antioch Syria). 13) Keep in Touch ....	214
Ch 8. Acts 15:1-35. The Jerusalem Council .....	217
Acts 15:1. The Situation in Antioch Syria.....	218
Paul's Rebuke of Peter .....	220
Acts 15:1. Epistle of Galatians.....	225

Acts 15:2-20. The Jerusalem Council.....	226
Ch 9. Acts 15:36-18:18. Gentiles in Corinth .....	231
Acts 16:12-15 (Philippi). 14) Baptize! .....	232
Acts 16:15 (Philippi). 15) Meet With the Brethren.....	235
Acts 16:16-24. Forbidden Forms of Seeking Guidance..	237
Acts 17:1-34. Thessalonica to Corinth .....	242
Acts 17:17. Epistle of 1 Thessalonians .....	247
Acts 18:11. Epistle of 2 Thessalonians.....	248
Acts 18:4-17. Paul's Ministry in Corinth .....	249
Acts 18:11 (Corinth). 16) Teach! .....	250
Ch 10. Acts 18:19-19:20. Gentiles in Ephesus .....	251
Acts 18:19-19:1. Ephesus to Jerusalem to Ephesus.....	252
Acts 19:8-10. Preaching in the School of Tyrannus .....	253
Acts 19:11-20. Miracles and Magic.....	254
Acts 19:20. Asian [Eph+] Imprisonment.....	255
Acts 19:20. Epistle of Philippians .....	260
Acts 19:20. Epistle of 1 Corinthians .....	268
Acts 19:20. Second Visit to Corinth .....	273
Acts 19:20. Epistle of 1 Timothy.....	278
Acts 19:20. Epistle of Titus .....	281
Part 4. Acts 19:21-28:31. Paul's Passion .....	285
Ch 11. Introduction to Paul's Passion .....	287
Purpose of This Section.....	287
Some Parallels Between Paul's Passion and Jesus'.....	288
Ch 12. Acts 19:21-21:17. Going Up to Jerusalem .....	295
Acts 19:21. Paul's Decision to Go Up to Jerusalem.....	295
Acts 19:21-20:1. The Collection for the Saints .....	298
Acts 20:2a. Epistle of 2 Corinthians .....	306
Acts 20:3a. Epistle of Romans .....	309
Acts 20:3b (Corinth). 17) Make Wise Flexible Plans .....	315
Acts 20:4. The Messengers (Apostles) of the Congregations .....	316
Acts 20:6a. Passover in Philippi .....	318
Acts 20:5. Luke Rejoins Paul at Philippi.....	320

Acts 20:13-14. Paul's Gethsemane.....	321
Acts 20:15-38. Farewell Speech to the Ephesian Elders	322
Ch 13. Acts 21:18-26:32. Caesarean Imprisonment .....	325
Acts 21:16-21. Arrival In Jerusalem.....	325
Catholic Prohibition Against Jewishness .....	327
Reformed Prohibition Against Jewishness .....	332
Acts 21:20-26. Paul's Promotion of Jewishness.....	340
Acts 22-26. Summary of Paul's Speeches.....	347
Acts 22. Paul's Defense Before the Mob .....	350
Acts 23. Paul's Defense Before the High Priest .....	352
Acts 24. Paul's Defense Before Governor Felix .....	355
Epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon .....	357
Locations of Paul's Coworkers in Acts.....	367
Acts 25a. Paul's Defence Before Governor Festus .....	373
Acts 25b-26. Paul's Defense to King Agrippa .....	374
Ch 14. Acts 27:1-28:31. Roman Imprisonment.....	387
Acts 27. Sea Voyage and Shipwreck.....	388
Acts 28:1-6. Circumstances .....	393
Acts 28:17-31. The Completion of the Goal .....	394
Epistle of 2 Timothy .....	403
Epistle of Hebrews.....	407
Ch 15. Applying the Word with Wisdom.....	413
Choosing Between Job Offers .....	413
Frameworks for Discerning God's Will .....	415
Career Choices .....	418
Marriage Choices .....	419
Ch 16. Conclusion .....	423
Appendix. Brief History of Let Go, Mysticism, & Charismaticism .....	443
100-1650. Early Movements.....	450
135 AD. Montanists .....	450
370-1340 AD. Euchites, Free Spirits, Friends of God ....	451

1526-1534. Tyndale’s New Testament and the Anglican Church .....451

1650. English Dissenters..... 452

1650-1685. Let Go and Let God .....453

1650. George Fox (Quaker), The Light Within ..... 453

1678. Barclay (Quaker). Apology for True Christian Divinity ..... 454

1680. Marshall (Puritan). The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification..... 455

1685-1700. Roman Catholic Mystics .....455

1685. Madame Guyon ..... 455

1685. Miguel de Molinos ..... 456

1699. Francois Fenelon ..... 458

Gene Edwards on Guyon, Molinos, & Fenelon ..... 460

1766-1858. The Sinless Perfection Movement ..... 469

1734-1748. The First Great Awakening..... 469

1766. Wesley. Plain Account of Christian Perfection ..... 471

1771. Fletcher. Last Check to Antinomianism..... 474

1775. Methodism in Virginia ..... 474

1801. The Cane Ridge Camp Meeting .....475

1800-1850. The Second Great Awakening.....475

1820. Charles Finney ..... 476

1823. The Mormons .....477

1832. The Catholic Apostolic Church.....477

1832. Spiritual Wives ..... 479

1846. John Humphrey Noyes ..... 479

1843. The Higher Life Movement Splits Off..... 480

1843. Phoebe Palmer. The Way of Holiness .....480

1858. Boardman. The Higher Christian Life.....481

1875. Smith. The Christians Secret to a Happy Life ..... 485

1923. Charles Trumbull, The Victorious Life..... 493

1907-2019. Keswick and America’s Keswick ..... 498

1867-1906. The Holiness Movement.....501

1867. The National Holiness Association .....501

1871. Charles Finney .....	501
1891. R. C. Horner. Pentecost.....	503
1894. The Southern Methodist Church Statement.....	504
1895. Irwin's Fire-Baptized Holiness Church.....	504
1897. Mason's Church of God in Christ .....	505
1896. Tomlinson's Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) .....	505
1898. Holmes Theological Seminary .....	506
1900. Crumpler's Pentecostal Holiness Church .....	507
1900. Alexander Dowie.....	508
1900. The Church of the Nazarene .....	508
1904. The Welsh Revival .....	509
1912. H. A. Ironside Criticism.....	509
1906-1959. The Pentecostal Movement.....	509
1900. Charles Fox Parham .....	510
1905. William Joseph Seymour .....	511
1906. Azusa Street .....	511
1906. Garr and Barratt .....	512
1906. Cashwell.....	513
1908. Absorption of Fire Baptized Holiness Church.....	514
1910. Finished Work Controversy .....	514
1914. The Assemblies of God .....	515
1916. Jesus Name, Oneness, Pentecostal Unitarians .....	515
1946-1955. William Branham (1909-1965) .....	516
1948. Latter Rain Movement.....	517
1952. Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship (FGBMF)	518
1959-1994. The Charismatic Movement.....	518
1959. Dennis Bennett's Episcopalian Charismatics .....	518
1967. Duquesne, Pittsburgh Catholic Charismatics .....	519
1968. Jesus People.....	519
1970-1975. Shepherding Ministry .....	520
1974. Vineyard Churches .....	520
1977. Kansas City Conference.....	520
1982. Kansas City Prophets .....	521

1990. Promise Keepers.....	525
1992-1977. Lakeland, Toronto Blessing, Brownsville ....	526
1994-2020. The Apostles and Prophets Movement .....	526
1994. New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) .....	527
1996. Bethel Church, Redding .....	529
2012. Judy Franklin & Ellyn Davis. The Physics of Heaven .....	530
2020. Caravan of Unity .....	531
20??-20??. The Apostasy .....	532
Scripture Index .....	537
Bibliography .....	553

## Paintings

i. Paul's Blinding of Elymas (1515). Raphael (1483-1520) .....	21
1. Paul's Sight Restored (1631). Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669) ....	27
2. Pentecost (1596-1600). El Greco (1541-1614) .....	65
3. Healing the Lame Man (1655). Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) ...	129
4. Paul at Stephen's Stoning (1569+). Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) .....	141
5. Paul's Calling. Nicolas Bernard Lépicier (1735-1784) .....	147
6. The Liberation of Peter. Hendrick ter Brugghen? (1588-1629) .....	151
7. Paul at Lystra (1515). Raphael (1483-1520) .....	163
8. Paul Rebuking Peter (1603). Guido Reni (1575-1642) .....	215
9. Paul at Athens (1515). Raphael (1483-1520) .....	229
10. Paul at Ephesus (1649). Eustache Le Sueur (1617-1655) .....	249
11. Paul's Calling (1690). Luca Giordano (1634-1705) .....	285
12. Paul's Prophetised Arrest (1687). Louis Cheron (1660-1713) ..	293
13. Paul Before Agrippa (1875). Nikolai Bodarevsky (1850-1921) .....	323
14. Paul Shipwrecked (1630). Laurent de La Hyre (1606-1656)....	387
15. Paul Writing (1618+). Valentin de Boulogne (1591-1632) .....	413
16. Paul's Calling (1601). Caravaggio (1571-1610) .....	423
b. Paul's Calling (1876). Domenico Morelli (1823-1901) .....	553



## Poems<sup>1</sup>

i. Barnabas. Earl Nelson (1758–1805) .....	21
1. Paul's [Calling] and Blindness. Richard Crashaw (1613–1649) ....	27
2. Pentecost. Arthur Middlemore Morgan .....	65
3. The Apostle John. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) .....	129
4. The Two Voices. Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) .....	141
5. Paul. Samuel Johnson (1822–1882) .....	147
6. Peter. John Keble (1792–1866) .....	151
7. I Bear in My Body. Edward Hayes Plumptre (1821–1891) .....	163
8. Peter and Cornelius. John Keble (1792–1866) .....	215
9. Resurrection. Tomm. Campanella (1568–1639). Tr. Symonds ..	229
10. [Calling] of Paul. Henry Alford (1810–1871) .....	249
11. Saul the Persecutor. Thomas Roscoe (1791–1871) .....	285
12. Awaiting Departure. Parisian Breviary. Tr. Isaac Williams .....	293
13. The Witness of Paul. Thomas Toke Lynch (1818–1871) .....	323
14. Of Paul's Danger. Thomas Fuller (1608–1661) .....	387
15. Paul's Calling. Henry Alford (1810–1871) .....	413
16. Paul's Calling. John Keble (1792–1866) .....	423

## Maps

Mission: Galatia. Epistles: 1) Galatians .....	164
Mission: Corinth. Epistles: 2) 1 Thess. 3) 2 Thess. ....	230
Mission: Ephesus. Epistles: 4) 1 Cor. 7) 2 Cor. 8) Romans .....	250
Sailing Days from Philippi to Caesarea and Back .....	265
Mission: 2nd Visit to Corinth. Epistles: 5) 1 Tim. 6) Titus .....	275
Paul's Steady Epistle Writing .....	365
Mission: Rome. Epistles: 13) 2 Tim. 14) Hebrews .....	388

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<sup>1</sup> Horder, Poets' Bible.

# Tables

Jesus' and Paul's Passion Narratives .....	34
Word Count in Acts - Congregation .....	36
Word Count in Acts - Jew .....	36
Word Count in Acts - Gentile .....	36
Number of Greek Words in the New Testament by Books .....	42
Divinely-Ordained Mission Methodology .....	45
Simplified Outline of Acts .....	47
Detailed Outline of Acts .....	48
Some Important Words in Acts .....	50
Geography in Acts .....	52
Geographical Grid of Paul's Mission .....	53
Judaism and Christianity - or What? .....	54
Spirit Baptism, Filling, and Gifts in Acts.....	106
Other Fillings in Acts Besides Chapters 2, 8, 10, & 19 .....	106
Men and Spiritual Gifts In Descending Importance .....	109
Crowd Miracles Per Location (1) .....	110
Crowd Miracles Per Location (2) .....	110
Crowd Miracles Per Location (3) .....	111
Crowd Miracles Per Location (4) .....	111
To the Jew First in Acts (1) .....	176
To the Jew First in Acts (2) .....	177
Paul's Oft-Repeated Pattern in Acts.....	195
Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (1).....	198
Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (2).....	198
Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (3).....	199
Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (4).....	199
Congregations Planted by Paul .....	212
No Waiting Period Before Baptism (1) .....	232
No Waiting Period Before Baptism (2) .....	232
No Mention of Baptism .....	233
Hosts and Hostesses of Paul.....	235
Possible Hosts and Hostesses of Paul .....	235
Forbidden Practices Per Deut. 18:10.....	239
Forbidden Practices Per Deut. 18:11.....	240
1 & 2 Thessalonians from Athens and Corinth.....	244
Byzantium to Caesarea Travel Times .....	264
Estimated Philippi - Caesarea Travel Times .....	264

Travel Times from Philippi to Ephesus and Back .....	265
Travel Times from Caesarea to Ephesus and Back .....	266
2nd Visit to Corinth vs. 2nd-Roman Imprisonment .....	274
Four Generations of Herods Against the Gospel .....	291
Paul's 2nd and 3rd Visits to Corinth (1) .....	300
Paul's 2nd and 3rd Visits to Corinth (2) .....	302
The Messengers (Apostles) of the Congregations .....	315
Speeches in Acts 22-26 .....	346
Paul's Five Speeches in acts 22-26.....	346
Coworker Arrivals & Departures Jerusalem/Caesarea .....	357
Paul's Coworkers Mentioned in Colossians+ .....	362
Ephesians 5:21-6:9 Compared to Colossians 3:18-4:1 .....	363
Prison Epistle Locations .....	364
Major Coworkers of Paul - Key to Abbreviations.....	365
Major Coworkers of Paul through Corinth (1) .....	366
Major Coworkers of Paul through Corinth (2) .....	367
Major Coworkers of Paul from Ephesus On (1) .....	368
Major Coworkers of Paul from Ephesus On (2) .....	369
Major Coworkers of Paul from Ephesus On (3) .....	370
Seaports .....	390
Places Luke Lived .....	408
Paul's Decisions in Acts 9 - 28 (1).....	435
Paul's Decisions in Acts 9 - 28 (2).....	436
Paul's Decisions in Acts 9 - 28 (3).....	437
Paul's Decisions in Acts 9 - 28 (4).....	438
Paul's Decisions in Acts 9 - 28 (5).....	439
Mysticism vs the Word - Salvation and Edification .....	461
Mysticism vs the Word - Union with God .....	461
Mysticism vs the Word - Becoming Like Jesus.....	462
Mysticism vs the Word - How to Pray .....	463
Mysticism vs the Word - Do Nothing or Work Hard? .....	464
Mysticism vs the Word - Do Nothing or Work Hard? .....	465
Mysticism vs the Word - Overcoming Sin (1).....	466
Mysticism vs the Word - Overcoming Sin (2).....	467
Mysticism vs the Word - Annihilation or Intentional Thinking? ....	468
Mysticism vs the Word - Be Detached or Involved?.....	468
Mysticism vs the Word - Unseen Realms or the Word?.....	469

# Quotes (Excluding Appendix)

Allen.....	400	Luter .....	193
Basil .....	273, 274	Luther .....	330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337
Bock ...	37, 318, 342, 345, 346, 350, 373	MacArthur .....	114, 149, 416
Bohannon .....	169	Macgregor .....	342
Bruce.....	340, 352, 376	Marshall.....	28, 33, 34, 37, 38, 351, 382
Calvin .....	338	Merkle .....	209
Casson.....	264	Michael.....	330
Chabad.....	383	Morgan .....	186
Chrysostom.....	328	Murray.....	169
Constantine .....	326	Nanos and Runesson....	55, 56
Dibelius .....	207	Newton.....	89
Doolittle .....	236	Oss .....	121, 123, 125
Edwards .....	281	Pliny.....	377
Ellicott.....	263	Pope Eugene IV .....	329
Eusebius.....	326	Rabbeinu Bahya .....	380
Freeman .....	44, 231	Rambam .....	396
Friesen ..	22, 74, 75, 76, 87, 88	Ramsay .....	205, 391, 392, 399
Gaffin .....	125, 126	Robinson.....	238, 393, 417
Gager ....	58, 59, 174, 328, 381	Sanday .....	310
Geisler.....	86	Shirer .....	79, 80, 82, 84, 86
Goosen.....	91, 113, 114	Smith .....	390
Griffiths.....	184	Spanos .....	121
Gromacki .....	204	Sproul .....	418, 419
Grudem.....	24, 200, 535	Stott.....	200, 352
Haenchen.....	207	Swavely.....	415
Hemer.....	205	Synod of Antioch .....	327
Hornok .....	184, 185, 190	Synod of Laodicea .....	327
Ignatius .....	325	Tacitus .....	263, 376
Janeway .....	392	Talmud.....	380, 383, 396
Joubert.....	89	Tozer.....	416
Kinman.....	262	Trajan .....	379
Kvalbein .....	44	Unger.....	191
Liefeld .....	206	Waltke 88, 143, 155, 189, 237, 269, 299, 416	
Longenecker ....	343, 344, 351, 353, 373, 375, 379, 382, 384	White.....	256, 257

Willard .....77, 86  
Wilson ..... 172, 392  
Worth ..... 261

Wright .....28, 202  
Zahn .....315



# Introduction to this Book



*i. Paul's Blinding of Elymas (1515). Raphael (1483-1520)*

The Son of Consolation,  
moved by thy law of love,  
Forsaking earthly treasures,  
sought riches from above.

i. Barnabas. Earl Nelson (1758–1805)

All my books can be read online for free at <http://wayneodonnell.com>. “Freely you have received, freely give” (Mt. 10:8).

In 1980, Garry Friesen wrote "Decision Making and the Will of God," a book that debunked the traditional view that God leads by inward impressions into His perfect, specific will. But Bible teachers continue teach prayer is a two-way conversation; churches continue to question pastoral candidates about their ‘call’ to the ministry; and

Christians continue to try to discern God's inner voice to make decisions.

Christians in the book of Acts made their decisions by the Word and Wisdom, not by listening for inward impressions. Almost all Paul's decisions in Acts can be explained by 17 logical principles he followed.

Paul was Jesus' surrogate to complete Jesus' mission to bring the gospel to the Gentiles of the Aegean Sea, and to the Jews of the diaspora. Isaiah 49:1, 6. "Listen, O Islands, to me; and hearken, you Jewish People, from far. The LORD has called me from the womb. ... He said, 'It is a light thing that you would be my servant to ... restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, so that you may be my salvation to the end of the earth.'"

The first part of the book of Acts asks, "Can even Gentiles be saved?" But the last part focuses on Luke's real message: The Congregation should continue to look equally Jewish and Gentile, even though Gentiles become far more numerous in the Congregation. This is God's highest purpose; gathering two into the one body of Messiah, according to Ephesians.

All Paul's epistles were written by the end of Acts 28. There's no need for a speculated release and second Roman imprisonment. This book also provides an accounting of the movements of Paul's coworkers; and a history of Charismaticism, Christian mysticism, and the false doctrine of "Let Go and Let God."

As for the decision-making aspect of this book, I would love to read an exposition of the Book of Acts that showed Paul, the other apostles, and their co-workers, making most of their decisions by listening for inward impressions, but it would require reading that doctrine into the text, rather than expositing it out of the text.

Friesen. In order to arrive at the conclusion of the traditional approach [to decision-making], it is necessary to water down the biblical examples and spice up the biblical teaching. Examples [like in Acts] are watered down to be less miraculous than they really



are [so we can think we're doing them too]. Biblical teaching [like in the epistles] must be spiced up to be more specific than it really is [for example, a promise to Israel to "guide you continually" (Is. 58:11), doesn't actually say anything about Christians being guided by 'inward impressions'].<sup>2</sup>

All Bible quotations are from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted, but I've modernized the English. The word "Christ" has been consistently changed to "Messiah," since no one knows what a "Christ" is, except for it's unfortunate religious overtones, but everyone knows what a "Messiah" is, and both are transliterations of the Greek and Hebrew word meaning "anointed." So much false Catholic and Reformed doctrine regarding Israel would have been avoided over the centuries if the KJV translators had chosen to use "Messiah" instead of "Christ."

In attempting to harmonize the movements of Paul's coworkers in the epistles and Acts, the reader should remember that my presentation is speculative, like everyone's is to different degrees; and that though I didn't clutter my narrative with repetitive phrases such as, "It is probable ...," or "Perhaps, ..." etc., the reservations those types of phrases signify are to be assumed.

I recommend the following additional books about decision-making by the Word and Wisdom.

1743, Benjamin Doolittle, *An Enquiry into Enthusiasm*.

1980, Garry Friesen, *Decision Making and the Will of God*.

1988, Arthur L. Johnson, *Faith Misguided: Exposing the Dangers of Mysticism*.

1995, Bruce K. Waltke, *Finding the Will of God: A Pagan Notion?*

1998, John MacArthur Jr., *Found: God's Will*. (Originally, 1973, *God's Will Is Not Lost*.)

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<sup>2</sup> Friesen, *Decision Making*, 75.

2003, Dave Swavely, *Decisions, Decisions: How (and How Not) to Make Them*.

Maybe it would help if we had more scholarly journal articles on the topic.

Grudem. I ... categorized the articles published in three refereed evangelical journals for the last five years [before 2000]: Westminster Theological Journal, ... Trinity Journal, ... and ... the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society. Not counting book reviews, there were 257 scholarly articles [on all topics]. ... [But regarding] God's guidance in our daily lives. Zero articles. Yet some understanding of God's guidance affects every Christian every day of his or her life! ... Either Garry Friesen is right on that topic, or he's wrong. ... We should expect to see many more scholars contributing articles and books supporting and developing their viewpoints.<sup>3</sup>

Paul made most of his decisions by the Word and Wisdom, not by inward impressions, and only rarely by direct revelation, even though he was the apostle on the cutting-edge of Jesus' mission to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Most of Paul's decisions in Acts can be explained by the following 17 principles.

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<sup>3</sup> Grudem, *The Bible Alone*, 6, 8, 14.

PAUL'S 17 MISSION STRATEGIES

1. Go!
2. Work with Others
3. Start At Home
4. To the Jew First
5. On-the-Job Training
6. New Territory
7. Contiguous Territory
8. Focus On Cities
9. Flee Persecution
10. Preach!
11. Defense Before Offense
12. Plant Congregations
13. Keep in Touch
14. Baptize!
15. Meet With the Brethren
16. Teach!
17. Make Wise Flexible Plans



# Ch 1. Introduction to Acts



*1. Paul's Sight Restored (1631). Pietro da Cortona (1596-1669)*

Why, Lord, this two-fold glory of Thy ray,  
Giving him sight whose sight it takes away?  
Paul in that night God's inner light shall find:  
That he may see [Messiah] his eyes are blind.

1. Paul's [Calling] and Blindness. Richard Crashaw (1613–1649)

Most people think Acts is a history of the early Congregation of God; and it is. But it's a very selective history. It records the gospel going to Ephesus, but not to Alexandria. It mentions Peter 56 times, but Paul 153. It gives only a one-verse mention of the Gentiles' offering for the poor brethren in Jerusalem that was so important to Paul per Romans and Corinthians, but it gives the last seven chapters to Paul's captivity. Obviously, Luke decided

what material to include in his book based on his topic, message, and purpose.

N. T. Wright thinks Luke wanted to limit his history to one scroll. It's an interesting thought. The oldest complete Torah scroll, dated from about 1200 AD., is 118 feet long.

Wright. The picture in Acts, it turns out, is oversimplified. (The longest histories ever written leave out far more than they put in, and Luke wants his book to fit onto a single scroll.) In Acts 9:20–28, Paul announces Jesus in the synagogue in Damascus until a plot against his life forces him to leave town and go back to Jerusalem. Somewhere in that story there must be room for a desert pilgrimage, after which Paul “returned again to Damascus.” [Gal. 1:17]<sup>4</sup>

## **Topic**

Acts is the account of Jesus completing the building of his Congregation through Paul.

The same author wrote both the gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. They're both addressed to Theophilus. The gospel of Luke tells what Jesus began to do through the Holy Spirit while here on earth, and Acts tells what Jesus finished doing through the Holy Spirit after returning to heaven.

Lu. 1:3-4. It seemed good to me also, ... to write to you ... Theophilus, so that you can know the certainty of those things, wherein you've been instructed.

Acts 1:1-2. The former treatise [the Gospel of Luke], I have made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up [returned to heaven].

Marshall. Luke, in contradistinction to the other evangelists, chose to add a second volume to the Gospel. ... His first volume dealt with 'all that Jesus began to do and teach', and ... by implication the

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<sup>4</sup> Wright, Paul, 64.

second volume deals with ‘all that Jesus continued to do and teach’ [actually, ‘finished doing and teaching’].<sup>5</sup>

Jesus couldn’t complete the building of his Congregation by Spirit baptism of both Jews and Gentiles into one body until after he returned to heaven.

Mt. 16:18. I will build my Congregation.

Jn. 16:7, 13. If I don’t go away, the Comforter won’t come to you; but if I depart, I will send him to you, [i.e.] ... the Spirit.

2 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we are Jews or Gentiles.

There were three specific groups Jesus had to complete his mission to in order to finish building his Congregation after he returned to heaven.

1) Jesus had to complete his mission to the Gentiles.

At Jesus’ first coming, except for rare exceptions, he limited his ministry geographically to the land of Israel, and ethnically to Jews.

Mt. 10:5-6. Don’t go into the way of the Gentiles, and don’t enter into any city of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mt. 15:24. I am not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Jn. 12:19-24. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, ... “Behold, the world is gone after him.” And there were certain Greeks (Ἕλλην, Hellyn, i.e. Gentiles) among them that came up to worship at the feast. The same came therefore to Philip, ... saying, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” ... Andrew and Philip told Jesus. And Jesus [wouldn’t see the Gentiles at that time but] answered, ... “The hour has come that the Son of man will be glorified. ... Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit [the Gentiles].”

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<sup>5</sup> Marshall, Acts, 20.

One of the Messiah's prophesied missions was to enlighten the Gentiles, but Jesus didn't do it while he was here.

Is. 42:6. I the Lord have called you [Messiah] ... and will ... give you for a covenant of the [Jewish] people, [and] for a light of the Gentiles.

Lu. 2:32. A light to light up the Gentiles, and the glory [brightness] of your people Israel.

Is. 49:1, 6. Listen, O islands [of the Gentiles], and hearken, you [Jewish diaspora] people from far. The Lord called me [Messiah] from the womb. ... And he said, "It is a light thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob. ... I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, so that you can be my salvation to the end of the earth.

But after his death and resurrection, Jesus did take his ministry to the Gentiles - through Paul!

Acts 1:8. You will receive power, after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses to me both [to Hebraic and Hellenized Jews] in Jerusalem, and [to mixed-Jewish Samaritans and God-fearing Gentiles] in all Judaea and in Samaria; and to [Gentiles in] the uttermost part of the earth [via the Aegean].

Acts 9:15. [Paul] is a chosen vessel to me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

2) Jesus had to complete his mission to the diaspora Jews.

Jesus offered the Messianic Kingdom to Israel in Matthew 1-10, on the precondition that the Jewish leaders would organize a national repentance.

Mt. 3:2; 4:17. Repent, for the [Messianic] kingdom of heaven is at hand.

In Matthew 11-12, the cities of Israel rejected his offer, by not having an organized repentance, like Nineveh had.



Mt. 11:20-21; 12:41. Then he began to scold the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they didn't repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida [cities, not individuals]! ... The men of Nineveh [a city, not an individual] will rise in judgment with this generation, ... because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here." [Spiritual salvation is always an individual decision but the physical salvation of the Messianic Kingdom is also a national decision.]

The Messianic kingdom will be set up someday, after Israel does organize a national repentance.

Mt. 23:39. You [Israel] will not see me again, until you will say, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord."

Zech. 12:9-13:1. In that day... they [Israel] will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, ... the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart, [etc.]. ... In that day, there will be a fountain opened ... to the inhabitants of Jerusalem [a city, not an individual] for sin and for uncleanness.

Peter began giving Israel another chance to repent at Pentecost.

Acts 2:38; 3:19-20. Repent, ... and he will send Jesus Messiah, which was preached to you before.

Paul preached to the Jews first in every city. And it's no accident the book of Acts is finished when the diaspora Jews of Rome reject the Messiah.

Acts 28:25-26. They departed after Paul had spoken one word, "Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet, ... 'Hearing you will hear, and will not understand.'"

3) Jesus had to complete his mission to his other sheep.

Jn. 10:16. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold. I must also bring them, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one fold and one shepherd.

People who had been saved under the Old Covenant before the coming of Messiah by faith in the God of Israel, didn't lose their salvation after Jesus died and rose again, but they weren't automatically incorporated into the Congregation by the indwelling Holy Spirit either. Instead, they believed the gospel without fail, as soon as they heard it; and believed in Jesus specifically, rather than God in general; and the moment they believed the gospel, they were indwelt by the Holy Spirit and incorporated into the Congregation.

This included Old Covenant believing Jews and Jewish proselytes like those in Jerusalem at Pentecost: "Jews, devout men, out of every nation" (Acts 2:5); and the diaspora Jewess Lydia, "which worshipped God" (Acts 16:14); and God-fearing, synagogue-associated, believing Gentiles like Cornelius, "a just man, and one that fears God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews" (Acts 10:22).

That's why the early brethren were so successful preaching the gospel! They were preaching to so many already-saved people who hadn't yet heard the new message. At Pentecost, "the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). When Peter and John healed the lame man, "many ... which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). Regarding Paul's preaching in the synagogues, "they went ... into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the [God-fearing, already-saved] Greeks believed" (Acts 14:1). The gospel had to go out, to bring these other sheep who were already saved, but not yet trusting in the now-revealed Jesus, and not yet part of the Congregation, into the Congregation.

Jesus used Paul to complete this work. When Jesus was on earth, he was the minister of the Jews; but after his

ascension, through the Holy Spirit, through Paul, he also became the minister of the Gentiles.

Rom. 15:8-16. Jesus Messiah was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the [Jewish] fathers, and that the Gentiles [also] might glorify God for his mercy. ... Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly to you, ... because of the grace that is given to me from God, that I would be the minister of Jesus Messiah to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

Marshall. Luke ... has reserved for [Paul] the missionary outreach to the Gentile world that Jesus saw as inherent in the Servant theology of Isaiah 61. And, ... as he turns in the latter half of Acts to portrayals of the “good news” to the Gentile world, Luke is, in effect, concluding his two volumes by explicating Jesus’ promise of the universal extension of God’s grace.<sup>6</sup>

The reason Paul’s arrest and captivity are given so many chapters in Acts is that Paul was Jesus’ surrogate on earth to finish the Gentile part of Jesus’ own mission, and Paul therefore also completed the [non-propitiatory] sufferings of Messiah.

Acts 9:15-16. [Paul] is a chosen vessel to me, ... for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Col. 1:23-25. I, Paul, ... rejoice in my sufferings for you [Gentiles], and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Messiah in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Congregation, whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you [Gentiles].

Acts chapters 1-19a (18.5 chapters) are about Paul completing his mission, and Acts 19b-28 (9.5 chapters), one third of the book, are Paul’s passion story.

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<sup>6</sup> Longenecker, Acts, 8256.

JESUS’ AND PAUL’S PASSION NARRATIVES BY NUMBER OF CHAPTERS						
Book	Life Narrative			Passion Narrative		
	Chp	#	%	Chp	#	%
<b>Matt.</b>	1-20a	19.5	70	20b-28	8.5	30
<b>Mark</b>	1-10a	9.5	59	10b-16	6.5	41
<b>Luke</b>	1-18a	17.5	73	18b-24	6.5	27
<b>John</b>	1-11	11	52	12-21	10	48
<b>Acts</b>	1-19a	18.5	66	19b-28	9.5	34

Marshall. The second part of Acts [13-19] is essentially the story of how Paul, in co-operation with other evangelists, proceeded to establish churches in Asia Minor and Greece, so that by chapter 20 the gospel has been effectively proclaimed throughout the Eastern Mediterranean world [the Aegean], and Paul can speak as though his work there is complete. But we are in fact only at chapter 20, and there is still something like a quarter of the book to come [a third by number of chapters from]. ... A certain parallelism between the careers of Jesus and Paul is to be seen. Jesus too journeyed to Jerusalem, and during his journey prophesied concerning his impending sufferings; he was arrested and tried, appearing before the Jews and the Romans; and he suffered death and rose again. ... Some have seen ... with his salvation from possible death by shipwreck and drowning, a pattern similar to the [death and resurrection] experience of Jesus.<sup>7</sup>

Paul called the gospel “my gospel” (Rom. 2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim. 2:8). He was given the revelation of the mystery of Messiah, that Jew and Gentile would comprise the Congregation, Messiah’s “body.”

Eph. 3:1-12. I, Paul, [am] the prisoner of Jesus Messiah for you Gentiles. ... By revelation he made known to me ... the mystery of Messiah, which in other ages was not made known ... as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Messiah by the gospel, whereof I was made

<sup>7</sup> Marshall, Acts, 27, 356.

a minister ... that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God, ... to the intent that now ... might be known by the Congregation the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Messiah Jesus our Lord.

Paul was called to complete the “afflictions of Messiah,” not for propitiation, but to bring in the Gentiles.

Col. 1:18-27. He is the head of the body, the Congregation, ... that in all things he might have the preeminence, for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. And ... you [Gentiles], that were sometime alienated, ... now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. ... I, Paul, ... now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Messiah in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Congregation, whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God, even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest, ... the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory.

## ***Message***

The message of Acts is that the Congregation of God is comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, who remain distinct, while united in the one body of Messiah.

The Greek word for “Congregation” (“church” in the KJV) is found 22 times in Acts, “Jew,” 78 times, and “Gentile,” 30 times; each more than in any other New Testament book.

WORD COUNT IN ACTS - CONGREGATION		
Word	Book	Ref Count
Congregation (‘Church’ in KJV)	Acts	22
	1 Corinthians	21
	Revelation	19
	2 Corinthians	9
	Ephesians	9

WORD COUNT IN ACTS - JEW		
Word	Book	Ref Count
Jew	Acts	78
	John	66
	Romans	11

WORD COUNT IN ACTS - GENTILE		
Word	Book	Ref Count
Gentile	Acts	30
	Romans	21
	Matthew	8

God’s highest purpose is that the Congregation is comprised of both ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles.

Eph. 1:9-10, 20-23. [God] made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he would gather together in one, all things in Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him. ... [God] gave him to be the head over all things to the Congregation, which is his body, the fulness of him that fills all in all.

Eph. 2:11-18. You being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, ... were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers. ... But now in Messiah Jesus you [Gentiles] who sometimes were far off are made near by the blood of Messiah. For he is our peace, who has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us, ... to make in himself of two, one new man,

... for through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Eph. 3:4-6. By revelation he made known to me ... the mystery of Messiah, which in other ages was not made known, ... as it is now revealed; ... that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body [with the Jews].

Marshall. To show how the church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, stands in continuity with Judaism, ... [is] a vital aspect of Luke's main theme. ... The ... church was regarded as taking place in fulfilment of Scripture [including] ... the outpouring of the Spirit and the proclamation of salvation (2:17-21), the mission to the Gentiles (13:47) and their incorporation in the church (15:16-18), and the refusal of the Jews as a whole to respond to the gospel (28:25-27). ... Luke makes it clear that ... the essential task of the church is mission. He says remarkably little about the inner life of the church. ... Moreover, for Luke, mission means evangelism, the proclamation of the good news of Jesus.<sup>8</sup>

∴ Luke's purpose is ... to ... persevere in the faith, ... recognizing that God has designed both Jew and Gentile to be a part of the new community.<sup>9</sup>

The theme of Jews and Gentiles comprising one body, the Congregation, continues up to the very end of the book. And thereby Luke tells us what the Congregation is supposed to be doing until Jesus returns. Not creating a new 'Acts 29' agenda, but preaching both the gospel of the kingdom, and the gospel of Jesus Messiah, per Acts 28.

Last Three Verses of Acts, 28:29-31. When [Paul] had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves. And Paul [was] ... preaching the kingdom of God [bodily glorification in the future Messianic Kingdom], and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah [spiritual justification and sanctification].

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<sup>8</sup> Marshall, Acts, 22, 25, 52.

<sup>9</sup> Darrell Bock, Luke, 371; in Allen, Lukan Authorship of Hebrews, Kindle 3420.

Luke doesn't conclude there's 'neither Jew nor Greek' (Gal. 3:28). That phrase is only about spiritual salvation in the eternal realm. Instead, Luke concludes, the Congregation will always continue to be made up of ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles. Understanding that should affect our doctrine, preaching, and teaching; and to lose sight of it, is to lose half the message of the gospel.

## ***Purpose***

The purpose of Acts is to encourage the Congregation to embrace the Jewishness of Jewish believers. Oh, how much error in doctrine and behavior would have been avoided over the centuries if the Congregation had heeded the message and purpose of Acts!

All of Acts deals with the issue of the relationship of Jewish and Gentile believers in the Congregation. The first nineteen chapters deal with the issue of Gentile believers not having to become Jewish proselytes. But the Holy Spirit knew that issue would soon be moot after Gentile believers began to outnumber Jewish believers, and so the the last nine chapters deal with issue of the relationship of Jewish believers maintaining their Jewishness, and the rest of the Congregation in being in harmony with them. Unfortunately, the brethren no longer even perceive this to be an issue, which shows our blindness in this area.

Marshall. Luke makes no mention of Gentiles being present on the day of Pentecost other than Jewish proselytes (2:10). But within a few years the church found itself preaching the gospel to Samaritans, uncircumcised God-fearers and finally to pagan Gentiles. This progression is seen by Luke as divinely willed and prophesied; it was a turn of events that came about apart from any conscious planning by the church. The church had to come to terms with this fact. The essence of the problem was whether the rise of the church had produced a new society that was different from Judaism. Since the first Christians were Jews, it was natural for them to live as Jews. ... Luke stresses



the Jewish origins of the church and its roots in Old Testament prophecy, but shows that it is ... composed of believing Jews and Gentiles, in which Jews may find the fulfilment of Judaism and Gentiles are not required to become Jews. But how was this possible on a practical level? ... Could Jewish Christians have fellowship with Gentiles without becoming 'unclean' through contact with people who did not observe the law of Moses? ... The vision which [Peter] received from God showed him that there was no longer to be a distinction between clean and unclean foods. ... The particular problems in the church which concerned Luke have in some cases disappeared. No longer is the church concerned with the problem of Jews and Gentiles and all the subsidiary questions that arose out of this basic one. [But we should be!!!] Yet the book retains its value. [No, it doesn't, if the existence of this issue is denied.]<sup>10</sup>

We should have solved the problem, of oneness yet distinctness, between ethnic Jews and Gentiles in the Congregation, by fostering mutual respect, and giving equal weight to the Jewish contingent, even though they are greatly outnumbered by Gentiles. Instead we 'solved' the problem by denying there is any ethnic Jewish segment in the Congregation. Imagine what a testimony and rebuke it would be, to both Rabbinic Judaism and religious-but-lost Gentiles, if the Congregation took on its proper appearance, of believing Jews and Gentiles living together in the one body of Messiah, without all being made to look like Gentiles.

Some think Luke's purpose in writing Acts was to provide a legal defense document for Paul to use at his trial in Rome. Acts usually presents Roman rulers and centurions, like Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:26) and Julias (Acts 27:1), in a favorable light, whereas most of the trouble is attributed to Jews who opposed Paul's work.

But this theory isn't feasible because 1) Roman authorities were also presented as flawed. For example, Felix kept Paul imprisoned to try to obtain a bribe for his

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<sup>10</sup> Marshall, Acts, 30-32, 52.

release, and then to please the Jews (Acts 24:26-27). Also, no Roman judge would read through such a long document as Acts with so much extraneous material. But most importantly, 2) Paul would never present any defense that might result in additional government persecution of his beloved Jewish brethren, for whom he was not only willing to die, but if it were possible, even to be accursed for.

Rom. 9:1-3. I say the truth in Messiah, ... that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Messiah for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Acts 28:19. [Paul told the Jewish leaders in Rome,] “I was forced to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything to accuse my nation of.”

## ***Author***

The author of Acts didn't give his name, but there are two time periods in which the author included himself in the action by saying “we” or “us,” instead of “they” or “them.”

On Paul's second missionary journey, the author joined Paul's team at Troas, a seaport on the northwest coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), accompanied him on a short sail across the Aegean Sea to Philippi in northeast Greece, and then remained in Philippi while Paul, Silas, and Timothy continued on.

Acts 16:9-12. [Troas to Philippi:] They [Paul, Silas, and Timothy] ... came down [‘down’ always means away from Jerusalem] to Troas. ... And after [Paul] had seen [a] vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. ... Therefore, loosing from Troas, we came ... to Philippi. ... [Luke remained in Philippi:] And when they had seen the brethren, they ... departed, ... [and] came to Thessalonica.

About six years later, the author rejoined Paul at Philippi for a long sea voyage to Jerusalem, stayed near him while he was imprisoned in Caesarea, and then accompanied him to his imprisonment in Rome.

Sea Voyage. Acts 20:5-6. These going before waited for us at Troas, and we sailed away from Philippi.

Imprisonment. Acts 21:17; 27:1-2; 28:16. And ... we came to Jerusalem.

Sea Voyage. Acts 27:1-2. And when it was determined that we should sail to Italy, ... we launched.

Imprisonment. Acts 28:16. And when we came to Rome, ... Paul was allowed to dwell ... with a soldier that kept him ... two whole years.

Long sea voyages and imprisonments are great opportunities to get a very busy apostle to sit down and relate the accounts of his mission trips. The years the author spent in Judaea, while Paul was imprisoned there, also enabled him to interview the other apostles and brethren.

The author of Acts also wrote the Gospel of Luke. Both books give honorable mention to Theophilus, who probably financed their publications. Perhaps Theophilus lived in Philippi where the author stayed so long, or in Judaea, where he did most of his research and writing.

Lu. 1:1-4. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them to us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses [the author wasn't], ... it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you in order, most excellent Theophilus, so that you can know the certainty of those things, wherein you have been instructed.

Acts 1:1. The former treatise [the Gospel of Luke] have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach [Acts is the continuation].

Together, Luke and Acts comprise about 27% of the New Testament, more than any other man. And if the same author also wrote Hebrews, possibly in association with Paul, he wrote almost a third (31%) of the New Testament. Three men, Luke, Paul, and John, wrote almost 75% of the New Testament; but Luke wrote the most. And since Acts is about Paul, more than half the New Testament is by or about Paul.

NUMBER OF GREEK WORDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BY BOOKS				
NT Books	Greek Words	% NT	Three Main NT Authors %	By or About Paul %
Luke	19,482	14	Luke 31	54
Acts	18,451	13		
Hebrews	4,953	4		
By Paul	32,207	23	Paul 23.3	
John	15,635	11	John 20.5	
Revelation	9,852	7		
1,2,3 John	2,805	2		
Matthew	18,345	13		
Mark	11,304	8		
Other	4,986	4		
Total	138,020	100	75	54

But who was the author of Acts? It was probably Luke, since Luke was with Paul during his Roman imprisonment.

2 Tim. 4:11, 18. Only Luke is with me.

Some teachers suppose Luke was a Gentile. If that’s true, then the author of Acts is someone other than Luke, because all scripture, both Old and New Testament, was written by Jews.

Rom. 3:1-2. What advantage then does the Jew have? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Having a Latin name, ‘Lucas,’ doesn’t mean Luke had to be a Gentile. Jewish people often had Gentile names they used among the Gentiles. Actually, people from all cultures do the same thing. My friend Sandhya from Kerala in India used to tell people her name was Sandy, because it was familiar and easy to say for English speakers, and sounded close to Sandhya, but I always called her Sandhya.

When Paul was entering the very Gentile territory of the Roman province of Galatia, he switched to using the Latin name Paulus (Παῦλος, Pavlos in Greek), instead of the very Hebrew name Saul, as in King Saul [שאול, Sha-ul]. Which was interesting, because Paul had just overpowered a magician who was preventing the governor of Crete, Sergius Paulus, from hearing the gospel.

Allen. The view that Luke was Jewish gained significant ground in the last half of the twentieth century, so much so that Jervell [1996] could state with dogmatic certainty, “Luke was a Jew.”<sup>11</sup>

## ***Title***

Although Luke’s second book has traditionally been titled, “The Acts of the Apostles;” a better name for it might be something like, “Paul.” Although Luke is the human author, he got most of his information from Paul. Then the five historical books that make up the first five books of the New Testament would be:

The Gospel of Jesus Messiah According to Matthew

The Gospel of Jesus Messiah According to Mark

The Gospel of Jesus Messiah According to Luke

The Gospel of Jesus Messiah According to John

The Gospel of Jesus Messiah According to Paul

Or more simply, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul.

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<sup>11</sup> Allen, Lukan Authorship of Hebrews, Kindle 507.

## ***Mission***

The book of Acts also records the history of the Congregation's implementation of Jesus' commission, as recorded in Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16, and Luke 24:47.

Mt. 28:18-20. Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Having gone [past participle in Greek] therefore, make disciples of [imperative verb command] all nations, baptizing [present participle] them, ... teaching [present participle] them to observe all things, whatever I have commanded you."

"Make disciples," the only command in Greek in the commission, describes the mission. And disciples are made by preaching the gospel. Whenever a hearer believes the gospel, he is justified, and indwelt with the Spirit, and thus becomes a learner, which is what 'disciple' is. 1 Jn. 4:6, "We are of God. He that knows God [all who have been justified] hears us [is a learner]."

Freeman. The only imperative in the commission is matheteusate ("make disciples").<sup>12</sup>

The participles; "having gone," "baptizing," and "teaching;" are parts of the divinely prescribed strategy and methodology for accomplishing the mission.

Kvalbein. The main verb describes the aim of the work of the disciples. The participles describe the means to reach this aim.<sup>13</sup>

So Jesus told the Congregation to fulfill its mission through a four-step methodology: 1) Go, 2) Preach (to make disciples), 3) Baptize, and 4) Teach.

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<sup>12</sup> Freeman, The Great Commission, 17.

<sup>13</sup> Kvalbein, Discipleship, 38, 48-53.

DIVINELY-ORDAINED MISSION METHODOLOGY			
	MT. 28:19-20	MK. 16:15-16	LU. 24:47
GO	<u>Having gone</u>	<u>Go</u> into all the world	
PREACH	<u>Disciple</u> all nations	And <u>preach</u> the gospel. ... He that believes	Remission of sins [will] be <u>preached</u> in his name among all nations
BAPTIZE	<u>Baptizing</u> them	And is <u>baptized</u> will be saved, but he that doesn't believe will be damned	
TEACH	<u>Teaching</u> them		

In the book of Acts, rather than giving moment-by-moment, impressional guidance, Jesus' usually allowed his disciples to use wisdom to ascertain the best ways to implement these four steps.

Acts is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke. The Gospel of Luke ENDS with with the resurrected Jesus telling the apostles three things: 1) You'll evangelize. 2) You'll receive the Spirit. 3) Wait.

Lu. 24:47-49. [1-You'll evangelize.] Remission of sins [will] be preached in [my] name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ... [2-You'll receive the Spirit.] And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. [3-Wait.] But wait in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

And the Book of Acts BEGINS with Jesus' telling the apostles the same three things, in reverse order: 1) Wait. 2) You'll receive the Spirit. 3) You'll evangelize.

Acts 1:4-8. [Jesus] commanded them [1-Wait.] that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, you have heard of me. ... [2-You'll receive the Spirit.] You'll be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. ... You'll receive power, after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and [3-You'll evangelize.] you'll be witnesses to me ... in Jerusalem ... and to the uttermost part of the earth.

## ***Outline and Structure***

Acts is the account of how Jesus accomplished his mission to bring the gospel to diaspora Jews and the Aegean Gentiles through Paul. Acts 1:8 provides an outline for the book up until the last section on Paul's Passion. The three parts of Acts 1:8 refer to both geographic and ethnic divisions, and each part ends with the summary statement that "the word of the Lord grew."

Acts presents the gospel going out successively to the following classifications of men, which also forms the detailed outline of the book.

### **ACTS 1-6:7. THE JEWISH CONGREGATION**

Acts 1-5. Hebraic Jews and Proselytes. Aramaic and/or Hebrew speaking, ethnic Jews, physically descended from Jacob, who lived in the land of Israel, according to Jewish ways.

Acts 6:1-7. Hellenistic Jews and Proselytes. Greek speaking, ethnic Jews, physically descended from Jacob, who embraced Greek culture.

Gentiles who became ritually circumcised and met other criteria, were accepted into the Jewish people as proselytes. They didn't actually become 'Jewish,' which is an ethnic designation.

Closing Verse: Acts 6:7. And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples multiplied.

### **ACTS 6:8-12:24. PAUL'S PREP**

Acts 6:8-9:43. Samaritans. An ethnically mixed Jewish and Gentile race, that lived in Samaria in the land of Israel. Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel around 700 BC, and resettled the northern Israelites in Assyria, and brought Gentiles in to replace them, who intermarried with the remnant left in the land.

Acts 10-12:24. Synagogue-Associated Gentiles. Also called God-Fearers, who believed in the God of Israel, but didn't go as far as becoming proselytes.



Closing Verse: Acts 12:24. But the word of God grew and multiplied.

**ACTS 12:25-19:20. PAUL’S MISSION**

Acts 12:25-19:20. Gentiles (in the Aegean, especially Corinth and Ephesus). Non-synagogue associated Gentiles who lived as Gentiles.

Closing Verse: Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

**ACTS 19:21-28:31. PAUL’S PASSION**

Closing Verse: Acts 28:31. Preaching the [future Messianic] kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah [for salvation].

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE OF ACTS		
Acts 1:8	Ethnicity	Summary Marker
Jerusalem	Hebraic & Hellenized Jews	Acts 6:7. And the word of God grew.
Judaea & Samaria	Judaeans Jews, Samaritans, & God-Fearing Gentiles	Acts 12:24. But the word of God grew.
The World	Aegean Jews & Gentiles (Corinth & Ephesus)	Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of the Lord.
Paul’s Passion		

DETAILED OUTLINE OF ACTS				
How Jesus accomplished his mission to bring the gospel to diaspora Jews and Aegean Gentiles through Paul				
Chp/Topic	Acts 1:8	Chp	Subtopic	
1:1-6:7	Jerusalem	1-2a	Holy Spirit Power	
The Jewish		2b-5	Hebraic Jews	
Congregation		6a	Hellenized Jews	
6:7. And the word of God grew [αὐξάνω, avskano], and the number of the disciples multiplied [πληθύνω, plythuno] in Jerusalem greatly.				
6:8-12:24 Paul’s Prep	Judaea & Samaria	6b-9	Judaean Jews & Samaritans	
		10-12a	God-Fearing Gentiles	
12:24. But the word of God grew [αὐξάνω, avskano] and multiplied [πληθύνω, plythuno].				
12:25-19:20 Paul’s Mission	The World	12b-15	Aegean Jews & Gentiles	Galatia
		16-18		Corinth
		19a		Ephesus
19:20. So mightily grew [αὐξάνω, avskano] the word of God and prevailed [ισχύω, iskuo, strengthened].				
19:21-28:31 Paul’s Passion		19b-21a	Up To Jerusalem	
		21b-26	Caesarean Imprisonment	
		27-28	Roman Imprisonment	

Whenever someone believes, the Spirit of truth and the word indwells him, so the word grows.

Jn. 5:38. You don’t have his word abiding in you, for whom he has sent, him you don’t believe.

1 Jn. 1:8, 10. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, ... his word is not in us.

The Jerusalem Hebraic and Hellenistic Jews were added to the Congregation, and were able to keep harmony between the two groups by appointing deacons (servants).

Acts 6:7. And the word of God increased [αὐξάνω, avskano], and the number of the disciples multiplied

[πληθύνω, plythuno] in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The Judaeans Jews and Samaritans and God-fearing Gentiles were added to the Congregation. And when Herod persecuted the Congregation, trying to stop the spread of its beliefs, Herod was removed.

Acts 12:23-24. The angel of the Lord smote him, ... and he ... gave up the spirit, but the word of God grew [αὐξάνω, avskano] and multiplied [πληθύνω, plythuno].

The diaspora Jews and Gentiles in the Aegean were added to the Congregation, and Satanic doctrines were defeated by the truth.

Acts 19:20. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men. ... So mightily grew [αὐξάνω, avskano] the word of God and prevailed [ισχύω, iskuo, strengthened].

When we think of the story of Acts, we might think it's the story of how the Congregation grew numerically. But it's really the story of how the doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Messiah grew to be believed by more and more people, and thus to have come to indwell more and more people through the Spirit.

We can't know God by only knowing him generically, as to what a god is; but we have to know him specifically - which God? The God revealed through Jesus Messiah.

Acts 4:10-12. Jesus Messiah of Nazareth, ... is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which has become the cornerstone. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is [since the time he has been revealed] no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we will be saved.

Likewise, we can't know Jesus by just using his name. Neither can we have a conversation with him or the Holy Spirit inside ourselves, contrary to what mystics and charismatics teach. We only know who he is specifically,

through the Bible, the gospel, the word of God. So when the word of God grows, so does the number of people in the Congregation, through receipt of the indwelling Holy Spirit, by faith in the true Jesus, and the true God.

Below is a list of some of the words that are important in Acts. It shows that 'miracles' and 'tongues' are unimportant. Jews and Gentiles hearing and believing the word is what was important, and what caused the Congregation to grow.

SOME IMPORTANT WORDS IN ACTS			
Word	Count	Rank	Percent of NT
<b>Jew</b>	78	1	41
<b>Gentile</b>	30	1	32
<b>word</b>	61	1	21
<b>hear</b>	109	1	19
<b>spirit</b>	72	1	19
<b>preach</b>	37	1	28
<b>witness</b>	21	1	23
<b>Congregation (church in KJV)</b>	22	1	20
<b>miracle</b>	8	1	25
<b>believe</b>	41	2	17
<b>tongue</b>	11	2	20
<b>heal</b>	12	3	16
<b>gospel</b>	6	7.5	6

For example, in Acts 3:1-11, Peter healed a lame man in the temple, and the miracle was able to attract a crowd, but it didn't add anyone to the Congregation. Peter's words to the crowd in verses 3:12-4:26 is what furthered the growth of the Congregation and the word.

Acts 3:11-12. As the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together to them ... greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it, he answered to the people, "You men of Israel, [etc.]"

Acts 4:1-4. As they spoke to the people, ... [and] taught the people, and preached, ... many of them which heard

the word believed. And the number of the men was about five thousand.

People nowadays mistakenly think the Spirit, and spiritual things, are the opposite of words, thinking, reasoning, and knowing. But actually and biblically, the Spirit of God and the spirit of man is the main part of both God and man that uses words, and thinks, and reasons, and knows.

1 Cor. 2:11-13. What thing knows the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no thing, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received ... the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things ... of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but [words] which the Holy Spirit teaches.

So there's nothing more unspiritual than making decisions by feelings or inner impressions instead of by thinking and reasoning.

Miracles are only “the manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:7) in the physical realm, and can never cause the word of God or the Congregation to grow, which must be done through that which is fully spiritual, the word of God and the preaching of the gospel.

Acts 1:8. You will receive power after the Holy Spirit comes on you [including both the physical manifestation of the Spirit in miracles, and also in boldness to speak], and you will be witnesses to me [which is where the real work of the gospel is done].

Acts 4:31. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Eph. 6:17. The sword of the Spirit ... is the word of God.

Geography

GEOGRAPHY IN ACTS			
Epistles In All Caps			
Importance	Region	City	Secondary
Paul’s Birthplace	Cilicia	Tarsus	
Paul’s Home Congregation	Syria	Antioch Syria	
1st Missionary Journey	<b>GALATIA</b>	Antioch Gal. Iconium	Cyprus Lystra Derbe
2nd Missionary Journey	Macedonia	<b>PHILIPPI THESSALONICA</b>	Troas Berea
	Achaia	<b>CORINTH</b>	Athens Cenchrea
3rd Missionary Journey	Asia	<b>EPHESUS</b>	Miletus
	Aegean		Crete
	Albania		Nicopolis
Caesarean Imprisonment	Judaea	Caesarea	
	Lycus Valley	<b>COLOSSAE</b>	Laodicea Hierapolis
Roman Imprisonment	Italy	<b>ROME</b>	

GEOGRAPHICAL GRID OF PAUL’S MISSION							
Epistles In All Caps							
West	The Aegean - Paul’s Mission			East			
Italy ROME	<u>Macedonia</u> PHILIPPI THESSALONICA		Asia EPHESUS (TIMOTHY)	<u>Lycus</u> COLOS-SAE (PHILE-MON)	<u>GALATIA</u> Antioch	<u>Cilicia</u> Tarsus	
	<u>Achaia</u> CORINTH	A E G E A N					
		Crete (TITUS)				Cyprus	<u>Syria</u> Antioch
						<u>Judaea</u> Caesarea Jerusalem	

The three most important geographical terms to understand in Acts are Asia, Achaia, and Macedonia, which are the regions surrounding the Aegean.

Asia means the Roman province of Asia on the east side of the Aegean, where Ephesus is, i.e., the west coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), and not something like India or China, as we think of Asia today.

Achaia means the region of Southern Greece on the west side of the Aegean, where Corinth is.

Macedonia means the region of Northern Greece on the north end of the Aegean, where Philippi and Thessalonica are.

The island of Crete is at the south end of the Aegean, and Paul ministered there also.

As a reminder of the meaning of these three regions, I’ll always show them like: Asia (Eph+), Achaia (Cor+), and Macedonia (Phil/Thess+).

Also note there are two Antiochs in Acts.

Antioch in Syria was the main city of the Congregation outside Jerusalem for many years, which I’ll call Antioch Syria.

Antioch in Galatia (the Roman province, not the ethnic area), was a missionary outreach of Paul, which I’ll call

Antioch Galatia.

Less important, when the New Testament says Illyricum, Dalmatia, or the city of Nicopolis, I’ll use Albania, for simplicity.

And I’ll list the region of Cilicia, where Paul was born in the city of Tarsus, as Cilicia [Tarsus+].

***Judaism and Christianity - or What?***

There’s no such thing as Judaism or Christianity in the Bible, or nothing significant anyway, since “Judaism” is mentioned only twice, and Christianity not at all. And “religion” (3 times), “Jewish” (once), and “Christian” (3 times), are also very rare terms in the Bible.

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY - OR WHAT?		
Word Counts For	NT	Acts
Religion	3	1
Jewish	1	0
Judaism (Jew’s Religion, KJV)	2	0
Brethren (Jewish, post gospels)	22	20
Jews (only occurs after 2 Kings 16)	299	78
Christianity	0	0
Nazarenes	1	1
Believers	2	1
Messianics (Christians, KJV)	3	2
Disciples (post gospels)	29	29
Congregations (Churches, KJV)	36	4
Saints (meaning all brethren)	61	4
Congregation (Church, KJV)	75	18
Brethren/Brother (spiritual, post gospels)	215	33

There weren’t any ‘Jews’ mentioned in the Bible until about the time Assyria carried the northern kingdom of Israel away into Assyria, and (mostly) only the tribe of Judah was left in the land.



The most common biblical terms in Acts for what we might call born-again, believing, Christians were “brethren,” “saints,” and “disciples,” with one passage expanding that to “the disciples of the Lord.” “Saints” has been ruined as a word by the apostate Roman Catholic Church to their perverted meaning of special, unusually holy Catholics, instead of the biblical meaning of all the true brethren. There are problems with all alternative terms such as “the set apart,” “the holy ones,” “the sanctified,” “the dedicated,” and “the sacred ones.” Maybe “the chosen” or “the elect” is a more biblical term?

The term “Christian” (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16), which appears three times in the KJV, I translate as “Messianics,” like I translate “Christ,” as Messiah. So instead of using words like ‘Christianity’ or ‘Christian,’ I’m going to try to use words the New Testament uses, like ‘brethren.’

Contributors to the book *Paul Within Judaism* wrestled with similar questions.

Nanos and Runesson. The work undertaken in this volume questions the traditional ... approaches to Paul as a founder ... of a new ... religious movement, “Christianity.” ... “Paul” - is conceptualized as one who “formerly” practiced Judaism, when he was a Pharisee known as “Saul.” ... Scholars most often approach the topic in terms of “Paul and Judaism,” ... [instead of] “Paul within Judaism.” ... The modern phenomenon of “religion,” which the term “Christianity” carries within it, ... did not exist as such in antiquity. ... Mark Nanos and I have suggested “Apostolic Judaism” as a descriptive term applicable to the early Jesus movement [notice he and the other authors have to use ‘Jesus movement,’ another non-biblical term]. ... As such, Apostolic Judaism may be added to the list of other Judaisms, such as Pharisaic Judaism, Essene Judaism, Sadducean Judaism, and later, Rabbinic Judaism. ... What would happen, for example, if we translated christianoi in Acts 11:26; 26:28 and 1 Peter 4:16 with “messianics,” and understood the term in the same ... manner as we do Pharisaioi?

Nanos and Runesson. [In] English translations of the New Testament, ... suddenly, we find “church” introduced as the English equivalent of *ekklēsia*, ... [which is] misleading, since it ... imposes on the ancients a separate non-Jewish institutional identity for those who claimed Jesus to be the Messiah. ... Why this new [English from German] word, “church,” ... to label the assemblies of Jesus’ followers, when Paul, in his context, did not choose a new term for his addressees gatherings but used one [*ekklesia*,’ meaning ‘assembly,’ ‘gathering,’ ‘congregation’] that was already in use by other Jews as well as by Greeks and Romans? ... Non-Jewish followers of Jesus ... have been invited to join (a specific group of) Jews, not to replace them or their institutions. ... In James 2:2: “if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly.” “Assembly” is chosen here [by translators] despite the fact that the Greek *synagōgē* is used.<sup>14</sup>

I’ve decided to use “Congregation” in place of the KJV “church.” “Assembly” might tend to imply the people are actually physically assembled, whereas it might be easier to picture a Congregation that persists as an entity even during non-meeting times. Since Luke’s main message in Acts is that Gentile brethren should participate with the Jewish brethren in fostering Jewishness in the Congregation, this work’s participation towards that goal is to replace ‘church’ with ‘Congregation’ in this book. Other versions that use ‘Congregation’ include the Jubilee Bible and the New Matthew Bible. Other versions that use “Assembly” include the Darby Translation, the World English Bible, and Young’s Literal Translation.

A central part of the book of Acts is Paul’s experience on the road to Damascus, when Jesus called him to become his surrogate, as the apostle to the Gentiles, specifically the Aegean, led by Corinth and Ephesus, as it turns out. The account is given three times in Acts, in chapters 9, 22, and 26. Unfortunately, most people refer to this experience as “Paul’s Conversion,” meaning from

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<sup>14</sup> Nanos. Paul within Judaism, 4-8, 61, 67-74, 78.

Judaism to Christianity, which it wasn't, though it can be thought of as a conversion from one Jewish sect to another, or from unbelief to faith. I even altered the titles of the paintings included in this book to refer to Paul's Calling rather than Paul's Conversion to avoid this very misleading concept.

Gager. Should we think of this dramatic transformation [of Paul] as a religious conversion? If so, from what to what? ... Until recent times, few have entertained the possibility that the apparent inconsistencies of Paul's letters might be located not in him but in his later readers, in us. ... This picture of the anti-Jewish, anti-Torah Paul is totally wrong ... Increasing numbers of Paul's readers not only question the old view but marvel that it ever came to be in the first place. ... Gaston, Torah, 92: "How can people say that Paul teaches the divine rejection of Israel in chapter 9 when he expressly says the opposite in 11.1?...How has Romans 9 been turned into an anti-Jewish polemic?" [Of course the answer is Reformed Theology.]

There has been discussion in recent years about something termed the "new perspective on Paul," or the "new Paul."

Wikipedia, "New Perspective on Paul." In 1963 the Lutheran theologian Krister Stendahl published a paper arguing that the typical Lutheran view of the Apostle Paul's theology ... was based more on mistaken assumptions about Paul's beliefs than careful interpretation of his writings. ... In 1977 E. P. Sanders published *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. In this work he studies Jewish literature and Paul's writings, arguing that the traditional Lutheran understanding of the theology of Judaism and Paul was fundamentally incorrect. ... Sanders ... was soon joined by the scholar James D. G. Dunn. Dunn reports that Anglican theologian N.T. Wright was the first to use the term "new perspective on Paul" in his 1978 Tyndale Lecture. ... The "new-perspective" movement is closely connected with a surge of ... the use of social-scientific

methods to understand ancient culture. ... It is often noted that the singular title "the new perspective" gives an unjustified impression of unity. In 2003, N. T. Wright, distancing himself from both Sanders and Dunn, commented that "there are probably almost as many 'new' perspective positions as there are writers espousing it."<sup>15</sup>

Gager talks about the New Perspective.

Gager. As the apostle to the Gentiles, [Paul] is focused exclusively on resisting the view that Gentiles within the Jesus-Movement had to be circumcised. ... Paul never speaks of Gentiles (those living in the first century whom we mistakenly call Christians) as replacing Israel or of God as having rejected Israel in favor of a new chosen people. ... This new view destabilizes Judaism and Christianity at their very foundations. ... Some have [objected] that there is no such view of Paul to be found anywhere in later Christianity. If true, that would be serious. [But that's because the unregenerate Roman Catholic Church destroyed all such writings.]

Gager. [There is now] an entirely new view of Paul - the view that he was not the father of Christian anti-Judaism, indeed that he was not Christian at all. ... Jacob Taubes [a Jewish scholar, said] ... "I regard [Paul] ... as more Jewish than any Reform rabbi. ... Paul is a zealot, a Jewish zealot."<sup>16</sup> ... He was not the father of Christian anti-Judaism. He was not the inventor of the rejection-replacement theory. ... His enemies and his audience were not Jews outside the Jesus-movement. ... He was not a convert from Judaism ... or to Christianity.

Gager also talks about the Judaism's movement to reclaim Paul as a Jew.

Gager. An American Jewish - and orthodox - thinker, Michael Wyschogrod [said]. ... "Early in my career I could not understand how a religiously sensitive Jew

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<sup>15</sup> Wikipedia, "New Perspective on Paul," accessed 11/29/19.

<sup>16</sup> Gager , Who Made Early Christianity.

such as Paul could speak about the law as he did. ... I was particularly annoyed by the idea that Jews think they are saved by deed while Christians know that they are saved by faith ... It was simply not true that Jews thought they were saved by deeds or works.”

It's true that saved Jews didn't think they were saved by good works.

Gen. 15:6. [Abraham] believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Ps. 2:12. Kiss the Son. ... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Joel 2:32. Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

But, most Jews like most Gentiles, aren't saved at all, and for the same reason for both, that they think they have to be good to have a place in the world to come. This is self-righteousness instead of faith.

Ps. 78:21-22. A fire was kindled ... against Israel, because they didn't believe in God, and didn't trust in his salvation.

Gager describes how various Jewish writers wrestled with how Paul sometimes seemed anti-Law while also seeming very Jewish. For himself, he thinks Paul only forbid Law-keeping to Gentile believers in Jesus. In actuality, though 1) Paul forbid Gentile conversion to Judaism, 2) he didn't forbid Law-keeping to anyone, but 3) he did forbid mandatory Law-keeping to everyone; because all who trust in Messiah have legally died through Messiah's imputed death and resurrection, and therefore no one who trusts in law keeping can be saved.

Gager. Two curious and closely related themes appear, beginning with Heinrich Graetz at the end of the nineteenth century. In his multivolume *History of the Jews*, Graetz initiated an entirely new strand of negative assessments of Paul - a strand that existed hardly at all in earlier centuries. Graetz saw Paul as the enemy of Jewish people and an apostate from the

Jewish Law: “Paul disparaged not only the ceremonial but even the moral laws of Judaism.” Joseph Klausner, writing some fifty years later, adopts a similar position - Paul had abrogated the Jewish Law for Jews and Gentiles and rejected the Jewish people. For Martin Buber, Paul is equally distant from Jesus and the Old Testament. ... And for Daniel Boyarin, a contemporary scholar of early Christianity and Judaism, Paul abrogated the Law not only for Gentiles but for Jews as well. He sowed the seeds that “deprive Jewish ethnic specificity (meaning here Jewish beliefs and practices) of any positive value.” ... But at the same time and in every one of these same writers, there appears another current, flowing in the opposite direction. Thus Graetz could argue that Paul's primary concern was bringing salvation to Gentiles. ... “Saul (Paul) may have recalled to mind a statement made by his teachers to the effect that ... as soon as the Messiah comes, the validity of the Law ceases ... Should the Messiah appear ... all obstacles in the path of winning over the pagans are removed.” ... But in the end, for Graetz, the apostle “over reached himself.” ... In much the same vein, Klausner, who held that the only possible Jewish view of Paul was a negative one, goes on for pages about Paul's Jewishness: “He considered that he was bringing Gentiles into Judaism, not taking Jews out of Judaism at all.” ... Even Buber: ... “this is the special concern of the apostle to the Gentiles - the Gentiles do not have to come through Judaism to Christ, but have their own immediate approach through him.” ... Clearly something odd is going on here in these bifurcated views of Paul. On the one hand, he is Jewish right down, as Klausner puts it (is he joking here?), to his physical appearance. And yet, they cannot go all the way. I don't pretend to have an explanation for this split decision. [Because Gager doesn't understand that Paul really did teach that Jews don't have to keep the law, because they legally died and rose with Messiah.] ... Perhaps it is anxiety over assimilation and the loss of Jewish identity that has stood in the way. [It's true a non-mandatory Law raises questions about how much law to keep and how to maintain Jewish identity.] ... There have been and still are other Jewish readers of

Paul who are prepared to go all the way in reclaiming Paul as a Jew. ... Pinchas Lapide, who died in 1977, was a German-born Israeli diplomat with a lifelong preoccupation with Paul. ... “How can we reconcile,” he wonders, “Paul’s negative statements about the Law with a view of Paul ... as a Jew?” The answer, he replies, is that the Law is simply no longer binding on Gentiles: “For Jews ... the Mosaic law retains its full and unaltered validity.” Then, following his logic to its full conclusion, he makes the following comments: “He neither repudiated Judaism, as numerous theologians still maintain, nor was he the founder of Christianity, as Martin Buber assumed.” “Paul did not become a Christian, since there were no Christians in those times; ... he never underwent conversion.” ... Paul is speaking to Gentiles, not Jews.

Unfortunately for Gager’s theory, Paul did teach that Jews and Gentiles are free from the obligation of the Law by being “in Messiah.” Paul gives an illustration of the relationship between a Jew in Messiah and the Law. The illustration has the husband [the Law] die, because in natural life, if the woman died she wouldn’t be able to remarry anyone.

Rom. 7:1-3. Don’t you know, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if the husband is dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband is dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

But in the application it’s the Jew [the wife] in Messiah, rather than the Law, that dies, because remarriage is possible after spiritual, legally-imputed death and resurrection.

Rom. 7:4. Wherefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law by [being counted within] the body of Messiah [who died], so that you would be

married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead [the same one who died, Messiah], so that we would bring forth fruit to God [whereas the Law wasn't potent enough to miraculously give children to a barren woman].

Nevertheless, Gager, Ninas, and the others are right that Paul didn't forbid Jewish believers from keeping the Law. He didn't forbid Gentile believers from keeping the Law either. Both Jews and Gentiles were free to keep the Law to whatever degree they desired, so long as it didn't prevent Jewish believers from fellowshiping with Gentile believers, and so long as Gentile believers didn't become proselytes, or the church would be comprised of only Jews and Jewish proselytes, instead of Jews and Gentiles. And Paul did require Jewish believers to maintain Abrahamic, pre-law circumcision, and Jewish identity. And per Luke, Paul did require Gentile believers to appreciate and foster Jewishness in the Congregation.



## **Part 1. Acts 1:1-6:7. The Jewish Congregation**



## ***Ch 2. Acts 1:1-2:40. Holy Spirit Power***



*2. Pentecost (1596-1600). El Greco (1541-1614)*

Amen! Amen! So be it, Lord, with all  
Who love Thy Festival!  
Thou hast not left us orphans; to our need  
The Comforter indeed,  
The Eternal Father's Promise, Thy Work's Crown,  
The Spirit has come down;  
The Father thus and Son in Souls may dwell  
For ever. It is well.

### **2. Pentecost. Arthur Middlemore Morgan**

These one and a half chapters (1-2a) describe 1) the creation of the Congregation through the baptism of the Holy Spirit; and 2) the empowerment of the Congregation to perform miracles through the filling of the Holy Spirit.

### **Acts 1:9-14. Waiting in Jerusalem**

When Jesus was with the apostles, they didn't have to make many decisions. But now ...

Acts 1:9-10. While they watched, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, "You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?"

Now what should they do?

The first decision was easy. Jesus had told them to wait in Jerusalem until he gave them the Holy Spirit. They had a clear command, that clearly applied to them, and they obeyed it.

The Word. Acts 1:3-5. He ... commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the [gift from the] Father, ... "for, [he said,] ... you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

And Wisdom. Acts 1:12-14. They returned to Jerusalem, and ... went up to an upper room, where abode ... all ... with one accord in prayer.

### **Acts 1:15-23. Matthias**

Jesus had told the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they received the Spirit. They did stay in Jerusalem, but they did more than wait. Peter decided they should choose a replacement for Judas, who had committed suicide after betraying the Messiah. He based this decision on a partial misinterpretation of the Word.

The Word. Ps. 109:5-8. They have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. ... Let his days be few, and let another take his office.

Jn. 15:26-27. You ... will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning.

Not Wisdom. And in those days Peter stood up in the middle of the disciples, and said, ... “Of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, to that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

Peter based his decision on Psalm 109 and Jesus words of John 15. Peter was correct that Psalm 109 says Judas will be replaced, but it doesn't say the apostles should appoint his replacement.

Jesus had given the apostles a lot of authority in the Congregation. “Whatever you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven; and whatever you will loose on earth will be loosed in heaven,” Mt. 16:19. But he never gave them authority to choose another apostle to represent him.

Would you be happy if I chose a representative for you? Even in secular life, no one has the authority to choose a representative for someone else. For example, if you name a trustee to administer your estate after you die, and he decides he doesn't want to serve, even he doesn't have the authority to appoint a replacement, unless that's explicitly stated in the trust document. If you didn't name a backup trustee, the courts will have to appoint a successor.

All human authority is limited to what God designates, and anything beyond that is a misuse of authority, and not binding on anyone; like when a pastor claims authority to determine who each person must marry, the way cults like Sun Myung Moon's do.

Perhaps Peter thought they needed to find a replacement for Judas before the gift of the Holy Spirit was given, so he could be a participant in that event. But if Jesus had wanted a replacement for Judas before Pentecost, he would have chosen one during the “forty days” he had just spent with “the apostles whom he had chosen” (Acts 1:2-3).

Peter also misinterpreted Jesus words of John 15, in thinking they meant an apostle had to have been with

Jesus from the baptism of John until the ascension. Matthew wasn't called to follow Jesus until Matthew 9. And I doubt either candidate, Joseph or Matthias, was in the boat the night Jesus walked on the water. Certainly neither supposed candidate was a witnesses of the transfiguration, or the healing of Jairus' daughter, or Jesus' praying in Gethsemane, which only Peter, James, and John witnessed. And probably neither Joseph or Matthias was even at the Passover meal when Jesus said "you ... shall bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning," Jn. 15:26-27. In saying an apostle of Jesus needed to have been with him from the baptism of John to the ascension, Peter was adding to the words of Jesus, even as Eve added to the commandment regarding the tree of knowledge, "You shall not eat of it [true], neither shall you touch it [wise behavior, but an addition to God's words]" (Gen. 3:3).

Peter even indicated he knew the forty days after the resurrection was what really mattered. "One must be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection," Acts 1:22.

Acts 4:34. With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 10:40-41. God raised up [Jesus] the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before God; even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

Based on the criteria of being a witness of Jesus during the forty days after his resurrection, a lot more men qualified as prospective replacements for Judas than just "two, Joseph ... and Matthias" (Acts 1:23).

1 Cor. 15:6. He was seen by above five hundred brethren at once.

Peter probably thought that after Jesus was "taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9), he wouldn't return until, "this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you

have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). Peter had no way to know Jesus would return to earth a few years later to personally choose Paul to be his apostle, saying “I send [ἀποστέλλω, apostello, apostle] you,” Acts 26:17. Paul was the last person to see the resurrected Jesus bodily, not in a vision.

1 Cor. 15:6. He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, ... and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Ananias saw Jesus in a vision. “The Lord said in a vision, ‘Ananias,’” (Acts 9:10). But Paul witnessed the resurrected Jesus himself. “Barnabas ... brought [Paul] to the apostles, and declared to them how he had seen the Lord in the way,” Acts 9:27.

We have the benefit of hindsight, and the indwelling Holy Spirit, which the apostles didn’t have when they chose Matthias. Would Peter have suggested choosing a replacement for Judas if he had known ahead of time Jesus would later return to personally choose Paul as an apostle of Jesus Messiah?

The word “apostle” is the transliteration of the Greek word “apostolos,” meaning messenger or representative. Some men in the New Testament were called apostles because they were “messengers [ἀπόστολοι, apostoloi] of the Congregations” (2 Cor. 8:23). For example, Barnabas was called an apostle in Acts 14:14, “the apostles, Barnabas and Paul,” because both he and Paul were apostles of the Congregation of Antioch Syria.

Acts 13:1-3. Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when ... they [the Congregation of Antioch Syria] ... laid their hands on them, they sent them away [as their representatives, or apostoloi, apostles].

But Paul was also “an apostle of Jesus Messiah” (1 Cor. 1:1, 2 Cor. 1:1, Eph. 1:1, Col. 1:1, 1 Tim. 1:1, 2 Tim. 1:1, Titus 1:1, 1 Pet. 1:1, 2 Pet. 1:1).

Peter was like Abraham, who took Hagar as a concubine because he didn’t know God would someday

miraculously give Sarah, his aged wife, a son. Abraham's impatience caused much trouble to Sarah's descendants, the Jewish people, because of Hagar's descendants, the Arabs. Likewise, Peter's impatience caused much trouble to the apostle Paul, because of Matthias.

Paul constantly had to defend his apostleship. He said he was ...

Gal. 1:1. An apostle, not of men [like Barnabas was for the Congregation of Antioch Syria], neither by man [like Matthias was by being chosen by Peter], but [of and] by Jesus Messiah and God.

He said ...

2 Cor. 12:11-12. I ought to have been commended of you; for in nothing am I behind the very chief of the apostles, though I be nothing. Truly, the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

One of the purposes of the Book of Acts, written by a travelling companion of Paul, was to help Paul defend his apostleship. The account of Jesus' appointment of Paul to be an apostle is given three times in the book and comprises 47 verses: 9:1-22, 22:4-16, and 26:9-20. And Luke makes sure to mention as many miracles for Paul as he does for Peter, to show Paul's apostleship was at least equal with Peter's.

Stott. Luke ... gives prominence in his story to Peter (chapters 1-12) and to Paul (chapters 13-28). ... Both Peter and Paul were filled with the Holy Spirit (4:8 and 9:17; 13:9); both preached the word of God with boldness (4:13, 31 and 9:27, 29); both bore witness before Jewish audiences ... (e.g. 2:22 ff. and 13:16 ff.); both preached to Gentiles as well as Jews (10:34 ff. and 13:46 ff.); both received visions which gave vital direction to the church's developing mission (10:9 ff.; 16:9); both were imprisoned ... and then miraculously set free (12:7 ff. and 16:25 ff.); both healed a congenital cripple ... (3:2 ff. and 14:8 ff.); both healed other sick people (9:41 and 28:8); both exorcized evil spirits (5:16 and 16:18); ... people were healed by Peter's shadow



and by Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons (5:15 and 19:12); both raised the dead ... (9:36 ff. and 20:7 ff.); both called down God's judgment on a sorcerer ... (8:20 ff. and 13:6 ff.); and both refused the worship of their fellow human beings ... (10:25-26 and 14:11 ff.).<sup>17</sup>

Another requirement for an apostle, was that he had to have received certain transmissions directly from Jesus to pass on to the Congregations.

Acts 1:2. [Jesus] was taken up, after he through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles [to transmit to the Congregation].

As an apostle, Paul couldn't tell a Congregation, "Here are the commandments Peter says Jesus gave him during the forty days after the resurrection." Instead, Jesus gave those same commandments directly to Paul in Arabia.

Gal. 1:15-17. When it pleased God, ... to reveal his Son in me, so that I would preach him among the heathen; immediately, I didn't confer with flesh and blood, neither did I go up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul mentioned three of the apostolic transmissions.

Apostolic Transmission #1) The Headcovering congregation meeting observance.

1 Cor. 11:2-4. I praise you, brethren, that you ... keep the ordinances [παρέδωκα, paredoka, 'transmissions'], as I delivered [παραδόσεις, paradoseis, 'transmitted'] them to you. ... Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.

Apostolic Transmission #2) The Lord's Supper Congregation meeting observance.

1 Cor. 11:23. I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered [παρέδωκα, paradoka, 'transmitted'] to

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<sup>17</sup> Stott, Acts, Locations 412-423.

you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread [etc.].

Apostolic Transmission #3) The gospel.

1 Cor. 15:3. I delivered [παρέδωκα, paradoka, ‘transmitted’] to you first of all that which I also received, how that Messiah died for our sins.

Gal. 1:11. The gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the [direct] revelation from Jesus Messiah.

Paul didn’t tell the Congregations he planted, “Peter says, Jesus said, to keep the Lord’s Supper.” Paul received direct revelation from Jesus as to what every Congregation should do, so he could fulfil his apostolic ministry as Jesus’ representative.

1 Cor. 4:17. My ways [not Peter’s] which are in Messiah, as I teach everywhere, in every Congregation.

Transmissions received from men are not authoritative. But Paul received his transmissions directly from Messiah, as his apostle, not from men.

Col. 2:8. Beware lest any man spoil you ... after the tradition [παράδοσιν, paradosin, ‘transmissions’] of men, ... and not after Messiah.

So Peter partially misinterpreted scripture, and went beyond his authority in even trying to select an apostolic replacement for Judas; whereas Jesus returned to choose Paul.

### **Acts 1:24-26. Casting Lots**

The Word. 1 Sam. 20:20-23. When Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, ... Saul ... was taken [by casting lots].

Not Wisdom. Acts 1:24-26. They prayed, and said, “You, Lord, which know the hearts of all men, show

which of these two you have chosen.” ... And they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias.

After Peter and the other apostles selected two men they thought were qualified to replace Judas, they cast lots to decide between the two. Lol, the lot had to fall on one of them!

In the Old Testament, God provided guidance about Achan, Saul, Jonathan, and Jonah through lots; but the lots were cast on an entire group, and the results were always confirmed by prophecy or confession.

Achan. Josh. 7: 16-22. Joshua ... brought Israel by their tribes, ... and Achan ... was taken, ... and said, “Indeed, I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.” ... So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

Saul. 1 Sam. 20:20-23. When Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, ... Saul ... was taken [by casting lots]. And when they sought him, he couldn’t be found. Therefore they enquired of the Lord further, ... and the Lord answered, “Behold, he has hidden himself among the stuff.” And they ran and brought him from there.

Jonathan. 1 Sam. 14:40-43. Then said [Saul] to all Israel, “You be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side.” ... Saul said to the Lord, ... “Give a perfect lot.” ... And Jonathan was taken, ... and ... said, “I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand, and, lo, I must die.”

Jonah. Jon. 1:7-12. They said, ... “Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is on us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ... And he said to them, “Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea, and the sea will be calm to you. For I know that for my sake this great tempest is on you.”

If the apostles wanted to use lots in a scriptural manner, they should have cast lots on their entire group, and then if one of the two men they thought were qualified

was taken, that might have provided some confirmation that God was providing guidance. Actually, the first lot should have been, “someone in our group,” versus “someone outside our group,” since we know Paul would eventually be Jesus’ choice.

God either causes or allows all that happens. “The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord” (Prov. 16:33). But God is not obligated to give guidance through lots because someone, even an apostle, wants him to.

God did provide guidance through lots to a small number of Israel’s rulers and prophets, like Joshua, Samuel, Saul, and Jonah; but there’s no indication he’ll provide guidance to us like that. Would you want to follow

...

Friesen. A leader who announces: “We should be led by God. So I will not make decisions, but every issue will be decided by casting lots?”<sup>18</sup>

After the apostles chose Matthias, he was “numbered with the eleven apostles” (Acts 1:26), and Peter stood up “with the eleven” (Acts 2:14) at Pentecost, and “the twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them” (Acts 6:2) to choose deacons. So from Acts 1-6, the Congregation counted Matthias among the twelve apostles. But did God count him as an apostle? Paul is first mentioned in Acts 7, and from then on there is no more mention of Matthias, “the eleven,” or “the twelve.”

The author of the book of Acts gave eleven verses, to this episode, and never mentioned Matthias again. Of course, only Peter, James, and John of the original twelve were mentioned by name after Acts 1:13. But Jesus’ choosing of Paul is repeated three times in 45 verses in Acts 9:1-22, 22:4-16, and 26:9-20.

Peter and the other apostles knew that only twelve apostles of Jesus Messiah will rule over the twelve tribes in the Messianic Kingdom.

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<sup>18</sup> Friesen, Decision Making, 214.

Mt. 19:28. In the regeneration when the Son of man will sit in the throne of his glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The apostles didn't try to appoint another apostle to replace James after Herod killed him in Acts 12, unlike the plethora of people claiming to be apostles of Messiah today. Only thirteen men in the New Testament were ever said to be apostles of Jesus Messiah. The original twelve, including Judas ...

Lu. 6:13-16. He chose twelve, whom also he named apostles: ... Peter and Andrew his brother, James and John [his brother], Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James ... and Simon, and Judas the brother of James and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

And Paul ...

1 Cor. 1:1, 2 Cor. 1:1, Eph. 1:1, Col. 1:1, 1 Tim. 1:1, 2 Tim. 1:1, Titus 1:1, 1 Pet. 1:1, 2 Pet. 1:1. An apostle of Jesus Messiah.

Friesen says maybe Matthias will judge one of the twelve tribes in Israel, while Paul will be Messiah's judge over the Gentile nations. "Paul might have been like the Levites. They were the thirteenth tribe without land."<sup>19</sup> (There were thirteen tribes in Israel, not twelve; because one of Jacob's twelve sons, Joseph, fathered two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh.)

Acts 2 says "many wonders and signs were done by the apostles" (Acts 2:43), and it doesn't mention Matthias as standing out by not being able to do any wonders or signs. But saying the apostles as a group did many miracles isn't the same as saying Matthias, did miracles, like we know Paul did.

2 Cor. 12:11-12. In nothing am I behind the very chief of the apostles. ... Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you.

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<sup>19</sup> Friesen, Decision Making, 219.

God didn't explicitly condemn the apostles' decision in Acts 1. But God also didn't explicitly condemn Jephthah's tragic decision to sacrifice his precious daughter when "she came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances" (Jdg. 11:34), or Ezra's tragic decision to "put away all the wives and such as are born of them" (Ezra 10:3). The book of Acts records some mistakes men made, without explicitly saying they were mistakes, including Barnabas' decision to break with Paul in Acts 13, and Paul's philosophizing speech in Athens in Acts 17, to help us learn discernment and decision-making principles.

It's appropriate in a book like Acts, whose purpose includes teaching the brethren how to make good decisions, it should begin with a decision-making exercise. And it's appropriate a book about the works and authority of the apostles should begin by considering the limits of even apostolic authority.

## **Inward Impressions**

Now that we've looked at how Peter and the other apostles made one of their first decisions in Acts, let's notice they didn't make it by trying to listen for inward impressions. There's more support for casting lots for guidance in the Bible, than for following inward impressions. The problem with trying to use inward impressions to make decisions is that the Bible never tells us how we would know if an inward impression was a thought or a message.

Friesen. When it comes to non-commanded decisions, we are given no criteria in Scripture for distinguishing the inner impression of the Spirit from the impression of the self or from any other potential 'voice.'<sup>20</sup>

Dallas Willard tried to show how to differentiate the voice of God from our own thoughts and feelings, but his advice is based on his own and others reported, unconfirmable, mystical experiences. As you read his quotation, notice the lack of scriptural authority.

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<sup>20</sup> Huffman, Three Views, Locations 1284-1285.

Willard [my underlining and all-caps]. We may mistakenly think that if God spoke to us we would automatically know who is speaking, without having to learn, but that is simply a mistake. ... It leaves us totally at the mercy of any stray ideas we have picked up about what God's speaking is like. ... The three factors of [God's speaking are] QUALITY, SPIRIT and CONTENT [based on what scripture reference?]. ... The voice of God will usually (though not always) take the form of certain thoughts or perceptions that enter our minds. These obviously are not sounds.

The QUALITY of God's voice is more a matter of the weight or impact an impression makes on our consciousness. A certain steady and calm force with which communications from God impact our soul incline us toward assent and even toward active compliance. ... The assent or compliance is frequently given before the content of the communication is fully grasped [Really?!]. At least I find it so, and others do as well. We also sense inwardly the immediate power of God's voice. ... The voice of the subconscious argues with you, tries to convince you; but the inner voice of God does not argue, does not try to convince you. It just speaks, and it is self-authenticating. It has the feel of the voice of God within it. ...

The voice of God speaking in our souls also bears within itself a characteristic ... SPIRIT of exalted peacefulness and confidence, of joy, of sweet reasonableness and of goodwill. His voice is not the voice of a bully. It will not run over you and your will. It is, in short, the spirit of Jesus. ...

Finally, there is a CONTENT that marks the voice of God. ... Evan Roberts, when he was in college, ... [told his] principal, ... "I hear a voice that tells me I must go home and speak to the young people in my home church. ... Is that the voice of the devil or the voice of the Spirit?" Phillips answered, very wisely, "The devil never gives orders like that. You can have a week off."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Willard, Hearing God, 220, 228-232.

I hope this sounds as silly and made-up to you, as it does to me. If God wanted to direct us moment-by-moment by his voice, wouldn't that be one of the most important things in the world for us to know how to be clear about?! Wouldn't it merit at least a passage in one of the epistles, and examples throughout the Book of Acts?

As the apostles and brethren waited in Jerusalem for the coming of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14), Peter didn't say, "While we prayed, I felt impressed for us to appoint a replacement for Judas." He said, "Men and brethren, this scripture needs [to be] fulfilled ... concerning Judas. ... 'His office let another take'" (Acts 1:16-20).

And once the apostles decided to replace Judas, Matthew didn't say, "While we prayed, I heard a still, small voice saying, 'Shlomo is an amazingly dependable man,' and it was like a steady and calm force on my soul inclining me towards assent. It didn't feel like bullying, and it had the feel of the voice of God within it, and an exalted peacefulness, a sweet reasonableness, to it."

We don't see the brethren making decisions on that basis in the book of Acts, and there was no need to, because the Word and Wisdom are sufficient for all godly decision-making. When I say "the Word," I'm including any true, prophetic, direct revelation. For the early brethren, this would have included the Old Testament scriptures; whatever New Testament scriptures they had access to, such as a letter from an apostle that would eventually be recognized as part of the Bible; oral prophecies from New Testament prophets, including prophecies from the exercise of spiritual gifts in the Congregation; and visions and appearances from angels and Yeshua. But today we have only the Old and New Testament scriptures, since the Word, the Bible, is complete.

Whereas this book is about making decisions by the Word and Wisdom, Priscilla Shirer wrote a book about making decisions by the Word and the Spirit. She divides history into four parts: 1) the prophets before Jesus, who



validated their prophecy by signs, 2) Jesus, who validated his prophesy by miracles, 3) the apostles, who also validated their prophecy by miracles, and 4) us, now that the New Testament is complete, who validate our inner impressions by the Word instead of by miracles.

Shirer, *Discerning the Voic.* [1-Before Jesus:] One of the ways God spoke to His people as a whole in Old Testament times was through the person of a prophet. And the main way people could confirm the prophet's message was through a visible sign. ... [2-Jesus:] Things changed, however, when Christ came. ... No longer were prophets one of the primary ways God spoke to His people. When Jesus came and walked the earth, God began speaking through the person of His Son. And He, in turn, confirmed God's Word through miracles. ... [4-Us:] When the Holy Spirit arrived in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost ... by enabling believers to actually receive this Spirit inside themselves, God initiated the most personal way He still speaks to us today - directly through the Holy Spirit, hand in hand with Scripture. ... And ever since, He has attempted to reveal the mind of God individually and continually to every saint willing to listen. [3-Apostles:] Hold on, then. If things changed at Pentecost with the giving of the Holy Spirit, why is the remainder of the book of Acts - the chronicle of the first-century church - still replete with miraculous activity? ... The apostles and their close associates performed miracles in the early years of the church for the same reason Jesus had performed them - to confirm His spoken words, which had not yet been fully recorded. [4-Us Again:] But once His Word was written down, there was no longer a need to rely on miracles as the sole [?] validation of what He said. ... We don't have to depend on them to know when God is speaking. We have His Word. We have His Spirit. The Bible and the Holy Spirit go hand in hand.<sup>22</sup>

The problem is, that although the Bible says God spoke through [1] prophets, and [2] Jesus, and [3] the apostles;

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<sup>22</sup> Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*, 65-67.

the New Testament never describes God speaking [4] “directly through the Holy Spirit ... individually and continually to every saint willing to listen.”<sup>23</sup>

Shirer describes how difficult and uncertain it is to hear God’s voice directly through the Spirit today.

Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*. Perhaps, like me, you’ve spent far too many years of your life not hearing or at least not recognizing His voice [p. 9]. ... Or to be so confused by flying thoughts and voices that I couldn’t pick God’s voice out of the crowd [p. 10]. ... Why don’t we hear Him? What keeps us from recognizing Him? How can we know when He is speaking? ... Nobody has all of this figured out. [p. 11]. ... How discouraging it can be when you don’t feel like God has any interest in talking to you and revealing His will [p. 12]. You genuinely want to hear from God. You want to know whether the recent circumstances you’ve noticed around you are more than mere coincidence, or whether the comments you heard someone make to you might truly be a signal of God’s will and direction. You want to make sure that this conviction you’re feeling is not just of your own creating. ... You want to get to the bottom of this often hard-to-understand concept of discerning God’s voice ... in relation to an important dilemma or decision in your life, and you want to find out how to hear Him more clearly. ... [Sometimes] unconfessed sin in our lives clog[s] the connection, some[times] we don’t know what we’re even looking for when it comes to sensing the Spirit’s prompting [p. 21]. ... If you have placed your faith in Jesus Christ, yet you’re discouraged right now because you’re struggling to discern His voice, please don’t doubt your salvation [p. 34]. ... I recall ... a time when I sensed God’s Spirit convicting me to cut away some specific things from my life so that I could more sharply focus on my relationship with Him. Or at least it seemed as if that was the conviction I felt. Of course, it could have also been a legalistic trap I was falling into, or an overreaction to a passing thought, or a bit of hyper spirituality that would sure sound impressive if I

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<sup>23</sup> Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*, 66.

were to share it in a group. Who knew? [p. 48]. ... Would that burning bush still do it for you, as opposed to all this ... subtlety? ... His voice may sometimes be hard to discern without careful, deliberate discipline and self-denial [p. 68]. ... He will consistently bombard your thoughts and your heart with His message until you're convinced of its authenticity. Even if it takes a while. Which it does, with most of us. We are nothing if not capable of missing His signals, wouldn't you agree? [p. 81]. ... [Even great saints have said,] "I don't always get it right." Turns out, there are no experts at hearing from Him. Each of us is still learning. ... Don't be too hard on yourself. Even when you hear incorrectly. ... The fact that you still make mistakes or get your signals crossed from time to time won't cause Him to ... quit speaking, ... [even] after you've moved forward in an area you thought was His will only to discover later that it wasn't. ... Each miscalculation is another opportunity [p. 88]. ... People will often say something like, "I think I'm hearing from God, but I'm just not sure. What if it's the Enemy luring me into a huge mistake? What if it's just my own voice, leading me in the direction of what I truly want and prefer? How can I know if it's God or not? [p. 130]. ... You might tell me how desperately you want to know God's will, how you feel almost in bondage to doubt and uncertainty, how you're afraid to take a step in any direction because you're not sure it's the one He's leading you to take. You want to hear His voice and receive His guidance. And yet from all appearances, it seems as if God is hiding from you - forcing you to hunt and peck, try and guess, hit and miss. And the heaviness of your search and the paralysis of not knowing why He's so silent is weighing you down, stripping you of all joy and confidence [p. 151]. ... A person never really exhausts the question, "What does God's voice sound like?" [p. 157]. ... One of the main reasons hearing God can become so difficult for us - so cloudy, so confusing - is that God, who knows our hearts, doesn't do much speaking into a person's life who isn't dedicated to obeying Him [p. 183].

Like Willard did, Shirer gives us some very complicated and subjective guidelines to differentiate the voice of God from our own thoughts or Satan's trap.

Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*. So how do we really do this? How can we know that what we're sensing within is actually the voice of God? ... With our hearts still bearing the taint of sin and our opinions still influenced by a worldly culture, how do we develop the ability to hear Him with a sure degree of confidence? ... His pattern is to say things more than once, in more than one way [p. 46]. ... Listening to Him is an exercise in hearing from within [p. 39]. ... Turn your thoughts inwardly as you earnestly seek God. Consider what you are sensing in your "gut" [p. 47]. ... The next time you're shopping and see an item you really want, but something inside says "no" - it's probably God [p. 50]. ... I began to feel the Holy Spirit leading me to consider marriage with [her future husband] [p. 56]. ... Frederick Meyer, in *The Secret of Guidance*, said, "God's impressions within and His Word without are always corroborated by His providence around. ... Circumstances, like glowworms, will sparkle along your path. You will become so sure that you are right, when God's three witnesses concur, that you could not be surer though an angel beckoned you on" [p. 78]. ... When a message or inner voice you are sensing makes you feel condemned, ... then it is probably not from God [p. 98]. ... When you boil it down to its foundation, do you sense the warmth and love of God? [p. 100]. ... The character of God will come shining through when He speaks to you. If it doesn't, it's not His voice. You'll know His voice by its loving, personal tone. [p. 103]. ... When you have His peace concerning a specific situation ... you should begin to consider that you're hearing His voice. [p. 107]. ... "Peace" can have sort of an airy, dreamy, wistful feel. But ... the peace of God is strong, intense, palpable, real. You can sense its stable presence [p. 108]. ... Or do I instead feel restless and unsteady, unsure about what these directions are telling me?" [p. 109]. ... Pay close attention to what you're hearing and sensing. You may be wrestling with a decision about a job offer in another city - or an

employee you need to hire [or fire!]. See which option is accompanied by a steady, solid, gripping settledness deep within [p. 110]. ... What He's saying to you may sound impossible. ... Up for a challenge? If what you sense from God never contains anything that surprises you, you're probably making it up yourself. Jan Johnson [p. 119]. ... I've got to be honest with you - this characteristic of God's voice has become the primary way that I recognize His leading in my life [p. 119]. ... That's often how we can differentiate between God's voice and the voice of a "stranger" (John 10:5). By the challenge [p. 124]. ... I often know God is speaking when a thought occurs to me that surprises me, maybe makes me a little uncomfortable [p. 125]. ... When what you are sensing seems strange, you can confidently say, "My God would never say anything like that" [p. 130]. ... The Holy Spirit ... has a desire to share divine revelations with you. He'll do it in a vast number of ways [p. 133]. ... Immediately my heart sensed the warm stirring that so often accompanies the voice of God. Peace. Assurance. Authority. Do it! [p. 144]. ... When the Holy Spirit speaks, His voice comes with power and authority. It hits you deep. It grips you. Your heart burns. It's Him! You know it [p. 145]! ... When God speaks, His voice is noticeable by its resonance, depth, and impact. It pulses with a calm, steady force [she must have read Willard's book] that makes a clear impression on your soul. It is the "burning fire" [p. 146]. ... Truly, you can distinguish the voice of God from any other voice by the powerful influence it carries in your soul [p. 146]. ... When God's Word leaps off the page and grips you - I mean stuns you as though you were awakened from sleep by a thunderclap ... this isn't some random occurrence or coincidence. It is God Himself speaking through His Word [p. 149]! ... He'll tell Abraham to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac [please don't do this!]. He'll tell Gideon that deliverance will come with a mere three hundred soldiers [p. 162]. ... [She says we should emulate her friend Monica who says,] "I am committed to obeying His leading, no matter how illogical His instructions may seem to be [p. 182]." ... The worst thing you can do - the quickest way to become insensitive - is to ignore an impression.

You must not allow yourself to hear without responding. - Peter Lord [p. 186]. ... Once you've heard from God, delay is no longer an option - only instant obedience [I don't recommend this] is [p. 188]. ... I was being met with an about-face directive from God that was so strong, I had no doubt He was speaking to me [p. 190]. ... I knew that what I was about to share [at my seminar] would enable them to begin recognizing the internal promptings of God's Spirit. This would mean that they'd become accountable for obeying Him [p. 37].

Shirer rebuts her own teaching by admitting that none of what she teaches to us is ever described like that in the Bible. No prophet in scripture ever had to read a book like, *Discerning the Voice of God: How to Recognize When God Speaks*, lol.

Shirer. Looking at both the Old and New Testaments, we see Him speaking to His people in so many incredible ways. ... And those who heard Him weren't in any doubt about who was talking or what He was saying. Whether He spoke to reveal His character or to give specific direction, His voice was clear. Unmistakable. From the very beginning of time, and no matter what the method He chose.<sup>24</sup>

The problem with Pentecostal and Charismatic doctrine, is that it's based on experience that doesn't match up with the Bible. In the Bible, prophets were always 100% accurate, not merely mostly accurate, like 98%, because God's own name was at stake.

Ex. 18:20-22. The prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, ... that prophet shall die. And if you say in your heart, "How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?" When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass [within the timing included in the prophecy], that is the thing which the

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<sup>24</sup> Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*, 65.

Lord has not spoken, but the prophet has spoken it presumptuously.

Likewise with miracles, there's no case in the Bible where a prophet tried to perform a miracle and wasn't 100% completely and instantaneously successful. There was one man the disciples tried to heal and couldn't; but then Jesus healed him. God probably included this example in the Bible so we realize there's no other such case of a prophet trying to heal and failing.

Mt. 17:14-18. There came to [Jesus] a certain man, ... saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son. ... I brought him to your disciples, and they couldn't cure him." Then ... Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him, and the child was cured from that very hour.

And there was one man Jesus healed partially, and then immediately healed him totally. God probably included this example in the Bible so we realize there's no other such case of a prophet not healing completely and instantaneously.

Mk. 8:23-25. When [Jesus] had spit on his eyes, and put his hands on him, he asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up, and said, "I see men as trees walking." After that he put his hands again on his eyes, and made him look up, and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

Even the enemies of God never denied a Bible miracle in the occurred, since biblical miracles were always clearly authentic, unlike today. They could only deny the source of the miracle, or try to prevent miracles through persecution.

Mt. 12:22-24. Then was brought to him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb, and he healed him. ... But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This fellow doesn't cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

Acts 4:14-17. Beholding the man which was healed standing with [Peter and John], they could say nothing



against it. But ... they conferred among themselves, saying, “What shall we do to these men? For indeed that a notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we can’t deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straightly threaten them.”

So from where do Willard and Shirer get their doctrine about discerning the voice of God, since it doesn’t come from the Bible? They get it from their experience.

Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*. When I’ve made mistakes, missed hearing Him, ... I’ve often felt like the journey may not have been worth it and that I’ll never get this right. But I hope these very personal experiences of mine will show you how [to] ... see more clearly than before [p. 12]. ... From even the limited experience of my own life - He will speak. And you will know [p. 152].

But why do Willard and Shirer follow doctrine which they can only arrive at by their own, and others claims of, experience, and not by the Bible? Because they very much want things to be the way they describe them.

Willard. How lonely life is! Oh, we can get by in life with a God who does not speak. Many at least think they do. But it is not much of a life.<sup>25</sup>

Shirer. We have a hunger to hear from God that unites us in spirit. Probably one that each of us would freely admit some frustration over, but in the end, something we know we simply cannot live without.<sup>26</sup>

Geisler warned against subjectivity, like inward impressions, in the foreword to Arthur L. Johnson’s book, *Faith Misguided: Exposing the Dangers of Mysticism*.

Geisler. A mystical maze has settled on our land. Fuzzy thinking is the order of the day. The Good Ship Evangelicalism is sailing without rational rudders in

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<sup>25</sup> Willard, *Hearing God*, 242.

<sup>26</sup> Shirer, *Discerning the Voice*, 9.



the hazy sea of subjectivity. Into this fog Arthur Johnson's book comes as a beacon in the night.<sup>27</sup>

The Mormons are a cult that rely heavily on direct revelation by means of feelings. "If it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore you shall feel that it is right."<sup>28</sup> But the Bible tells us where inner voices and strong impressions come from: our own thoughts.

Ps. 4:4. Talk with your own heart on your bed.

It's a serious mistake to suppose they're direct revelation.

Ezk. 13:1-10. Say to them that prophesy out of their own hearts, "Hear the word of the Lord." Thus says the Lord God, "Woe to the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ... They have seen nothing and lying divination, saying, 'The Lord says,' and the Lord has not sent them, and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word. Have you not seen an empty vision, and have you not spoken a lying divination, whereas you say, 'The Lord says it,' albeit I have not spoken?" Therefore, thus says the Lord God, "Because you have spoken nothingness, and [in supposed visions] seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you," says the Lord God. And my hand will be upon the prophets that see nothing, and that divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of my people. Because, even because, they have seduced my people, saying, "Peace," and there was no peace.

## **Fleeces and Bible Roulette**

Friesen says casting lots would be better than using fleeces.

Friesen. This practice [lots] appears to be the most defensible method for putting out a fleece. Why create your own circumstantial sign before a decision when

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<sup>27</sup> Geisler in Johnson, *Mysticism*, Locations 26-29.

<sup>28</sup> Doctrine and Covenants, Section 9, Verse 8.

you can pull out dice (or lots)? It's quicker, cleaner, and has biblical precedent.<sup>29</sup>

The only biblical precedent of using a fleece, at least had a miraculous aspect to it. But it indicated lack of faith in what God said.

Jdg. 6:12, 16-17, 37-39. The Angel of the Lord appeared to [Gideon], and said, ... "You will save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Haven't I sent you?" ... And [Gideon] said to him, ... "Show me a sign. ... I will put a fleece of wool in the floor, and if the dew is on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the earth beside, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said." And it was so. ... And Gideon said to God, "Let not your anger be hot against me. ... Let it now be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew." And God did so.

It's not a biblical fleece if it omits the miraculous.

Friesen. There is the "phone fleece" method of dating. ... A busy signal was a closed door - I shouldn't call back (maybe some other fellow was asking her out); if she answered but turned me down, then God did not want me to take her out (nor did the girl); if she answered the phone and accepted my invitation, she was the one!<sup>30</sup>

And Bible Roulette is no better.

Waltke. The use of promise boxes, or flipping open your Bible and pointing your finger, or relying on the first thought to enter your mind after a prayer are unwarranted forms of Christian divination.<sup>31</sup>

Interpreting scripture by inward impressions about the Word, isn't making decisions by the Word, but by inward impressions.

Friesen. While the author intended a single meaning, the [biblical] text is often interpreted by modern

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<sup>29</sup> Friesen, Decision Making, 214.

<sup>30</sup> Friesen, Decision Making, 86.

<sup>31</sup> Waltke. The Will of God, 102.

readers in more than one way. ... If a commentator were to ... write something like this: “In response to my prayer for guidance, the Spirit has indicated to my heart through His still small voice that the correct interpretation is the last one listed above,” ... his book would be rejected for publication by any reputable publisher (and rightly so) on grounds of improper methodology and irresponsible scholarship. ... There would be nothing to prevent scholars who espouse opposing views from making the same claims to divine guidance. That, in turn, would make a mockery of genuine biblical scholarship and impugn the Spirit of truth as the author of confusion. ... Impressions may be good commentaries of our present feelings, but they are not trustworthy guides for determining proper interpretation of Scripture.<sup>32</sup>

Joubert and Maartens wrote a journal article in 2017 entitled “The Use Of The Bible As A Source Of Divine Guidance On Matters Which It Does Not Directly Address: Is It Scriptural?”

Joubert. The problem we have sought to address is the practice of decontextualising scripture and recontextualising it to say something it was not originally meant to say and then using it as a ‘word from the Lord.’ [p. 129] ... The recontextualised meaning is then taken as a personal message from God [for guidance and decision making]. [p 105] ...

In 1794, John Newton, ... writer of the well-known hymn ‘Amazing Grace’, wrote a short booklet on knowing God’s will. In it he states that the practice of opening the Bible at random to discern God’s will originated in Rome, in particular, with ... Sortes Virgiliana (sortes being the Latin for ‘divination’), which refers to ‘the practice of divination by opening the writings of Virgil at random and accepting as divine guidance the first words the eye fell upon.’ ... He wrote that people who use [this method] ‘commit the greatest extravagances, expect the greatest impossibilities, and contradict the plainest dictates of common sense, while

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<sup>32</sup> Friesen, Decision Making, 93-94.

they think they have the Word of God on their side.’ [pp. 111-112] ...

For Pentecostal communities that have taken ‘a ... postmodern turn’ in the reading of scripture, less and less emphasis, if it all, has been placed on the intended meaning of the human author (Arrington 1994). ... Davies (2009) ... declares that Pentecostals have ‘little interest’ in the ‘surface [i.e., plain, literal] meaning of the text’ and pay ‘scant attention’ to the ‘original intention of the author’. Kenneth Archer (2015) ... states that the focus of meaning has shifted from ‘the author’s mind’ to the meaning ... of the reader. For Davies (2009) ... this means that we have to accept that the meaning a text has for you may not be the meaning it has for me. If that is so, then there can be no objections to decontextualising a text to recontextualise it and then making it say what it was not originally meant to say. ... If we are to accept that a text has multiple meanings, then we are to accept that no text has an actual meaning, but this idea is easily refuted, for every Christian knows that John 3:16 has one and only one meaning. The notion of multiple meanings also leads to the idea that two conflicting or contradictory meanings can both be true at the same time. ... Paul’s instruction to Timothy is to ... ‘[avoid] contradictions [Gr. *antitheseis*] of what is falsely called knowledge’ (1 Tim. 6:20; NKJV). ... One of the laws of logic or laws of thought is known as the law of non-contradiction, which states that some assertion, statement or claim cannot be both true and false at the same time in the same sense. [pp. 118-119] ...

The Wrongful Assumption That My Community Has Authority To Decide What A Text Means. According to Davies (2009), ... a reader’s ‘Spirit-inspired message needs to resonate in a Spirit-filled community’, the reason of which is to serve as a sort of preventative measure to ‘misrepresentation of the meaning of a text’. Archer (2015) ... puts the same point thus: ‘The Pentecostal communities must discern rightly what the Spirit is saying in and through the scriptures. The community must discern what the text means and how that meaning is to be lived out in the community’. ...

[They imply] a community has the authority to decide what a text means. [p. 120] ... Does recontextualisation imply or entail that the authority of the Word of God can be subjected to or be replaced by the authority of its readers? [p. 109]

So, although the apostles rightfully based their decision to choose a replacement for Judas on scripture rather than inward impressions, they partially misinterpreted Psalm 109, and made the wrong decision. In this life, even our wisest decision-making efforts will always be subject to some uncertainty.

If God really guided us moment by moment through inward impressions, we would know the outcome of our decisions in advance with certainty. But James says:

Jas. 1:13-15. Go to now, you that say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain,” whereas you don’t know what will be tomorrow. ... For you ought to say, “If the Lord will, we will live, and do this, or that.”

Another newer form of guidance by inward impressions is called the ‘relationship view.’

Goosen. By fostering a relationship with Jesus, we learn how to be attentive to him, ‘as an immediate experience and as a dynamic of our Christian experience’ (Huffman 2009:198). ... Our ability to discern is progressive and proportionate to the depth of our relationship (Blackabys 2002:234). ... The more time we spend with him, the better we will come to know him.<sup>33</sup>

This is even worse than the traditional view of inward impressions. With the relationship view, we not only lack a way to differentiate between Spirit-generated impressions and our own thoughts, but we also have to get closer to the indwelling Jesus through mystical, internal experiences to know God’s will, which is impossible. Jesus said to the Father ...

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<sup>33</sup> Goosen, *Perceiving God’s Voice*, 3.

Jn. 17:22-23. The glory which you gave me, I have given them, so that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and you in me.

We can't get any closer than that! We will grow in maturity over time, but that's not the same thing as retreating to some inner place to imagine we're meeting with the mystical, indwelling Messiah.

## **Logic**

Some people contrast 'head knowledge' with 'heart knowledge,' by which they mean 'rational knowledge' versus 'emotional knowledge.' But biblically, the heart is where rational thinking takes place.

Mk. 2:6-8. There were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, ... "Who can forgive sins but God only?" And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said to them, "Why do you reason these things in your hearts?"

Biblically, the heart is where reasoning takes place, because the heart is comprised of both the soul, which has intents, emotions, and will; and the spirit, which has thoughts, logic, reasoning, and words.

Heb. 4:12. The dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and ... the thoughts [spirit] and intents [soul] of the heart.

The spirit is the part of the heart that thinks, and knows things by using words. That's why angels, which are only spirits, understand words, logic, and morality.

1 Cor. 2:11-13. For what knows the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knows nothing, except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, so that we can know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but [in words] which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Man's wisdom, including naturalism and rationalism, is not unspiritual because it's rational; but because it's rationally based on naturalistic presuppositions; whereas God's wisdom is spiritual because it's rationally based on "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Since the spirit in both man and God is the source of words and thinking, on the authority of the Bible, we can say there is nothing more unspiritual than making decisions according to feelings and emotions instead of logic.

Jesus is "the Word" (Jn. 1:1), "the Logos," or "the Logic" in Greek; so logic is inherently spiritual and good. You can't read Paul's writings without noticing his heavy use of logic to teach spiritual truth.

Rom. 6:3, 11. Don't you know? ... Reckon ... yourselves.

Rom. 12:2-3. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. ... Think soberly.

Does this mean intellectually intelligent people have an advantage learning God's will? No, because understanding truth is primarily a moral issue. "Men, ... hold [down] the truth in unrighteousness," Rom. 1:18.

### **Acts 2:1-3. The Baptism, Filling, & Gifts of the Spirit**

As for the timing of Pentecost, Jesus gave the Congregation the promised gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the first Sabbath after Passover (Pentecost means fifty), and ten days after his ascension back to heaven.

Acts 1:3. He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days.

Up until this time, the Holy Spirit had been "with" believers; but from now on He would be "in" believers.

Jn. 14:16-18. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, so that he may stay with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. ... He dwells with you, and

will be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you.

Rom. 8:15. You have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, “Abba, Father.” (Also, Jn. 7:38-39; 16:7.)

Jesus “commanded [the apostles] that they shouldn’t depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4). The apostles didn’t have a choice, because along with their apostolic office came the God-provided certainty they would fulfill the essentials of their office, because God’s credibility was at stake through the apostles and prophets he appointed as his official representatives.

But even if the other 109 or so disciples (“the disciples ... were about a hundred and twenty,” Acts 1:15), didn’t remain in Jerusalem, Jesus would still have sent the Spirit at the appointed time, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1). And the fact that they “all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication” (Acts 1:14) had nothing to do with the timing of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus fulfilled the 4 spring feasts of Israel (Lev. 23) at his first coming exactly on the days the feasts were observed.

1) He fulfilled the feast of Passover, on the day the lamb for the nation was offered, by dying as the Passover lamb. “The fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord’s Passover,” Lev. 23:5, also Ex. 12:6.

2) He fulfilled the feast of Unleavened Bread, during the seven days of unleavened bread, by proving his sinlessness (Mt. 22:15-46) like the Passover lambs were examined to be sure they were without blemish (Ex. 12:3-6); and the resurrection proved his sinless sacrifice was accepted (Rom. 4:25). “And on the fifteenth day ... is [e.g. begins] the feast of unleavened bread. ... Seven days you must eat unleavened bread. ... You shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord ... on the day after the [first] sabbath [after Passover],” Lev. 23:6.



3) He fulfilled the feast of Firstfruits by his resurrection on Sunday, “the day after the [first] Sabbath [after Passover]” (Lev. 23:11).

And, 4) he fulfilled the feast of Pentecost by uniting Jewish and Gentile believers into his one body, the Congregation, through the baptism and indwelling of the Spirit, on the Sunday fifty days after the first sabbath (Saturday) after Passover. “You shall count to you from the day after the [first] sabbath [after Passover], from the day [Sunday] that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering [Firstfruits], seven sabbaths shall be complete [49 days], even to the day after the seventh sabbath [Sunday], you shall number fifty days,” Lev. 23:15-17.

Passover is always on the 14th of Nissan, and the Unleavened Bread Week always starts the day after on the 15th of Nissan. Since the feast of unleavened bread is seven days long, there’s always one Sabbath, a Saturday, within it, and Firstfruits is always the day after that Sabbath, i.e. Sunday. (The rabbis calculate this wrong because they consider the first day of unleavened bread on the 15th of Nissan as the first ‘Sabbath’ after Passover no matter what day of the week Passover (the 14th) and Unleavened Bread (the 15th) fall on.)

Why did God make it so that Firstfruits (Resurrection Day) and Pentecost (Congregation Creation Day) always fall on a Sunday? Because even at the time when the nation of Israel was born at the Exodus, God was already planning the birth of his new creation, Messiah’s body, the Congregation, which would celebrate Sunday, rather than Saturday, for both Yeshua’s resurrection and Congregation creation. Saturday is still the Sabbath; but the Sabbath was given to Israel, not to the Congregation. The Congregation was given the Headcovering and Lord’s Supper meeting observances of 1 Corinthians 11 instead.

Ex. 16:29. The Lord has given you the sabbath.

Ex. 31:13-17. Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, “Truly my sabbaths you shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations. ... Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the

sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.”

Ezk. 20:12. I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them.

The first three spring feasts, Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits, represented Jesus, and required an absence of leaven, which represents sin. Thus only matza, unleavened bread, is eaten during the first three feasts of the Passover week.

But the feast of Pentecost, fifty days later, represents the union of sinful Jews and sinful Gentiles into one body, the Congregation, and so amazingly required two loaves of leavened bread.

Lev. 23:16-17. [From the first Saturday after Passover] you shall number fifty days [Pentecost, means ‘fiftieth,’ from ‘pente,’ meaning ‘five’]; and you ... shall bring out of your houses two wave loaves ... of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven.

Eph. 2:14-15. [Messiah] has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, ... to make in himself of two [both Jew and Gentile] one new man.

1 Cor. 12:13. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles.

So, the Holy Spirit didn’t come at Pentecost because the disciples ‘prayed through,’ but because the day was appointed from the time of Leviticus 23, and even from the foundation of the world, to be fifty days after the first Sabbath after Passover, or seven weeks, i.e. seven sevens, forty-nine days after Firstfruits, the resurrection.

Jesus said the apostles would experience two things at Pentecost. The first was the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is the same as receiving the promise of the Father.

Jn. 14:16-17. [The Promise:] I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, so that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth. ... He dwells with you, and will be in you.

Acts 1:4-5. Wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, you have heard of me, for ... you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the invisible action in which the Spirit baptizes every believer into the Congregation, the body of Messiah. The first time this happened was at Pentecost, manifested by tongues of fire resting over each person. That was the only time in history there was ever any visible or audible indication of the actual point in time when anyone was baptized by the Holy Spirit.

From Pentecost on, every person who believes is simultaneously and invisibly baptized into the Congregation, the body of Messiah, at the moment they are justified by faith, without any manifestation.

1 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, ... and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

Rom. 8:9-10. You are ... in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of Messiah, he is none of his. ... Messiah [is] in you.

The second thing Jesus said the apostles would experience at Pentecost, was the “filling” of the Holy Spirit. This was the same thing as the Spirit “coming upon,” “falling upon,” or being “poured out on,” someone, and it resulted in miraculous manifestations of power.

Acts 1:8. You will receive power, after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses to me.

For the Spirit to come on or fill someone in the New Testament, is the same as it was in the Old Testament.

Ex. 31:2-4. I have called by name Bezaleel, ... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, ... in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, ... in gold, and in silver, and in brass [for the tabernacle].

Deut. 34:9. And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the Spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him.

Jdg. 6:34. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, and [sent messengers], [and the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali were] gathered after him.

Jdg. 15:14-15. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon [Samson], ... and he found a new jawbone of an ass, ... and slew a thousand men with it.

Each person can only be baptized by the Spirit into the Congregation of God one time, but can be filled with the Spirit multiple times. Peter was filled with the Spirit at Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, ... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit [including Peter].

And when Peter gave his defense to the Jewish council for healing a lame man, he was filled with the Spirit again.

Acts 4:8-10. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, ... “By the name of Jesus Messiah ... does this man stand here before you whole.”

Then after the Jewish council prohibited Peter and John from speaking in Jesus’ name, they returned to the disciples and prayed, and Peter was filled with the Spirit again.

Acts 4:31. And when they had prayed, ... they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Only believers can be baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Congregation, but sometimes even unbelievers, like Saul and Judas, were filled with the power of the Spirit and prophesied or did miracles.

1 Sam. 10:10-12. When ... a company of prophets met [Saul], ... the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. ... Therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

So, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (Acts 2:1), the apostles and the other disciples, including some

Gentile proselytes, were Spirit baptized into the Congregation, the body of Messiah, as manifested by the tongues of fire.

Acts 2:3. There appeared to them cloven tongues like fire, and it sat on each of them.

And then they were also filled with the Spirit.

Acts 2:4. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues.

There was only one other time in history when Spirit baptism was accompanied by Spirit filling, and that was also the only other time the baptism of the Spirit is mentioned in Acts: at the ‘Gentile Pentecost.’

For the first 9 chapters of Acts, only Jews, Gentiles who had converted to become Jewish proselytes, and Samaritans, who were ethnically mixed Jews, had been part of the Congregation. Jesus had given Peter the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Mt. 16:19), and so Peter was the main speaker at both Pentecost in Acts 2, and the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ in Acts 10.

Like as happened to the Jewish believers and Gentile proselytes at Pentecost, first the God-fearing, non-proselyte, Gentiles at Cornelius’ house were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Congregation.

Acts 10:43-44a. “Whoever believes in him [Jesus] will receive remission of sins.” While Peter yet spoke these words ...

... Cornelius and the other Gentiles believed on Jesus, and were spirit baptized into the Congregation. How did they all believe on Jesus at the same time so they could all be spirit baptized into the Congregation at the same time? Because they were already all justified and forgiven by trusting in the God of Israel, like Abraham and David were under the Old Covenant (Rom. 4), and so all without fail believed on Jesus when they heard the gospel.

Acts 10:1-2, 22. Cornelius [was] a centurion, ... a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house,

which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people, and prayed to God always; ... [he was] a just man, and one that fear[ed] God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.

And then, like happened to the Jewish believers at Pentecost, secondly they were filled with the Spirit.

Acts 10:44b-45; 11:15-17. The Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, ... because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues. ... [Peter later explained,] “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning [at Pentecost]. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said, ... “You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ... God gave them [Gentiles] the same gift as he did to us [Jews], who believed on the Lord Jesus Messiah.

Why was it so important for God to provide a physical manifestation of entrance into the Congregation on these two occasions, the only two occasions in history when invisible spirit baptism was accompanied by visible spirit filling? Because the union of ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles together to form the Congregation is the ultimate purpose of the book of Acts, and of God, covering all three doctrinal chapters of Ephesians.

Eph. 1:9-10, 20-23; 2:11-18; 3:4-6. [God] made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he would gather together in one, all things in Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him. ... [God] raised [Messiah] from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ... and gave him to be the head over all things to the Congregation, which is his body, the fulness of him that fills all in all. ... Remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, ... were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers. ... But now in Messiah Jesus you [Gentiles] who sometimes were

far off are made near by the blood of Messiah. For he is our peace, who has made both [Jews and Gentiles] one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us, ... to make in himself of two, one new man, ... for through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit to the Father. ... [This is] the mystery of Messiah, which in other ages was not made known, ... as it is now revealed; ... that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body [with the Jews].

This doesn't mean Jews and Gentiles cease to exist as distinct entities when they became one in the Spirit in the Congregation, any more than it means male and female cease to exist when they become one flesh in marriage (Gen. 2:24). If male and female cease to exist in the oneness of marriage, then homosexuality isn't wrong. And if Jew and Gentile cease to exist in the oneness of the Congregation, then why would the New Testament mention "Jew" 190 times, and "Gentile" 93 times, and continue to deal with this topic?

In general, the baptism of the Spirit is the more important experience of the two, because the quiet indwelling Spirit of Truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) causes us to love truth (1 Jn. 2:27; 2 Ths. 2:10), and brings forth the fruit of the Spirit of love, joy, peace, etc. (Gal. 5:21-22), and indwells us forever (Jn. 14:16). But for the apostles and the early brethren to accomplish the mission of Acts, they needed the miraculous manifestation of the power of the filling of the Spirit.

Acts 1:8. You will receive power after the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses to me.

The early brethren were never commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, because that happens to every believer, and no one can either cause it or prevent it. But they were commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).

Now that their mission has been accomplished, as described in the book of Acts, the filling of the Spirit is no longer given. It's not that we no longer have a need, but we

must now rely on his grace. God never provided prophets or miracles based on personal needs alone, but only to further his plan for Israel, the establishment of the Congregation, and the future Messianic Kingdom. People in many different times in many different countries needed healing, but Jesus came only to one generation and only to Israel, because his miracles were to prove he was the Messiah, not merely to provide relief.

Mt. 8:16-17. He ... healed all that were sick, so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses [not when he died on the cross, as is commonly taught, but when he healed all in Israel right then according to Mt. 8:16-17].”

Believers were also given visible power through spiritual gifts.

1 Cor. 12:1, 7. Now concerning spiritual gifts, ... the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit thereby.

Eph. 4:8. To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. Wherefore he says, “When he ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men.”

Acts 8 and 19 indicate spiritual gifts could only be obtained by the laying on of the apostles' hands. Paul said he wanted to visit the believers in Rome, “so that I can impart to you some spiritual gift” (Rom. 1:11), by laying his hands on them; though some in Rome already had spiritual gifts, because they had already met the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 2:10, etc. ).

In Acts 8, Phillip preached the gospel in Samaria, and water-baptized those who believed, but apostles had to be sent from Jerusalem to give the new believers spiritual gifts.

Acts 8:12-18. When [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching, ... they were [water] baptized. ... Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John [apostles], ... because as yet [the



Holy Spirit] was fallen upon none of them, only they were [water] baptized. ... Then [the apostles Peter and John] laid their hands on them, and they received [the gifts of, as explained below] the Holy Spirit. And ... Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands [the gifts of, as explained below] the Holy Spirit was given.

What did Simon see when he saw the apostles lay their hands on the new believers in Samaria in Acts 8? Probably the same thing as when Paul laid his hands on new believers in Ephesus in Acts 19: the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophesy.

Acts 19:6. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

The Samaritans were justified, Spirit-baptized, and indwelt by the Spirit as soon as they believed in Acts 8:12a, “when [the Samaritans] believed Philip preaching”; and then they were water-baptized to testify of their salvation in 8:12b, “they were [water] baptized.” So why did verse 17 say that when the apostles laid their hands on them they “received the Holy Spirit,” instead of saying they “received the gifts of the Holy Spirit?” And why did Paul ask the disciples of John in Ephesus, “Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?” (Acts 19:2) instead of asking “Have you received the gifts of the Holy Spirit since you believed?”

Because it looked like they were receiving the Holy Spirit when they received the manifestation of the Spirit via spiritual gifts, since you can't see the Spirit come and indwell a believer at justification. The brethren didn't know the baptism and indwelling of the Spirit occurred invisibly at justification, until it was revealed to Paul when he wrote 1 Corinthians during the two years he taught in Ephesus in Acts 19:10.

1 Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

Gradual increase in knowledge is also why Peter and

John “prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:15), before they laid hands on them; whereas by Acts 19, Paul knew he only had to lay hands on them, without praying first.

Acts 19:5-6. Paul [said] ... they should believe ... on Messiah Jesus. When they heard this, they were [water] baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied [spiritual gifts].

When the last of the twelve apostles died, no more spiritual gifts could be imparted by their hands. And when the last of the people they had laid their hands on died, no more spiritual gifts could be exercised.

The gifts of the Spirit people claim to exercise today, are far removed from the miraculous ones described in the New Testament. God gives all people natural abilities, and helps us exercise our talents, but our ministering, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy, discernment, helps, and governments (Rom. 12:7-8; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28), are far from miraculous. Unbelievers, with only natural abilities, are often better at doing those things in their own realm.

“When [Messiah] ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men” (Eph. 4:8) to celebrate the creation of the Congregation, his espoused bride. You receive ‘bridal shower’ gifts to celebrate an upcoming marriage, or ‘wedding’ gifts to celebrate a wedding, but you don’t keep getting ‘marriage’ gifts from people everyday after you’re married. Likewise, the gift of the physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit was the Son’s gift to the Congregation at it’s beginning, not continually afterwards. At the future marriage supper of the Lamb, once again many miracles and prophesy will celebrate the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (Rev. 19:9; Ezk. 47:1-12).

The following table shows Spirit baptism, filling, and gifts in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19.

Only the first time the Jews entered the Congregation in Acts 2, and the first time the Gentiles entered the

Congregation in Acts 10, was Spirit baptism accompanied by Spirit filling, so that the invisible baptism could be seen for those two non-repeatable, historical events in the progression of God's plan to bring Jews and Gentiles together into Messiah's one body. Acts 8 and 19 show that spiritual gifts were given by the laying on of the apostles hands, and since we have no apostles of and by Jesus Messiah today, we have no spiritual gifts today.

In Acts 2 and 10, at the filling that accompanied spirit baptism, ALL spoke in tongues, and tongues ALONE. But in Acts 8 and 19, in the filling that accompanied spiritual gifts, only SOME spoke in tongues, and SOME prophesied. "Concerning spiritual gifts, ... are all prophets? ... Do all speak with tongues? [Implying no.]," 1 Cor. 12:1, 29-30.

Spirit Baptism, Filling, and Gifts in Acts			
Occasion	Cause	Occurrence	Manifestation
<b>Acts 2 Jewish Pente- cost</b>	Nothing	<u>Baptism</u> Baptized With 1:5 Gift Of 2:38 Promise Of 1:4; 2:33	Tongues of Fire (ALL) 2:3
		<u>Filling</u> Fell Upon 1:8; 11:15 Poured Out On 2:17-18 Filled With 2:4a Received Power 1:8	Tongues (ALL) 2:4b
<b>Acts 10 Gentile 'Pente- cost'</b>	Nothing	<u>Baptism</u> Baptized With 11:16 Gift Of 10:45; 15:8 Received 10:47	
		<u>Filling</u> Fell Upon 10:44; 11:15 Poured Out On 10:45	Tongues (ALL) 10:46
<b>Acts 8 Samaria</b>	Laid Hands 8:14-19	<u>Gifts</u> (Received 8:15, 17, 19?) Fell Upon 8:16	Tongues & Prophecy (SOME)? 8:15-19
<b>Acts 19 Ephesus</b>	Laid Hands 19:6a	<u>Gifts</u> (Received 19:2?) Fell Upon 19:6b	Tongues & Prophecy (SOME) 19:6c

OTHER FILLINGS IN ACTS BESIDES CHAPTERS 2, 8, 10, & 19		
Occasion	Persons	Results
<b>1st Opposition</b>	Peter & Jeru. Disciples 4:8	Bold Speech
<b>1st Deacons</b>	Qualification 6:3, 5 Stephen 6:8, 10	Wonders, Miracles, Wise Speech
<b>1st Martyr</b>	Stephen 7:55	Grace, Boldness
<b>Calling of Paul</b>	Paul 9:17	Power for Ministry
<b>Description of</b>	Barnabas 11:24	Exhortation
<b>1st Missions</b>	Paul 13:9	Miracle for Ministry
<b>1st Gentiles</b>	Antioch Syria 13:52	Joy and Power

Not only did God give spiritual gifts to individuals in the Congregation; but he also gave some individuals as

gifts to the Congregation. These individuals functioned constantly in their offices, in contrast to spiritual gifts, that the Spirit enabled in individuals intermittently in Congregation meetings.

Eph. 4:7-14. [Spiritual Gifts to Individuals in the Congregation:] To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Messiah. Wherefore he says, “When he ascended up on high, he ... gave gifts to men.” ... [Gifts of Individuals to the Congregation:] And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Messiah.

Men and Spiritual Gifts In Descending Importance				
Eph 4:11	1Cor 12:28	1Cor 12:29-30	1Cor 12:8-10	1Cor 13-14
1. MEN AS GIFTS TO THE CONGREGATION				
apostles	1st, apostles	apostles		
Apostles (Foundation): Peter, bro Andrew; James, bro John; Philip, Bartholomew; Thomas, Matthew; James, Thaddaeus; Simon, Paul. Mt 10:2-4. 2Cor 8:23				
prophets	2nd, prophets	prophets		
Prophets (Foundation): 13:1 Barnabas?, Niger?, Lucius?, Manaen?, Saul. Acts 15:32 Judas, Silas. Acts 21:10 Agabus.				
evangelists	--	--		
Evangelists: Stephen?. Acts 21:8 Philip.				
pastors	--	--		
teachers	3rd, teachers	teachers		
			wisdom	understand mysteries
			knowledge	knowledge
	after that, miracles	miracles	faith	faith
2. SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO MEN IN THE CONGREGATION				
	then, gifts of healings	gifts of healing	gifts of healing	
			miracles	
			prophecy	gift of prophecy
			Gift of Prophecy: Acts 21:9 Philip's daughters (Acts 21:10-11 privately).	
			discerning	
	helps			
	governments			
	other tongues	tongues	tongues	tongues of men
		interpret		

If the Spirit gave a man to the Congregation in one role, he also had all the roles underneath. For example, since Paul was an apostle, he was also a prophet (1 Cor. 14:37), evangelist (Acts 14:7), pastor (1 Pet. 5:1), and teacher (Acts 14:21).

The apostles and New Testament prophets were the foundation of the Congregation, and you don't keep laying the foundation of a building, but build upon it.

Eph. 2:19-20. You are ... the household of God, and are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Messiah himself being the chief corner stone.

So God gave apostles and prophets to only the first generation of brethren. God still gives evangelists, pastors, and teachers to the Congregation. If any other men could ever do what the twelve apostles did, then the miraculous works of apostles wouldn't have had any validation value.

1 Cor. 2:12. Truly the signs of an apostle were worked among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

## **The Cessation of Miracles and Revelation**

Luke said the apostles (Acts 2:43; 5:12), Peter (Acts 5:15-16), and Stephen (Acts 6:8), all did an abundance of public miracles in Jerusalem. But we shouldn't suppose they continued to do them after Luke ceased to mention them, after the persecution that arose after Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7:60-8:1), or after James' martyrdom (Acts 12:1-2), or when Paul arrived in Jerusalem in Acts 20:17-18, and that Luke just didn't mention it.

An abundance of public miracles was temporary in each location, only accompanying the outer edge spread of the gospel to new regions. As Mark said, "These signs shall follow them that believe" (Mk. 16:17), and you can't be followed unless you're moving.

Crowd Miracles Per Location (1)		
Chp/ Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
1-7 Jeru- salem	Acts 2:43. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.	Acts 3:8, 22. Immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, ... leaping. ... The man was above forty years old.
	Acts 5:12-16. By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders worked among the people. ... They brought forth the sick into the streets, ... that ... the shadow of Peter ... might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.	
	Acts 6:8. Stephen ... did great wonders and miracles among the people.	

Crowd Miracles Per Location (2)		
Chp & Place	Crowd Miracles	Single Miracles
8-12 Judaea & Sama- ria	Acts 8:6-7. The people ... gave heed to ... Philip, ... seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many ... and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. ... Simon ... continued with Philip, ... beholding the miracles and signs.	Acts 9:33-41. Aeneas ... had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said, "... Jesus Messiah makes you whole." ... And he arose immediately. ... A certain disciple named Tabitha, ... was sick, and died. ... Peter ... prayed, and turning him to the body said, "... Arise." And she opened her eyes, and ... sat up.



<b>Crowd Miracles Per Location (3)</b>		
<b>Chp &amp; Place</b>	<b>Crowd Miracles</b>	<b>Single Miracles</b>
<b>13-15 1st Journey Galatia</b>	Acts 14:3; 15:12. The Lord ... gave testimony to the word, ... and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ... Barnabas and Paul, declar[ed] what miracles and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles by them.	Acts 14:8-10. A certain man, ... impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. ... He leaped and walked.
<b>16-18 2nd Journey Corinth</b>	2 Cor. 12:12. The signs of an apostle were worked among you, ... in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.	Acts 16:26. There was a great earthquake, ... and ... all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

<b>Crowd Miracles Per Location (4)</b>		
<b>Chp &amp; Place</b>	<b>Crowd Miracles</b>	<b>Single Miracles</b>
<b>19-21 3rd Journey Ephesus</b>	Acts 19:11-12. God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed, ... and the evil spirits went out of them.	Acts 20:9-12. A certain young man, ... as Paul was long preaching, ... sank down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul ... embracing him said, ... "His life is in him." ... And they brought the young man alive.
<b>27-28 4th Journey Rome</b>	Acts 28:9. When this was done, others also, which had diseases ... came, and were healed.	Acts 28:5, 8. Paul ... shook off the [snake], and felt no harm. ... The father of Publius lay sick. ... Paul ... prayed, ... laid his hands on, ... and healed him.

Near the end of Paul's ministry, he couldn't even heal his own coworkers.

2 Tim. 4:6, 16-20. The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus [because he died]; for he often refreshed

me, and was not ashamed of my chain, but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. ... I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. ... Trophimus have I left at Miletus [near Ephesus] sick.

Phil. 2:25-30. I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, ... your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. ... For indeed he was sick near to death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ... Hold such in reputation, because for the work of Messiah he was close to death, not regarding his life.

And the last recorded direct revelation in Acts was during Paul's voyage to Rome.

Acts 27: 20-26. When ... no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence [from food], Paul ... said, ... "There stood by me this night the angel of God, ... saying, 'Fear not, Paul. You must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God has given you all them that sail with you.'"

And the last recorded direct revelation in the New Testament was the book of Revelation.

Rev. 1:9-11; 22:18. I, John, ... heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega." ... If any man will add to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.

Miracles and direct revelation will not recommence until Elijah returns, the history of Israel recommences, and the Day of the Lord begins.

Mal. 4:5. I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Rev. 11:3-6. I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days. ... These have power ... to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they want.

Just as the majority of the miracles in the Old Testament were condensed into the first forty years after Israel's creation at the Exodus - the plagues, the parting of the Red Sea, the destruction of Egypt's army, the lightnings and thunderings at Sinai, the pillar of cloud, the daily manna, the water from the rock, the clothes that didn't wear out, etc. - likewise the miracles of the New Testament were condensed into the first forty years after the Congregation was created at Pentecost. And just as the book of Genesis is a book of firsts; the book of Acts is a book of firsts: first Congregation members, first Congregation opposition, first Congregation deacons, first Congregation martyr, first Gentile Congregation members.

The existence of miracles is purpose-driven. The purpose of Jesus' miracles wasn't just to provide people with healing, because people in all generations and places have needed healing, but Jesus only healed his generation, and only in and around Israel. As mentioned before, the purpose of Jesus' miracles was to prove he was the Messiah (Mt. 8:16-17).

The purpose of proving Jesus was the Messiah was no longer needed after Israel rejected his Messianic ministry in Matthew 11 and 12.

Mt. 11:20. Then he began to scold the cities where most of his mighty works were done, because they didn't repent.

So Jesus removed his miracles from the nation, by moving his ministry to just outside the borders of Israel.

Mt. 15:21; 16:13; 19:1. Then Jesus ... departed into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. ... Jesus came into the borders of Caesarea Philippi. ... He departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judaea beyond Jordan.

In a journal article, Goosen and Peppler say ...

Goosen. Each of the perspectives on the will of God and its discoverability advocated today ... agree that ... God

can give specific, even miraculous, direction to individual believers if and whenever he chooses.<sup>34</sup>

No. Not every perspective on the will of God agrees with that. God can't do anything he wants, any time he wants. Not even God can do unrighteousness, or anything that is a true logical contradiction (like do something that he can't do), or violate his own nature and purposes. "God ... cannot lie," Titus 1:2. As Goosen and Pepler themselves admit ...

Goosen. The Bible consists of sixty-six different books, composed ... over a period of around one thousand six hundred years. ... [It's] quite apparent that while God can and may speak dramatically, he has done so rather infrequently, to very few people, over a vast period of time. The scriptures themselves testify to the fact that in the days of Samuel 'the word of the Lord was rare' (1 Sam 3:1).<sup>35</sup>

In a journal article entitled, "Does God Still Give Revelation," John MacArthur said:

MacArthur. Just as the close of the OT canon was followed by [400 years of] silence, [broken only by the coming of John the Baptist and Jesus] so the close of the NT has been followed by the utter absence of new revelation in any form since the book of Revelation was completed. ... "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book," Rev. 22:18.<sup>36</sup>

In the Bible, prophecy means direct revelation from God. It doesn't mean foretelling the future, though it can include 'prophecies' about the future. Anyone who receives inward impressions to direct his decision making is receiving direct revelation from God, which is prophecy, which would mean he was a prophet. But even among the early brethren, when there were genuine prophets, most believers weren't prophets. "Are all apostles? Are all

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<sup>34</sup> Goosen, Perceiving God's Voice, Location 22.

<sup>35</sup> Goosen, Perceiving God's Voice, 18.

<sup>36</sup> MacArthur, Revelation, 230.

prophets?” 1 Cor. 12:29. And even those few who were prophets didn’t usually receive direct revelation for decision making, as we will see throughout the rest of this book.

Though we might wish we always had specific guidance, our needs are not of the kind that God provided miracles and revelation for. “God shall wipe away all tears” (Rev. 21:4) when he comes down to dwell with man after the Messianic Kingdom, not before.

Heb. 1:1-2. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days, spoken to us by his Son.

“In times past,” God only spoke “at sundry times,” not often; and only “by the prophets,” not to everyone. The vast majority of Old Testament believers never received any direct revelation from God. God completed the Old Testament over a period of about 1500 years, and after 500 years of silence, burst the finale of his revelation into the world through the coming of his Son, and the writing of the New Testament, in one generation.

The first coming of Messiah, and his forerunner, John the Baptist, was foretold, so Israelites living at the end of the 500 silent years, would know when prophecy began again.

Mk. 1:1-2. The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Messiah, ... as it is written in the prophets, “Behold, I send my messenger before [Messiah’s] face.”

The second coming of Messiah, and his forerunner, Elijah, is also foretold, so the Messianic Kingdom generation living at the end of 2000+ years of silence will know when prophecy begins again.

Mal. 4:5. Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

Until then, don’t be swayed by men’s false claims, since “every man [is a] liar” (Rom. 3:4). And don’t rely on your

inward impressions for guidance, since “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9).

The excitement of miracles were good at attracting crowds and persecution, but the furtherance of the mission of Acts was only accomplished by speaking the word of the gospel to the minds of men.

Peter and John healed a lame man in Jerusalem (Acts 3:7), which attracted a crowd (Acts 3:11), and got them imprisoned (Acts 4:3), but faith only came by their words (Acts 3:12-28; 4:1-4).

The apostles did many miracles in Jerusalem (Acts 5:12), which got them beaten (Acts 5:40), but the advance of the gospel came through their message (Acts 5:12b-14, 20-21).

Stephen did miracles (Acts 6:8), which brought about his death (Acts 7:60), and a persecution that scattered the Congregation (Acts 8:1), but the believers were added by the preaching of the word (Acts 8:4; 11:19-21).

Philip did miracles in Samaria, that attracted a crowd (Acts 8:6), but it was what he said that won men’s souls (Acts 8:5, 12).

Paul temporarily blinded Elymas the sorcerer so Sergius Paulas could hear his preaching (Acts 13:8, 11), but Sergius came to faith by engaging his mind with the word and doctrine (Acts 13:7, 12).

Paul and Barnabas did miracles in Iconium in Galatia (Acts 14:3), that caused them have to flee the city (Acts 14:5-6), but believers came only through preaching (Acts 14:1, 3a).

Paul healed a lame man in Lystra in Galatia (Acts 14:10), that resulted in a crowd stoning him (Acts 14:19), but the advance in the mission came only through the word (Acts 14:21-23).

Paul cast a demon out of a girl in Philippi (Acts 16:18), that got him and Silas beaten and imprisoned (Acts 16:23), but the progress came by speaking (Acts 16:13-14; 30-32).

Paul did many miracles in Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12), but it was his teaching that caused the word to go into the whole region (Acts 19:9-10, 20; 20:20-21).

Miracles did help Paul and those with him after his shipwreck in Malta (Acts 28:8-9), because the native population then gave them provisions (Acts 28:10), but only the gospel actually furthered the mission of Acts (Acts 28:23-31).

So we lost nothing essential to the spread of the gospel by the temporary cessation of miracles until the Day of the Lord. Miraculous power was only for the purpose of jump-starting the spread of the gospel (Acts 1:8), until the Congregation was large enough to survive local persecutions (Rev. 2:10, 13), and mature enough to spread the gospel without apostles, prophets, or miraculous help (Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:1-12; 2 Cor. 8:16-24; Col. 4:7-17; 2 Tim. 4:10-12; Titus 3:12-13; etc.); for signs to the Jews (1 Cor. 1:22); and for confirming the word before the Bible was complete (Mk. 16:20; Acts 14:3). There are many other ways to gather crowds, and the empty things taught by those who counterfeit miracles today are better off not heard anyway.

### **Acts 2:4b-11. Tongues Then and Now**

The tongues spoken at Pentecost were all human languages that the speakers, all Galileans, miraculously spoke without having to learn them.

Acts 2:4-11. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues. ... And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven [because they travelled to Jerusalem to keep the Jewish feasts of Passover and Pentecost]. ... And ... every man heard them speak in his own language, and [said], “Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how do we hear, every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt,

and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we hear them speak in our tongues.

When God goes out of his way, as it were, to include so much detail, as to name so many of the languages, when he could have just summarized them by saying something like ‘many different languages,’ we know he’s making an important point. In this case, the important point is that these were human languages. God didn’t mention all those languages, and take up all that space in his Word, for us to interpret tongues to be non-existent, or supposed angelic, languages that sound like babbling.

The tongues spoken at the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ were also human languages, because “the Holy Spirit fell on them [the Gentiles], as on us [the Jews] at the beginning [the same way as at Pentecost]” (Acts 11:15). And there’s no reason to believe the tongues referred to in Acts 8 or 19, Mark 16, and 1 Corinthians 12-14 weren’t human foreign languages.

When Paul said ...

1 Cor. 13:1. IF I [were to] speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and [were to] have not love, I am become as sounding brass.

It was like when he said ...

Gal. 1:8. Even IF we, or an angel from heaven, [were to] preach any other gospel to you, than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.

Paul and angels from heaven didn’t actually go around preaching false gospels, and Paul didn’t actually speak in the tongues of angels. Hebrew was the original language of all mankind from creation until the tower of Babel in Genesis 11, since the early names in the Bible only have meaning in Hebrew. For example, “Adam” only means “man” and “earth” in Hebrew.

Gen. 2:7; 5:2. The Lord God formed man [‘the Adam,’ ‘ha adam,’ אָדָם] of the dust of the ground [‘the



adamah,' 'ha adamah,' אָדָם], ... and called their name Adam.

And “Eve” only means “live” in Hebrew.

Gen. 3:20. Adam called his wife’s name Eve [‘Chavah,’ חַוָּה], because she was the mother of all living [‘Chai,’ חַי] [people].

We will all speak Hebrew in the future Messianic Kingdom.

Zeph. 3:9. Then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.

Every time God speaks in the Bible, it’s in Hebrew, so the language of angels is Hebrew also. But even if angels were to speak a language other than Hebrew, it would still have to have semantics, syntax, grammar, etc., versus the non-miraculous, babbling of Pentecostals and Charismatics today.

There were two differences between the tongues spoken at the two ‘Pentecosts,’ and the gift of tongues. First, in Acts 2:4, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues;” and in Acts 10:44, “the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.” But concerning the gift of tongues, Paul said, “Do all speak with [the gift of] tongues?” (1 Cor. 12:30), meaning they don’t.

And secondly, the Pentecost tongues in Acts 2 didn’t need any interpreters, because they were spoken directly to native speakers of other languages. And the ‘Gentile Pentecost’ tongues in Acts 10 didn’t need any interpreters, because they were only given to demonstrate to the Jewish brethren that God had also accepted the Gentiles into the Congregation. “God ... bore them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did to us” (Acts 15:8).

On the other hand, the gift of tongues were spoken in foreign languages which neither the speaker, the interpreter, nor the majority of the audience knew. Both the speaking and the interpretation were miraculous. The

hearing wasn't.

1 Cor. 12:7-10. For to one is given, by the Spirit, ... divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues.

The purpose of tongues in Congregation meetings was to provide validated new prophetic revelation that hadn't yet been incorporated into the New Testament.

1 Cor. 14:2. He that speaks in an unknown tongue ... speaks mysteries.

The Greek word for mysteries doesn't mean things hard to understand, but things previously unrevealed, but now revealed. The whole point of 1 Corinthians 14 is that prophetic revelation is worthless if it can't be understood, because that's not revealing anything.

1 Cor. 14:27-28. If any man [prophecy] in an unknown tongue, let it be ... at the most ... three, one at a time, and let one interpret. But if there's no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Congregation.

If Gaius, who knew only Greek and regularly attended a Greek-speaking Congregation at Corinth, prophesied in perfect Egyptian one week, perfect Persian the next, and perfect Phrygian the next, etc.; and Quartus, who also knew only Greek and also regularly attended the same Greek-speaking Congregation at Corinth, interpreted those different languages every week, that would indeed be obviously miraculous, and thus would have validation value.

How would the brethren know Gaius wasn't just babbling, and Quartus wasn't just making up an interpretation according to his own feelings? Because actual languages have semantics, syntax, grammar, unique phonetics, etc. The brethren would notice Gaius' so-called tongues lacked these things, and sounded too similar each week. And they would notice over time that Quartus' so-called interpretations kept repeating his favorite themes. And if occasionally a genuine native speaker was in the meeting, and the speaking and

interpretations were sometimes written down and verified with brethren from other areas, Gaius and Quartus would only have to be caught deceiving the brethren once, to put a quick end to their supposed ministry, and apart from sincere repentance, to their being allowed to gather with the Congregation.

Oss would like to know ...

Oss. If the gift always took the form of the human language of the hearers, why were interpreters necessary in order to make the utterance comprehensible?<sup>37</sup>

Because while the tongues at Pentecost were spoken to “men out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5), tongues at weekly Congregation meetings are spoken in languages that are not known by most of the congregation. Acts 2 is the only place in the Bible that actually describes people speaking in tongues, and they’re clearly foreign languages.

Babbling can’t validate prophecy, because it’s not miraculous. Even genuinely speaking in the tongues of angels, if angels didn’t speak Hebrew, can’t validate prophecy, because no one can verify it. The tongues we hear today have already been proven not to be miraculous, because it’s been proven that anyone can do it.

Spanos. Spanos et al. (1986) demonstrated that 70% of college students with minimal training could produce tongue-speaking that was indistinguishable, as judged by blind raters, from that of spontaneous speakers. This supports the theory that glossolalia is socially-learned and in that sense is unexceptional in origin.<sup>38</sup>

Tongues are also proven not to be miraculous because unbelievers do them as well as believers. Most tongues speakers in the world today are Roman Catholic, and thus unbelievers. No one who believes Roman Catholic doctrine is born-again or justified, because salvation is not by works. Catholicism teaches justification by works - that

<sup>37</sup> Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts*, 280.

<sup>38</sup> Spanos, *Glossolalia*, 21-3.

you actually have to become righteous, rather than be counted as righteous by faith per Romans 4, to be justified.

Rom. 4:3-8. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. ... To him that works not, but believes on him that justifies [declares to be righteous] the [actually] ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, to whom God counts righteousness without works, saying, ... “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not count sin.”

Do Pentecostal and Charismatic ecumenicists now consider Catholics to be believers because Catholic doctrine changed? No, simply because they now speak in tongues and sing Protestant songs.

Paul said, “Love never fails, but ... tongues ... shall cease” (1 Cor. 13:8). The indwelling Holy Spirit gives every born again believer a new mind that changes his walk more and more over time. It’s not outwardly snazzy, fast, or exciting. It doesn’t attract huge crowds, or bring incompatible religions together, like tongues and healings do. It doesn’t give a person the feeling of being in some ‘higher’ relationship with God. But indwelling-Spirit induced love is truly miraculous and edifying. When the so-called revivals leave only memories of holy laughter, animal noises, a lighter wallet, and discouragement while waiting for the next fix, the next emotion-induced high; the true indwelling Holy Spirit quietly continues to cause us to supernaturally walk in love and righteousness in contradiction to all the philosophies of the world.

### **Is Pentecost Normative?**

A major question relating to guidance is whether the things that happened at Pentecost are normative for the entire period before the Lord’s return, or are part of the once-for-all progression of God’s plan on earth.

In considering this question, we should remember ‘spiritual gifts’ are ‘spiritual’ because their source is the Spirit, but they are part of the changeable, physical realm,

since they are “the manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:7). They are not part of the eternal, unchangeable realm that is true for all people and all times, or they would have existed for all peoples and all times, and not have started at Pentecost.

In the physical realm, even Jesus is not “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8). First he was God, then he continued to be God while also becoming mortal man at the incarnation. First he was a small baby, and then an adult man. Sometimes he was thirsty, and sometimes not. Finally, he continued to be God, and became immortal man at the resurrection. But spiritually, he was always righteousness and love.

Pentecostals, Charismatics, and many others, say Acts 2 is the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of the coming of the Spirit for both internal sanctification and for external manifestation until the Lord returns, based on Peter quoting Joel’s words at Pentecost.

Acts 2:6-21. Every man heard them speak in his own language, ... and they were all amazed. ... But Peter, ... said to them, ... “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. ... And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come. And it will come to pass, that whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

Oss (wrongly says). The hope for the universalization of charismatic activity takes on more specific form in Joel 2:28–32. ... In contrast to the old era, when the Spirit’s empowering work was restricted to select individuals, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this

future age will extend to all of God's people and will be characterized by the Spirit's empowering work.<sup>39</sup>

The problem with the Charismatic interpretation is that Joel's prophecy is about the end times, when Israel will be physically regathered to the land after the second coming of Messiah, and Gentiles will never rule over them again. In context, the "all flesh" of Joel 2 refers to all physical, Jewish flesh. Joel 2 can't be fulfilled until all living Israelites prophesy.

Joel 2:17-31. Spare thy people, O Lord, and don't give your heritage to reproach, that the Gentiles should rule over them. ... Then will the Lord be jealous for HIS LAND, and pity HIS PEOPLE. Yes, the Lord will ... say to his people, ... "I won't any more make you a reproach among the Gentiles. ... Fear not, O land. ... And my people will never be ashamed. You will know that I am in the midst of ISRAEL, ... and my people will never be ashamed. And it will come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; and YOUR sons and YOUR daughters shall prophesy, YOUR old men shall dream dreams, YOUR young men shall see visions. ... And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke, ... before the great and terrible Day of the Lord come.

Israel has been ashamed since the Babylonian captivity, and has even been scattered to all nations in the diaspora after the 70 AD destruction of the temple. Joel 2 refers to a future time when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26). God will allow 2/3 of the Jewish people to perish just before the Messianic Kingdom is set up, so that only Jewish Messianic believers will be left among the Jewish people of that generation. That's when Joel's prophesy that "all [Jewish] flesh" will prophesy will be fulfilled.

Zech. 12:9; 13:8. In that day, ... all the nations [will] come against Jerusalem. ... In all the land [of Israel] ...

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<sup>39</sup> Douglas A. Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 248.

two parts therein will be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein.

Ezk. 20:37-40. I will cause you to pass under the rod, ... and I will purge out from among you the rebels. ... I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn [in the diaspora], and they will not enter into the land of Israel. ... For in my holy mountain ... shall ALL the house of Israel, ALL of them in the land, serve me.

If Joel 2 was fulfilled at Pentecost, where were the “wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke” (Joel 2:30). Pentecost was a foretaste of Joel 2. Peter never said Joel 2 was fulfilled by Acts 2, but only “this is that which was spoken” (Acts 2:16), and it is. It’s the same kind of thing as Joel 2; God pouring out his Spirit on people, and them prophesying; and God giving signs, wonders, and miracles, but not the ones mentioned in Joel.

Oss, in defending the Pentecostal view, says:

Oss. The phrase “history of salvation” refers to the historical unfolding of the central events in God’s plan of salvation, e.g., creation, fall, history of Israel, incarnation, the cross, resurrection, ascension and exaltation, Pentecost, second coming, and new creation.<sup>40</sup>

Gaffin agrees with Oss’ list, but says:

Gaffin. What is telling in this summary is the noticeable gap ... between Pentecost and [second coming]. ... The present time of the church is “between the times,” a hiatus in Christ’s one redemptive-historical work, bracketed by his resurrection and return. ... First Thessalonians 1:9–10 neatly captures the essence of this interim: The church [for the Gentile part anyway] consists of those “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God” ... [while we] “wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead.” ... Thus, if church history (with the exception

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<sup>40</sup> Douglas A. Oss in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 283.

of its apostolic era) is not redemptive history, we may not simply extrapolate from the latter [redemptive history] to the former [church history]. We may not conclude that, unless there is explicit indication to the contrary, ... all that is true of the process continues into the interim period (postapostolic church history), bounded by the two events that constitute that consummation (Christ's first coming, culminating in ... the founding of the church, and his second coming).<sup>41</sup>

Gaffin. D. A. Carson has observed, "The essentially salvation-historical structure of the Book of Acts is too often overlooked." [Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 150.] ... The events in the history of salvation (such as Christ's death and resurrection) are finished, nonrepeatable events that have importance for all of God's people for all time. ... Pentecost is at the heart of Christ's finished work. ... Pentecost, then, is no more capable of being a repeatable paradigm event than are the other events. ... Too often Acts is read as a more or less random collection of episodes from the primeval glory days of the church. ... Acts intends to document a completed history, a unique epoch in the history of redemption - the once-for-all, apostolic spread of the gospel "to the ends of the earth."<sup>42</sup>

Before we leave the topic of Pentecost we should take a look at Acts 2 in the SLV.

Acts 2. Spirit-Led Version. When the day of Pentecost was fully come, Peter lifted up his voice, and said to the crowds that were gathered in Jerusalem, "Hearken to my words. These men aren't staggering around and falling over from alcohol, but from Holy Ghost cocktails." At this point, some people in the crowd began howling with laughter. Peter went on, "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, ... ." But now he couldn't continue because of all the laughing and roaring and barking. So he had the other apostles line people up and stand behind them to catch them,

<sup>41</sup> Richard B. Gaffin, Jr. in Grudem, *Miraculous Gifts: 4 Views*, 285-286.

<sup>42</sup> In Grudem, *Gifts Today: 4 Views*, 31-38.



because although God is powerful enough to knock people over, he doesn't seem to protect them when they fall. Whenever Peter got near someone with sin in his life, his hand swelled up and turned purple. If it turned blue and vibrated, Peter healed them, like if they had one leg shorter than the other, or headaches, or had come in a wheelchair. Peter kept one eye on an angel in a pillar of cloud that only he could see, and whenever it hovered over someone, it would tell him their address and occupation, which he then announced to the crowd. The finale was when gold dust filtered down from heaven on everyone, and those who had any tooth decay miraculously received gold fillings. Peter closed the meeting with, "This Jesus has God raised up, and being exalted at the right hand of God, has shed forth this, which you now see and hear." When they heard this, they said, "Men and brethren, how can we bring these miraculous displays back to our own cities?" Then Peter said, "These miracles are promised to you, and your children, and to all people!" And he continued the Jerusalem revival for three years, and thirty three thousand souls visited the meetings during that time, and then for some reason they petered out. But great excitement had come upon many people. And the Lord continued to give new and more impressive phenomena each year to various charismatic preachers.



### ***Ch 3. Acts 2:41-5:42. Hebraic Jews***



*3. Healing the Lame Man (1655). Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665)*

Him evermore I behold  
Walking in Galilee, ...  
By the shores of the Beautiful Sea.  
He toucheth the sightless eyes;  
Before him the demons flee;  
To the dead he sayeth: Arise!  
To the living: Follow me!  
And that voice still soundeth on  
From the centuries that are gone,  
To the centuries that shall be!

3. The Apostle John. Henry Wadsworth  
Longfellow (1807–1882)

These three and a half chapters (2b-5) show the similarity between the birth of the new entity, the

Congregation of God, through the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost; and the birth of Israel at the Exodus. The entire Congregation was Jewish at this time, and the narrative takes place entirely in Jerusalem. The filling of the Spirit at Pentecost empowered the brethren to begin their mission, despite opposition from the Jewish leaders.

### **Acts 2:41-47. Early Congregation Life**

The power the brethren received by the Spirit filling that accompanied the Congregation's creation by Spirit baptism, had an immediate effect on the fulfillment of their mission. In the following paragraph, the themes of unity, fear, sharing, and favor are introduced.

Acts 2:41-47. Then they that gladly received [Peter's] word [at Pentecost] were baptized, and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls. And [UNITY] they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And [FEAR] fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And [SHARING] all that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And [UNITY] they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and [FAVOR] having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Congregation daily such as should be saved.

The early brethren followed a four part formula in their gatherings: Teach, Meet, Eat, and Pray.

Acts 2:42. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine [Teach], and fellowship [Meet], and in breaking of bread [Eat], and in prayers [Pray].

The "breaking of bread" referred to having the Lord's Supper as part of a full meal. Paul wasn't warning the Corinthians about partaking with unconfessed sin when he said "he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and

drinks damnation to himself” (1 Cor. 11:29). All our sins are already forgiven, which is what the meal represents and it’s message!!! That’s the very first thing every new believer should learn, that all his sins are already and forever forgiven. “I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake,” 1 Jn. 2:12. (The context shows 1 John 1:9 is a salvation verse, not some kind of stay-on-good-terms-with-God-after-salvation verse. Believers admit they’re sinners and trust in Jesus sacrifice in verse 9, while unbelievers are self-righteous per the verses before and after, verses 8 and 10.)

Instead, Paul was warning the Corinthians against committing sacrilege, by forgetting what the bread and wine of the meal represented.

1 Cor. 11:20-21. When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat [sarcastically] “the Lord’s Supper.” For in eating every one takes before other[s] “his Own Supper.” And [so] one is hungry, and another is drunken.

Paul told the Corinthians how to solve the problem.

1 Cor. 11:33-34. When you come together to eat [the meal was the main purpose of their meetings], wait for one another. And if any man hunger [so much he can’t wait for the others], let him eat [something] at home [first]; so that you come not together to condemnation.

The Corinthians solved the problem by waiting and eating together and remembering the meaning of the supper. We solved the problem by throwing out the whole supper! No one can overeat our little crackers, or even worse, bits of leavened bread that represent Jesus as having sin. And no one can get drunk on our thimbles of grape juice. Because the Corinthians disrespected the symbolism of the Lord’s supper, “for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [died]” (1 Cor. 11:30). Therefore, because we have gotten rid of the whole Supper, many among us are weak, and sick, and sleep.

1 Corinthians 11:33 above said, “When you come together to eat.” The meeting in Troas confirms that eating

the Lord's Supper was the primary reason the brethren met.

Acts 20:7-11. Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul talked to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. ... When he therefore ... had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

This also shows the early brethren usually met on Saturday nights, not Sunday mornings or Sunday nights. Luke consistently used the Jewish convention of going 'up' to Jerusalem (Acts 11:2; 13:31; 15:2; 18:22, 21:4; 21:12, 15; 24:11; 25:9; ), and 'down' from Jerusalem (Acts 8:5, 26; 9:30, 32; 12:19; 16:8; 18:22; 21:10; 25:7); so he also used the Jewish convention of days beginning in the evening, as in Genesis 1, "the evening and the morning".

Paul didn't teach at Troas from Sunday morning till Monday morning, but from Saturday night, when biblically Sunday the first day of the week begins, until Sunday morning. (Still pretty long.) And he didn't teach from Sunday night till Monday morning, because Luke would have counted Sunday night as the beginning of Monday. "The evening and the morning were the first day," Gen. 1:5. Your performance each day is greatly dependent, in the long run, on how well you rest each night before. Night comes before day. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning," Ps. 30:5. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let's therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let's put on the armor of light," Rom. 13:12.

And Luke's consistent use of "up to" and "down from" Jerusalem, in all divinely given Congregation history which ends in Acts 28, shows Reformed theology contradicts the heart of God, and the Congregation of the New Testament, in claiming Jewish ethnicity and Jewish things have no relevance anymore.

Also, their "breaking bread from house to house" (Acts 2:46), shows they met in houses, not in 'church' buildings. Except for the early meetings in Solomon's porch of the

Jewish temple (Acts 5:12), the brethren for the rest of the New Testament, met in houses. However, today, it's not better to meet in houses if you have to sacrifice good teaching to do it. It's teach, meet, eat, and pray, in order of importance, for Congregation meetings (Acts 2:42).

Acts 12:5, 12. Peter therefore was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Congregation to God for him. ... He came to the house of Mary, ... where many were gathered together praying.

Acts 20:20. I ... have taught you publicly, and from house [meeting] to house [meeting].

Rom. 16:3-5. Greet Priscilla and Aquila [in Rome], ... likewise greet the Congregation that is in their house.

Rom. 16:14. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

Rom. 16:15. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

Rom. 16:23. Gaius my host, and of the whole Congregation.

1 Cor. 16:19. Aquila and Priscilla [in Corinth] salute you much in the Lord, with the Congregation that is in their house.

Col. 4:15. Salute ... Nymphas, and the Congregation which is in his house.

Phm. 1:1-2. Paul ... and Timothy, ... to Philemon, ... and to the Congregation in your house.

### **Acts 4:1-31. When To Disobey Authorities**

Acts 4:1-4, 18-19. As [Peter and John] spoke to the people, the priests ... and the Sadducees, came on them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. [The Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection.] ... Many of them which heard the word believed, and the

number of the men was about five thousand. ... And [the Jewish leaders] called [Peter and John], and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it’s right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.”

We obey commands of authorities, only in order to give indirect obedience to God, who directly commands us to obey authorities.

Rom. 13:1-2. Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities, for there is no authority but of God. The authorities that be are ordained of God. Whoever therefore resists the authority, resists the command of God.

So, when indirect obedience to God through obeying the commands of an authority, conflicts with direct commands of God, we obey the direct commands of God. However, before we put ourselves into disfavor with an authority, we should be sure there’s no appropriate way we can obey both God and the authority. For example, if an unbelieving husband doesn’t want his believing wife to go to Congregation meetings every Sunday morning, maybe she can go on Wednesday nights, or meet informally with sisters Thursday mornings, or every other week. The Bible says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together” (Heb. 10:25), not “Go to Congregation meetings every Sunday morning.” If obedience to authority only causes you a financial cost, it’s probably better to suffer the financial loss, and obey the authorities. The American Revolution was probably not a godly movement if it was based on a rebellion against unfair taxes.

There’s no way Peter and John could have obeyed their commission to “be witnesses to me ... in Jerusalem” (Acts 1:8), and also “speak [not] at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18). The second time the apostles were arrested, they again confirmed their priorities.

Acts 5:27-29. When they had brought them, they set them before the council, and the high priest asked



them, saying, “Didn’t we straightly command you that you shouldn’t teach in this name? And, behold, you’ve filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood on us.” Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

### **Acts 4:32-37. Like the Birth of Israel**

Acts 4:32-33. And [UNITY] the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Neither [SHARING] said any of them that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all.

The extreme redistribution of wealth within the Congregation in Acts 2 and 4 isn’t meant to be normative, or God would have continued it, and it would have been discussed in the epistles. The exceptional things that happened at the birth of the Congregation at Pentecost, were intended by the Holy Spirit, to mirror the exceptional things that happened at the birth of the nation of Israel at the Exodus. The Gentiles were not merely added onto the commonwealth of Israel.

Eph. 2:11-13. Remember, that you being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, ... were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, but now in Messiah Jesus, you who once were far off are made near by the blood of Messiah.

Instead, believing Jews and Gentiles became a new man, the Congregation, while Israel remained Israel [with their own promises yet to be fulfilled]. That’s why God doesn’t want Gentiles to become circumcised and Torah [Law of Moses] observant.

Eph. 2:15-17. Having abolished in his flesh the wrath, even the law of commandments, ... in order to make in

himself of two, one new man, so making peace, and that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] to God in one [new] body by the cross, ... and came and preached peace to you [Gentiles] which were far off, and [peace] to them [Jews] that were near.

The Greek word for “Congregation,” or “church,” is “ἐκκλησία, ekklysia,” which means a called-out assembly, gathering, or congregation. The mob at Ephesus is called an ‘ekklysia’ three times, because it was a gathering, but it wasn’t “the Congregation.”

Acts 19:33-41. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another, for the assembly [ἐκκλησία, ekklysia] was confused, and the larger part didn’t know why they had come together. ... And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, “You men of Ephesus, ... if Demetrius ... ha[s] a matter against any man, the law is open. ... But if you enquire ... concerning other matters, it will be determined in a lawful assembly [ἐκκλησία, ekklysia]. ... And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly [ἐκκλησία, ekklysia].

Israel was a congregation in the Old Testament, as any group can be called, but it wasn’t “the Congregation.”

Acts 7:37-38. This is that Moses, which ... was in the congregation [ἐκκλησία, ekklysia] [of Israel] in the wilderness ... in the mount Sinai ... with our fathers.

Therefore Gentiles are not to be circumcised and be required to observe Torah, as if they are just added onto “the congregation [ἐκκλησία, ekklysia] in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38). And Reformed Theology is totally wrong in thinking “the people of God” are the same entity in both Testaments. The Congregation is a completely new entity that began at Pentecost, and God demonstrated that, by mirroring the creation of Israel, when he created the Congregation. The purely voluntary (not socialistic or communistic) redistribution of wealth at the birth of the Congregation, was like the redistribution of manna according to need, at the birth of Israel.

Ex. 16:15-18. The children of Israel ... gathered, some more, some less. And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.

And the birth of both Israel and the Congregation began with an exceptionally severe judgment. For Israel, a man was executed for gathering sticks on the sabbath (Num. 15:32-36); and for the Congregation, Ananias and Sapphira died for lying about the sale price of their property (Acts 5:1-11).

Acts 5:10-13. Then [Sapphira] fell down straightway at [Peter's] feet, and yielded up the spirit. And the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came on all the Congregation, and on as many as heard these things. And by the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were worked among the people, and [UNITY] they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch [of the temple]. And [FEAR] of the rest [of the people], no man dared join himself to them.

But today the problem is the opposite of the early brethren. Some of us have large, modern houses with many rooms, while some of us don't even have one room to live in. For some believers to have abundance, while leaving other believers to lack basic needs, is sin.

Jas. 5:1-5. Go to now, you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that will come upon you. ... Your garments are moth-eaten, your gold and silver is corroded, and the rust of them will be a witness against you, and will eat your flesh as it were fire. You have heaped treasure together for the last days. ... You have lived in pleasure on the earth, ... you have nourished your [own] hearts

Mt. 6:19-21. Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, ... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust corrupts, ... for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

People need cell phones and cellular service in order to search for jobs, and find housing, and make appointments, etc. Each Congregation should keep in close personal contact with the poor of their Congregation, and be enablers, and a safety net to them, so they can gradually improve their condition.

Acts 4:36-37. And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, which being interpreted is, "The Son of Consolation," a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Luke doesn't include details like this for no reason. Barnabas' will have an important role with Paul later in the book. Also, financial gifts like Barnabas' (Acts 4), led to the apostles being overburdened with distribution work, which led to the choosing of deacons including Stephen (Acts 6), which led to his martyrdom at which young Paul was present (Acts 8), which led to a general persecution, that Paul was saved while participating in (Acts 9), that scattered the brethren to Antioch (Acts 11), which led to the mission of Paul and Barnabas to the Gentiles (Acts 13), and the fulfillment of Jesus' mission in Acts.

That the early brethren met in the temple, shows they were still very Jewish and observant in their style of dress and worship. Also, the early brethren didn't have 'seeker-friendly' meetings. Unbelievers wouldn't dare to try to meet with them. "No man dared join himself to them," Acts 5:13. Not only because some unbelievers had heard about the judgment of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 4:34-5:12), but also because they would be asked by everyone how they came to know the Lord, and be expected to discuss spiritual things, and the men would be expected to minister through spiritual gifts during the meetings - unlike our meetings today where there is no participation, and you can just sit in the back and watch the show, and then say hello and goodbye to everyone on the way out.

The early brethren didn't use Congregation meetings as a place to invite people to hear the gospel, but rather to edify and strengthen believers, so believers would go out

and witness in the streets and among their neighbors. Not that they wouldn't welcome an unbeliever to visit, but their purpose and emphasis wasn't to provide seeker-friendly meetings as is the popular focus today.

1 Cor. 14:23-25. If therefore the whole Congregation comes together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad? But if all prophesy, and there [happens occasionally to] come in one that believes not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all; and thus the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

The worst thing that can possibly happen to a local Congregation would be to have a large number of unbelievers, comfortably continuing as unbelievers, as part of the Congregation, because that would make spiritual unity of purpose impossible. Not that we have to forbid unbelievers to come. If we target the meetings for the welfare of believers, unbelievers who remain unbelievers won't be interested in coming for very long.

2 Cor. 6:14-15. Don't be unequally yoked [for the Lord's work] together with unbelievers. For what fellowship does righteousness have with unrighteousness? And what communion does light have with darkness? And what concord does Messiah have with Belial? Or what part does he that believes have with an unbeliever?

Acts 5:13-16, 42. The people [FAVOR] magnified them. And believers were added the more to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about to Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and every one was healed. ... Then went ... the officers, and brought [the apostles] without violence, for they feared the

people, [FAVOR] lest [the officers] should have been stoned [by the people]. ... And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Messiah.

The early brethren were granted temporary supernatural favor with the unbelieving people in Jerusalem as one of the Congregation's birthday gifts. Initially, some unbelievers may have liked the sense of family the brethren projected by sharing all things, and the healings and miracles, but eventually they weren't permitted to continue meeting in the temple. Eventually "all that will live godly in Messiah Jesus will suffer persecution," 2 Tim. 3:12. Jesus also had popularity initially while he was healing everybody, but eventually ...

Jn. 15:18-19. If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Jas. 4:4. Friendship of the world is hatred with God.

The temporary favor the Lord miraculously gave the Congregation at its birth was like the temporary favor the Lord miraculously gave Israel at its birth.

Ex. 3:21. I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians.

Ex. 11:3. The Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

Ex. 12:36. The Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent to them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians [count it as back wages and as punishment for not willingly supporting Israel's journey to Canaan].

## ***Ch 4. Acts 6:1-7. Hellenized Jews***



*4. Paul at Stephen's Stoning (1569+). Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574)*

He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho' cursed and scorn'd, and bruised with stones.

But looking upward, full of grace,  
He pray'd, and from a happy place  
God's glory smote him on the face.

4. The Two Voices. Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)

In Acts 6 we meet the Hellenized Jews called 'Grecians.' The Hebraic Jews weren't treating the Hellenized Jews equally in the Congregation's food distribution program for widows. To remedy the problem,

the Congregation choose the first ‘deacons,’ either mostly or all Hellenized Jews, to handle the entire food distribution, which demonstrated their full equality and trust in the Congregation.

### **Acts 6:1-7. The First Deacons**

The Word. Jn. 21:3, 9, 15-16. Peter said to them, “I go fishing.” They said, ... “We also go with you.” ... As they came to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. ... So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, ... do you love me more than these?” He said, ... “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs. ... Feed my sheep. ... Feed my sheep.”

And Wisdom. Acts 6:1-5, 8. When the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians [Hellenized Jews] against the Hebrews [Hebraic Jews], because their widows were neglected in the daily [food] ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them, and said, “It’s not reasonable that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, look out from among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, ... and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte [a Gentile that had been ritually circumcised as a convert to Judaism] of Antioch Syria. ... And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

Notice the twelve didn’t say, “we don’t feel led or called to serve tables,” but “It’s not reasonable” (Acts 6:25). They didn’t say, “God impressed it on our hearts how to solve this problem.” They did what was “reasonable” (Acts 6:2). And they didn’t say, “Look out from among you seven men who feel called, and have a burden for this ministry.” They



said, “look out from among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3).

Waltke. Make your decision in light of giftedness. ... Take a look at the way the early church made the decision about who should wait on tables for the widows. ... It would be a false humility to take the talents of the apostles and have them spend time feeding the widows at their tables. That is just not the best use of their apostolic gifts [or of their genuine calling and appointment by Jesus].<sup>43</sup>

In the next part, one of the seven that was chosen as a deacon, Stephen, will become the Congregation’s first martyr, with significant consequences for the spread of the gospel to non-Jerusalem Judaeans and Samaritans, and for the beginning of Paul’s story.

And of course, this part ends with one of the three section markers in the book.

Acts 6:7. And the word of God increased.

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<sup>43</sup> Waltke, *The Will of God*, Locations 12-13; 1. 1270, 1294-97; 2. 1301-04; 3. 1320-23; 4. 1336. 1344-49; 5. 1351-60.



## **Part 2. Acts 6:8-12:24. Paul's Prep**



## ***Ch 5. Acts 6:8-9:43. Judaeans and Samaritans***



*5. Paul's Calling. Nicolas Bernard Lépicié (1735–1784)*

Then flashed it on thy spirit mightily  
That thou hadst spurned a love that died for thee  
And all the pride went down in whelming flood  
Of boundless shame and boundless gratitude.

5. Paul. Samuel Johnson (1822–1882)

### **Acts 6:8-8:4. Going into Judaea and Samaria**

The Word. Acts 1:8. You will be witnesses to me both  
in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria.

And Wisdom. [They couldn't figure out a way to do it.]

Why didn't the brethren go into Judaea and Samaria?  
Jesus said they would be his witnesses "in all Judea and in

Samaria" (Acts 1:8), but the apostles stayed in Jerusalem. It seems the brethren enthusiastically spread the gospel wherever they went, but there were theological obstacles, that Jesus had to clear for them. Each time a blockage was cleared, the brethren evangelized the next area. This was similar to when Peter was miraculously released from prison, and the angel only did the things for Peter he couldn't do for himself (Acts 12).

Though they knew it was the will of God for them to witness in Samaria, the apostles couldn't figure out how to actually implement that, while remaining true to their Jewishness. After Stephen's martyrdom in Acts 7, God allowed persecution of the brethren, that resulted in the gospel going to Samaria.

Acts 8:1-6. At that time there was a great persecution against the Congregation which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria. ... Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down [i.e., away from Jerusalem] to the city of Samaria, and preached Messiah to them. And the people, with one accord, gave heed to those things which Philip spoke, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

After the blockage of taking the gospel to the Samaritans was cleared through persecution and Philip's preaching, then Peter and John "preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans" (Acts 8:23), and Peter also then "passed throughout all quarters" (Acts 9:32) in Judaea.

### **Acts 9:32-35. Peter at Lydda and Joppa**

The Word. Prov. 22:29. Do you see a man diligent in his business? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before common men.

And Wisdom. Acts 9:32-42. As Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. ... And all that dwelt at

Lydda ... turned to the Lord. ... And since Lydda was near to Joppa [now ‘Jaffa’ or ‘Yafo’ in Tel Aviv], ... the disciples ... desir[ed] him that he would ... come to them. ... And ... throughout all Joppa, ... many believed in the Lord.

MacArthur. This brings up another crucial principle. Imagine trying to steer and change the direction of a stationary tractor-truck. ... It would take huge cranes and chains to even budge it. But once rolling, a truck weighing thirty-six thousand pounds is not difficult to control. ... “Now as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. There he [healed] a man named Aeneas, who ... was paralyzed. ... And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord” (Acts 9:32–35). ... Neatly tucked into this event is a simple little thought: “As Peter was traveling through all those regions.” Peter was already on the move. ... That’s when God directed [his steps] to Lydda. ...

On his second missionary journey Paul fulfilled the ministry God had planned for Galatia. ... The next province was Asia [Eph+], [but] ... they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel in Asia [Eph+] (Acts 16:6). ... [They went] [north]west until they came to the Aegean Sea. ... “A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man ... saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and help us’” (v. 9). ... God wanted them in Macedonia area [Phil/Thess+] all the time. But He never told them till they ... couldn’t take another step. ... So many people sit around waiting for that celestial crane to move them.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> MacArthur, *God’s Will*, Locations 465-507.





## ***Ch 6. Acts 10:1-12:24. God-Fearing Gentiles***



*6. The Liberation of Peter. Hendrick ter Brugghen? (1588-1629)*

Touch'd, he upstarts - his chains unbind -  
Through darksome vault, up massy stair,  
His dizzy, doubting footsteps wind  
To freedom and cool moonlight air.

6. Peter. John Keble (1792–1866)

These three chapters begin with Peter using the keys of the kingdom of heaven Jesus gave him, to open the door of spirit baptism into the Congregation to the Gentiles, and then, his mission accomplished for Luke's purposes, disappearing from the book of Acts, except for his statement regarding the Gentiles at the Jerusalem council in chapter 15.

The apostles knew it was the will of God for the gospel to go to the uttermost part of the earth, but they didn't go. God had to use angels, visions, voices from heaven, and other direct revelation from the Holy Spirit to get Peter to go to Cornelius' house, so the first Gentiles would come to faith in Jesus and be incorporated into his body, the Congregation. This had to be done by Peter, to keep the unity of the brethren. If God had Paul do it, the Jewish brethren would have been more suspicious as to whether or not it was really from God.

Also, some believers who fled the persecution after Stephen's death, brought the gospel to Hellenistic Jews and synagogue-associated Gentiles in Antioch Syria.

### **Acts 10:1-11:18. Peter and Cornelius**

The episode of Peter and Cornelius mentions one of the few places in Acts the Spirit is said to 'say' something to someone. "The Spirit said to [Peter], "Behold, three men seek you. ... Go with them, ... for I have sent them." But Peter was a prophet and an apostle, and the purpose of that direct revelation was to open the door of spirit baptism into the Congregation to the Gentiles, without which, the whole purpose of Jesus in the book of Acts would have failed.

And in the same incident, Cornelius sent three men a days journey to an address given to him by an angel in a vision; and Peter fell into a long trance, saw heaven opened in a vision, heard a voice from heaven, and was told to answer the door just as the men who were sent the day before arrived. This is not what most people today mean when they talk about the Spirit supposedly telling them what job to take, or what restaurant to go to.

Acts 10:1-22. There was a certain man ... called Cornelius, a centurion, ... one that feared God with all his house. He saw in a vision ... an angel of God coming in to him, and saying to him, ... "Send men to Joppa, and call for one ... [named] Peter. He lodges with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea side." ... And ... he called two of his household servants, and a devout

[godly] soldier, ... and ... sent them to Joppa. The next day, as they ... drew near to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour. And he became very hungry, and ... fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and ... a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts. ... And there came a voice to him, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." But Peter said, "I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." And the voice spoke to him again, ... "What God has cleansed, don't you call common." ... Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius ... stood before the gate. ... While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men seek you. ... Go with them, ... for I have sent them." Then Peter went down to the men which were sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Behold, I am he whom you seek." ... And they said, "Cornelius ... was warned from God by a holy angel to send for you."

Cornelius was already a justified man, and a synagogue-associated, God-fearing Gentile, before Peter preached to him and his friends. Therefore, he and his devout friends accepted the message of Jesus as soon as they heard it, and thereby became members of the body of Messiah, the Congregation.

Acts 10:1-2, 22. Cornelius, a centurion, ... a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the [Jewish] people, and prayed to God always; ... a just man, and one that fears God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.

Peter got in trouble from the brethren for sharing the gospel with Gentiles, but all the special miracles surrounding the event convinced the brethren that God had now accepted the Gentiles into the Congregation.

Acts 10:23, 28, 44-48; 11:1-4, 15-18. Certain [Jewish] brethren from Joppa accompanied him [for witnesses]. ... And [Peter] said to them [gathered at Cornelius' house], "You know how it's an unlawful thing for a man

that is a Jew to keep company, or come to one of another nation; but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." ... While Peter ... spoke, ... the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. ... And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And ... they that were of the circumcision contended with [Peter], saying, "You went in to men uncircumcised, and ate with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter, ... saying, ... "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning [at Pentecost]. ... Forasmuch then as God gave them the same gift as he did to us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Messiah, what was I, that I could withstand God?" When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then God has also to the Gentiles granted repentance to life."

Today, there are about 8 billion Gentiles in the world, and only about 15 million Jews. If even 10% of each group are born again believers, the Congregation would be composed of 800 million Gentiles and only 1.5 million Jews (2/10 of 1%). Yet the Congregation has two equal arms and legs, the two equal leavened loaves of Leviticus 23, regardless of the number of people in each loaf. But rather than graciously accommodate both cultures, most Gentiles today give no recognition to our ethnic Jewish brethren, and dominate Congregation culture by the power of sheer numbers. But for the first half of the book of Acts, the real question was, "Can even Gentiles become part of the Congregation?"

As soon as Acts tells us Peter opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, it tells us Gentiles as far away as Antioch Syria came to faith in Jesus.

Acts 11:18-21. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, “Then God has also to the Gentiles granted repentance to life.” Now they which were scattered abroad on the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as [Tyre and Sidon], and Cyprus, and Antioch Syria, preaching the word to none but to the Jews only. And some of them, ... when they came to Antioch Syria, spoke to the Grecians [Hellenized Jews, living among the Gentiles in this case rather than in Israel], preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.

### **Acts 11:28-30. Antioch Syria’s Gift for Jerusalem**

The Word. Ex. 16:17-18. The children of Israel ... gathered [the manna], some more, some less. And when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.

And Wisdom. Acts 11:28-29. Agabus ... signified by the Spirit that there would be great famine throughout all the world. ... Then the disciples [at Antioch Syria], every man according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judaea.

Did the disciples in Antioch Syria pray and ask God to ‘lay it on their hearts’ how much each one should give, and then listen for ‘that still small voice’ to tell them? No!!! They didn’t believe they could receive direct revelation from God for this. And no TV evangelist urged them to give more than they could afford with false promises of proportional prosperity to follow. Instead they wisely gave “every man according to [in proportion to] his ability [εὐπορέω, evporeo, prosper; meaning what they had already been prospered]” (Acts 11:29).

Waltke. Make your decision according to your ability. ... I like the lesson of Acts 11:29: “The disciples, each

according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.”<sup>45</sup>

### **Acts 12:4-12:19. Peter's Deliverance from Prison**

The Word. Acts 12:7-8. The angel of the Lord ... [said], “Cast your garment about you, and follow me.”

Jn. 15:12. Love one another, as I have loved you.

And Wisdom. Acts 12:9, 17-18. When [Peter] had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary. ... He ... declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison, ... and he departed, and went to another place.

Peter's miraculous deliverance from Herod's imprisonment in Acts 12 provides an example of using wisdom to make decisions.

Acts 12:1-5. Herod ... killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. ... And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him, intending after Passover to bring him forth to the people. Therefore Peter was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Congregation to God for him.

The high security was probably due to Peter's having been miraculously set free before.

Acts 5:17-20. The ... Sadducees ... laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, ... and said, “Go, stand and speak in the temple.”

An angel freed Peter again this time.

Acts 12:6-8. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before

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<sup>45</sup> Waltke, The Will of God, Locations 12-13; 1. 1270, 1294-97; 2. 1301-04; 3. 1320-23; 4. 1336. 1344-49; 5. 1351-60.

the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, ... and ... smote Peter on the side, ... saying, "Rise up quickly." And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said to him, "Gird yourself, and bind on your sandals." And he did so. And he said to him, "Cast your garment about you, and follow me."

The angel only did the things Peter couldn't do for himself, like putting the guards to sleep, and making the chains fall off. But he made Peter do everything he could for himself: get up, get dressed, follow me.

Acts 12:9-12. And [Peter] went out, and followed him, and didn't know that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of it's own accord. And they went out, and passed on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. And when Peter came to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain, that the Lord has sent his angel, and has delivered me out of the hand of Herod. ... And when he had considered the thing he came to the house of Mary the mother of ... Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

The angel escorted Peter one block extra beyond the prison, so Peter wouldn't get caught again while he stood around dazed, and then the angel left him. At that point, Peter didn't need direct revelation from a 'still small voice' of an inner impression to tell him what to do next. He used logic, and "considered the thing" (Acts 12:12).

We can imagine his thoughts at the time. "The angel didn't tell me to go preach in the temple this time (Acts 5:20), so I better go hide or get out of town. But first I better let the brethren know I'm ok, so they don't worry. They're probably praying for me at Mary's house where they often pray. I think God will keep the guards asleep long enough for me to stop by there."

Acts 12:5, 12, 17. Prayer was made without ceasing of the Congregation to God for him. ... When he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the

mother of ... Mark, where many were gathered together praying. ... He ... declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go show these things to James, and to the brethren." And he departed, and went to another place.

After Peter told the brethren what happened, "he ... went to another place" (Acts 12:17). Not staying with the brethren at Mary's house was a wise decision, because remaining there could have exposed their meeting place and put the brethren at risk. The next day, his decision to leave was validated.

Acts 12:17-19. Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death.

Paul's logic at Philippi later in Acts 16 was similar to Peter's at Jerusalem. After Paul and Silas had been wrongfully beaten and imprisoned without a trial, the next day the magistrates wanted them to leave. Paul said they would have to come themselves and publicly escort them out, probably so the believers in town would have their names cleared, and have some government protection from further persecution.

Acts 16:37-40. Paul said to [the sergeants], "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privately? No, truly; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." And [the magistrates] feared when they heard that they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

When the magistrates asked Paul to leave town, he probably reasoned he would not be antagonizing them by taking time to stop by Lydia's house and pick up Timothy,



and see the other brethren: Luke, the jailor and his family, and maybe the girl who had been demon possessed. Also, it was wise to leave Luke behind, who had not been imprisoned with them, to teach and strengthen the new believers while Paul, Silas, and Timothy went on. “They [not ‘we’] ... departed,” Acts 16:40.

And of course, this part ends with one of the three section markers in the book of Acts.

Acts 12:24. But the word of God grew and multiplied.



## **Part 3. Acts 12:25-19:20. Paul's Mission**



***Ch 7. Acts 12:25-14:28. Gentiles in Galatia***



*7. Paul at Lystra (1515). Raphael (1483-1520)*

There lives no man whose flesh is scarred like  
mine,

    The scourge and rod have graven deep their brands,  
And Lystra's stones have left  
    A wound that will not heal.

Fastings and watchings, tossings on the deep,

    Hot suns, keen frosts upon the mountain  
height,

These have made life as death,

    And brought the snows of age.

7. I Bear in My Body. Edward Hayes Plumptre  
(1821–1891)



*Mission: Galatia. Epistles: 1) Galatians*

These two chapters (13-14) recount Paul's 1st missionary journey to the Roman province of Galatia, just west of Paul's home city of Tarsus. The ethnic Galatians were 'Gauls,' or 'Celts;' but Luke wasn't referring to the area of the ethnic Galatians, but to the Roman province of Galatia.<sup>46</sup>

BibleStudy.org. New Testament cities within the Roman province of Galatia include Antioch [Galatia], ... Iconium, ... Lystra, ... and Derbe.

From this point on, I'll begin listing the 17 wise principles Paul used to make almost all his decisions without any need for direct revelation or divine guidance.

**Acts 13:1-2 (Antioch Syria). 1) Go!**

The Word. Acts 1:8. You will be witnesses to me ... to the uttermost part of the earth.

<sup>46</sup> BibleStudy.org, Asia-Galatia-Bithynia.

Acts 9:9. [Paul] is a chosen vessel to me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

Acts 22:6, 17-21. Describing his calling on the road to Damascus. As I ... came near to Damascus, ... suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. ... And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw [Jesus] saying to me, "Make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me. ... Depart; for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles."

Acts 26:16-18. Again describing his calling on the road to Damascus. I saw in the way a light from heaven, ... and ... I heard a voice speaking to me ... in the Hebrew tongue. ... And he said, "I am Jesus whom you persecute. But ... I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness, ... delivering you from the people [of Israel], and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they can receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Acts 13:47. We [Paul and Barnabas] turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have set [Messiah] to be a light of the Gentiles, so that [he] would be for salvation to the ends of the earth" [quoting Isaiah 49:6].

Rom. 11:13. I am the apostle of the Gentiles.

Gal. 1:15-16. God ... separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, so that I would preach him among the Gentiles.

Gal. 2:9. They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, so that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision.

And Wisdom. [They didn't know what to do.]

Paul knew from previous revelation to himself he had been chosen to take the gospel out to the Gentiles. If anyone had a responsibility to take it to “the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8), it was him. Yet Jesus had to intervene with direct revelation to get him started. What was holding Paul, and the rest of the brethren, back from taking the gospel into Gentile territory?

Paul and Barnabas might have been too busy with all the evangelism and teaching opportunities they had at Antioch Syria, and would have gone eventually.

Acts 11:26. It came to pass, that a whole year [Barnabas and Paul] assembled themselves with the Congregation, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Messianics first in Antioch Syria [and only once more in Acts by king Herod].

But more importantly, the unresolved Jewish-Gentile question hindered Gentile evangelism. Just as Jesus had to allow the persecution that followed Stephen's martyrdom to disperse the church to preach the gospel in Samaria and the Judean countryside; and had to provide direct revelation to Peter get him to preach to Cornelius and open the door of spirit baptism into the Congregation for the Gentiles; he also had to step in to get Paul's missionary journeys started.

Acts 13:1-2. Now there were in the Congregation that was at Antioch Syria certain prophets and teachers. ... As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Separate Barnabas and Saul to me for the work to which I have called them.”

It certainly helped the unity of the brethren for Paul and Barnabas to be able to say their mission to the Gentiles began by divine choice, rather than by their own initiative. As Peter said in Acts 15 ...

Acts 15:7. You know how that a good while ago God chose among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth would hear the word of the gospel and believe.



And once the blockage was cleared, Paul didn't need any more direct revelation to keep heading out to further and further Gentile regions with the gospel. (God's intervention at Troas on his 2nd missionary journey only changed the order of his ministry, to put Greece before Ephesus.)

When in Acts 13:2, "the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate Barnabas and Saul to me'" nothing is mentioned about the Holy Spirit putting impressions on believers' hearts, or their "having a peace about" going to the Gentiles. Since 13:1 mentions prophets, "there were in the Congregation that was at Antioch Syria certain prophets," the context indicates the Holy Spirit spoke to the group through one or more of their prophets.

'Prophecy,' in the Bible, means 'to speak words of revelation from God,' not 'to foretell the future,' though it sometimes included that. Acts indicates that whenever prophets prophesied, it was the Holy Spirit that spoke.

Acts 1:16. The Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas.

Acts 4:8. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said ... .

Acts 13:9-10. Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, ... said ... .

Acts 21:10-11. A certain prophet, named Agabus, ... said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit," ... .

Acts 28:25. Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying ....

### **Acts 13:2-3 (Antioch Syria). 2) Work with Others**

The Word. Mk. 6:7. He called to him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two.

Lu. 10:1. The Lord appointed another seventy also, and sent them two and two.

Acts 13:2. The Holy Spirit said, "Separate to me Barnabas and Saul."

And Wisdom. Acts 13:3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Jesus sent out the twelve and the seventy two by two. Peter and John often ministered together.

Acts 3:1-2. Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, ... and a certain man lame from his mother's womb was ... laid daily at the gate.

Acts 8:14. When the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John.

The brethren usually sent out emissaries in groups of two or more. A rare exception was when the brethren in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch Syria. Maybe he had told them he planned to get Paul to work with him there. In any case, it didn't take him long to bring Paul there.

Acts 11:22-27. Tidings of [Hellenized Jews in Antioch Syria believing] came to the ears of the Congregation which was in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch Syria. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them, ... and many people were added to the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, to seek Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch Syria.

Stott. We cannot help admiring Barnabas' humility in wanting to share the ministry with Saul, and his sense of strategy also. He must have known of Saul's calling to be the apostle to the Gentiles (9:15, 27), and it may well have been the Gentile conversions in Antioch Syria which made him think of Saul.<sup>47</sup>

Acts 11:29-30. The disciples [in Antioch Syria] ... determined to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judaea, ... and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

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<sup>47</sup> Stott, Acts, Locations 3620-3621.

Acts 15:39-41. Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus. And Paul chose Silas, ... and ... went through Syria and Cilicia [Tarsus+].

Acts 15:2. They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.

Acts 15:23-27. They wrote letters. ... We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

Bohannon. The Apostle Paul modeled a team planting paradigm throughout his missionary journeys.<sup>48</sup>

Murray. In 1971 my wife and I went to the largely unevangelized country of Italy as church planters with a mission agency that at that time had six church-planting couples in the country. Each couple was located in a separate city. Because so many Italian cities and towns were (and are) totally unevangelized, our mission leadership reasoned that its personnel should be spread out to cover more unreached territory. We, however, resisted this strategy, because we felt inadequate to do the work of evangelism and church planting by ourselves. After much discussion we persuaded our mission leadership to let us recruit a team of eight other missionaries to work with us in the unreached province of Pordenone, with a population of 300,000. We had a wonderful experience with that team, evangelizing together in a way that none of us was capable of doing alone, and planting a church in the capital city of the province.<sup>49</sup>

Philip's single-handed ministry in Acts 8, and Peter's in Acts 9, were exceptions.

Acts 8:5. Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Messiah to them.

Acts 9:32-38. As Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda and ... Joppa.

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<sup>48</sup> Bohannon, Church-Planting Teams, 36.

<sup>49</sup> Murray, Paul's Corporate Evangelism, 189.

Sometimes circumstances forced Paul to work alone for brief periods.

Acts 17:13-15a. When the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came there also, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea, but Silas and Timothy abode there still. And they that conducted Paul brought him to Athens.

But Paul's preference was always to work with others.

Acts 17:15b-17; 18:5. And receiving a command to Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed [to Athens], they departed. While Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore he disputed in the synagogue ... and in the market daily. ... When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Messiah.

### **Acts 13:4 (Cyprus). 3) Start at Home**

The Word. Acts 1:8. You will be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem ... and to the uttermost part of the earth.

Lu. 8:38-39. Now the man out of whom the devils were departed begged [Jesus] that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and show what great things God has done to you."

And Wisdom. Acts 13:4. They, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, ... sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 4:36. Barnabas, ... [was] a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus.

Acts 21:39. Paul said, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus."

Not everyone should leave their own place to minister. Jesus told the man he healed in the area of the Gadarenes ...

Lu. 8:38-39. Return to your own house, and show how great things God has done to you.

And generally, you should do what you can in your home area before thinking about going farther afield.

Acts 13:2. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.’

Did the Holy Spirit give them more specifics as to what “the work” was? I don’t think he needed to. By previous divine revelation, Paul already knew he was called to preach to the Gentiles, and Barnabas and the others knew about it also. That might be what they were fasting and praying about when the Holy Spirit provided the prophecy for them to get started.

Did the Holy Spirit tell them where to go? I don’t think so, since the passage avoids mentioning it. Paul and Barnabas had probably already talked many times about wanting to preach the gospel; Paul to Galatia just beyond his home region of Tarsus; and Barnabas to his home island of Cyprus. And Jesus had already given them the principle of starting at home and branching out from there. “You will be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, [etc.],” Acts 1:8.

The Spirit had chosen Barnabas to lead the mission, by mentioning Barnabas first. “Separate me Barnabas and Saul,” Acts 13:2. That made Barnabas more responsible, humanly speaking, for the success of the mission. So it was sensible leadership for him to prefer to go to his own home area of Cyprus first, rather than the Galatia area near Paul’s home area. Barnabas was already familiar with the island, and had contacts there. There was no need to learn another language or culture.

They didn’t go to Paul’s home area of Tarsus first, because Paul had already evangelized that area; first for Jews and Jewish proselytes; and then, after Peter opened

the door of faith in Jesus to the Gentiles in Acts 10, to God-fearing, synagogue-associated Gentiles in the area. Three years after Paul had been saved at Damascus, he went to Jerusalem.

Acts 9:29-30. He was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians [Hellenized Jews]; but they went about to slay him. Which, when the brethren knew, they ... sent him forth to Tarsus.

Later, when the brethren at Jerusalem wrote to the god-fearing, synagogue-associated Gentiles like Cornelius, about not needing to be circumcised, they wrote ...

Acts 15:23. To the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch Syria, and Syria, and Cilicia [Tarsus+].

So, some of those brethren in Cilicia [Tarsus+] must have been from Paul's ministry in his home area before Barnabas brought him to Antioch.

Wilson. Two obscure references in Acts point to the organization of churches in Cilicia [Tarsus+] at an earlier date [than Paul's first missionary journey in Acts 13]. Among the addressees of the letter drafted by the Jerusalem council were the churches in Cilicia [Tarsus+] (Acts 15:23). Later Paul visited these same churches at the beginning of his second ministry journey (Acts 15:41). Paul's relationship to these churches points to this apostle as their founder. Since his home was the ... city of Tarsus, to which he returned after his conversion (Gal. 1:21; Acts 9:30), Paul was apparently active in church planting during his so-called 'silent years'. The core of these churches undoubtedly consisted of Diaspora Jews who, like Paul's family, lived in the region. Jews from Cilicia [Tarsus+] were members of a Synagogue of the Freedmen in Jerusalem, to which Paul was associated during his time in Jerusalem (Acts 6:9).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Wilson, Cilicia, 15.

**Acts 13:5a (Cyprus). 4) To the Jew First**

The Word. Is. 49:6. It is a light thing that you [Messiah] should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give you for a light to the Gentiles, so that you can be my salvation to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8. You will be witnesses to me ... [to the Jew first] in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria, and [also to the Gentiles] to the uttermost part of the earth.

Rom. 1:16, 2:10 (the concept, though Romans wasn't written yet). To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Rom. 11:24. How much more shall these, which are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Rom. 15:27. The Gentiles have been made 'partakers' [not 'overtakers'] of their [Jewish] spiritual things.

And Wisdom. Acts 13:4-5. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, ... sailed to Cyprus, and ... preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.

The first thing Barnabas and Paul did when they got to the island of Cyprus was to preach in the synagogues. After Cyprus, they went to their primary destination, the large city of Antioch Galatia, and they went to the synagogue first.

Acts 13:14-16, 45-46. They came to Antioch in [Galatia], and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "You men and brethren [Paul must have dressed in Jewish fashion], if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "[etc.]". But when the Jews ... spoke against those things, ... contradicting and blaspheming, then Paul and Barnabas ... said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Although Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, he went “to the Jew first” (Rom. 1:16, 2:10) in every city he went to. Only after the Jews of each city rejected the gospel, did he go to the Gentiles in that city. As he said in Antioch Galatia ...

Acts 13: 45-46. It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken to you first.

There were certainly practical advantages to that strategy. Many of the Jews, Gentile proselytes, and synagogue-associated, God-fearing Gentiles were already justified and knew God, and would without fail accept Jesus as Messiah as soon as they heard the gospel message. That's why the gospel spread so quickly, and such large numbers believed from the initial preaching of the early brethren. Also, it's easier to talk about the Messiah with people who already acknowledge the authority of the Bible, the Old Testament at that time.

Gager. Paul went to the synagogue because he knew that he would find Gentiles there. Both those called, in Paphos, “devout converts” ... and others who, in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth, are identified as “worshippers of God” ... and, in Antioch, as “those who fear or revere God.” ... In just about every city that Paul visits, Gentiles are present in the synagogue in significant numbers. ... These Gentiles were not just one-time, drop-in visitors but actual members of the synagogue community in one form or another. ... One of the things we know about these god-fearers is that some of them were major donors to synagogues.<sup>51</sup>

But the main reason Paul preached to the Jew first, was theological - to acknowledge the priority God gives the Jewish people. We believing Gentiles aren't jealous that God gives the Jewish people priority, because God has given us humility through the Holy Spirit, and we know that anything anyone receives is by grace.

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<sup>51</sup> Gager, Early Christianity, 1269-1280.



Jas. 4:6. He gives more grace. Therefore he said, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

The Congregation was entirely Jewish, and Jewish proselyte, up until Acts 10. And even in Acts 15 and beyond, it was hard for the brethren to accept that even Gentiles, as Gentiles, could become part of the Congregation.

Eph. 3:4-6. The mystery of Messiah, ... that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Messiah by the gospel.

In Acts we see Jesus working to maintain the unity of the body, among Jewish and Gentile believers, as the gospel went farther and farther out from Jerusalem, and the Congregation became more and more Gentile in number, simply because most of the world’s population is Gentile. This is probably why God chose a Pharisee, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, trained by Gamaliel, to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

Acts 22:3. A Jew, born in Tarsus, ... yet brought up in [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers.

Phil. 3:5. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee.

“To the Jew first” also means Gentiles have the responsibility to give financial priority to support Jewish brethren and missions.

Rom. 15:26-27. It has pleased them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+] to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It has pleased them truly, and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their [the Jews] spiritual things, their [the Gentile’s] duty is also to minister to them in physical things.

To the Jew First in Acts (1)	
City/Acts	Scripture
<b>Damascus</b> 9:20	Straightway he preached Messiah in the synagogues.
<b>Jerusalem</b> 9:28-29	He was with them ... at Jerusalem, ... and disputed against the [Hellenized Jews].
<b>Cyprus</b> 13:5	When they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.
<b>Antioch (Galatia)</b> 13:14, 46	They came to Antioch in [Galatia], and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day. ... "It was <u>necessary</u> that the word of God should have been spoken first to you, but seeing you put it from you, ... we turn to the Gentiles."
<b>Iconium</b> 13:51, 14:1	They ... came to Iconium, ... and ... went both together into the synagogue of the Jews.
<b>Lystra/ Derbe</b> 14:6-7	(There was probably no synagogue in Lystra and Derbe.)
<b>Philippi</b> 16:13	On the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where [Jewish] prayer was often made [since there was no synagogue in Philippi].
<b>Thessalonica</b> 17:1-2	They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, <u>as his manner was</u> , went in to them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.

<b>To the Jew First in Acts (2)</b>	
<b>City/Acts</b>	<b>Scripture</b>
<b>Berea</b> 17:10	Who, coming [to Berea], went into the synagogue of the Jews.
<b>Athens</b> 17:16-17	While Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to [Gentile] idolatry. [Nevertheless,] therefore he disputed in the synagogue with the Jews.
<b>Corinth</b> 18:1, 4, 6	Paul ... came to Corinth, ... and he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath. ... And when they ... blasphemed, he ... said, ... “From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”
<b>Ephesus</b> 19:1, 8	Paul ... came to Ephesus. ... And he went into the synagogue, ... for ... three months. But when some ... spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he ... separated the disciples. [The believers had been meeting in the synagogue services there.]
<b>Rome</b> 28:16-28	When we came to Rome, ... Paul called the chief of the Jews together, ... and ... he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus. ... And ... they departed, after that Paul [said], “Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet, ... “Hearing you will hear, and will not understand.” ... Therefore ... the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and ... they will hear it.

### **Acts 13:5b-13 (Cyprus). 5) On-the-Job Training**

The Word. Lu. 6:13. He called to him his disciples, and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.

And Wisdom. Acts 13:5. They also had John for their minister.

Acts 16:1-3. A certain disciple was there named Timothy. ... Paul wanted to have him to go forth with him.

It's not just that Paul and other Congregation leaders wanted to have someone help them with the more menial tasks of their work so they could expand their own

ministry. They also actively sought out men with the most potential to intern with them as the primary means to train them to grow into a ministry of their own. This method is far more effective than our method of university and seminary training today. It's really a win-win situation: inexpensive help and the best means of training.

Jesus lived and ministered with the twelve apostles to provide them on-the-job-training, and the results were evident.

Acts 4:13. When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned ... men, ... they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

The brethren at Antioch Syria sent Barnabas, Paul, and Titus with alms for the brethren in Judaea. When Barnabas and Paul returned to Antioch Syria, they brought Barnabas' nephew [many versions say his cousin] Mark, whose mother's house was a meeting place for the brethren, back with them.

Gal. 2:1. Fourteen years after [the last time I was in Jerusalem], I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

Col. 4:10. Mark, the nephew of Barnabas.

Acts 11:29-30. The disciples [in Antioch Syria] ... sent [financial relief] to the elders [in Jerusalem] by the hands of Barnabas and [Paul]. ... When [Peter was freed from prison by an angel], ... he came to the house of Mary the mother of ... Mark, where many [probably including Barnabas, Paul, and Titus] were gathered together praying.

Acts 12:25. Barnabas and [Paul] returned from Jerusalem, ... and took Mark with them.

Titus may have stayed in Jerusalem for awhile to learn from the apostles and elders there. Paul wouldn't have considered Titus a potential candidate for on-the-job-training at this time on his first missionary journey anyway, because Titus being a Gentile could hinder them

from preaching in Jewish synagogues. Titus may not have been spiritually mature enough yet either.

So Barnabas and Paul added Mark to their team, to help them, and to give him on-the-job training. Mark went ahead to Cyprus to make arrangements, and Barnabas and Paul met up with him when they arrived there.

Acts 13:5. When they were at [the island of Cyprus], ... they also had [Mark] as their minister.

Even though Paul was a permanent apostle of Jesus Messiah himself, and Barnabas was only a temporary apostle of the Congregation of Antioch Syria, Paul had submitted to on-the-job training under Barnabas, from the time Barnabas introduced him to the brethren in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-28), and brought him to Antioch Syria (Acts 11:25-26), and they began their first missionary journey (Acts 13:2), up until the time Paul was filled with the Spirit, and took the lead in dealing with Elymas the sorcerer. From that time on, Paul's name was listed before Barnabas'; and listed as "Paul," instead of "Saul."

Acts 13:7-12. The deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, ... called for Barnabas and Saul [Barnabas is still listed first here], and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer ... withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, who also is called Paul [through the rest of Acts], filled with the Holy Spirit, ... said, ... "You will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season." And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy ... believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

After dealing with Elymas, the team, now called "Paul and his company," left the island of Cyprus to go to Antioch Galatia on the mainland, and Paul's name was listed before Barnabas' from then on.

Acts 7:13-16, 43. Now when Paul and his company loosed from [Cyprus], they came ... to Antioch [Galatia], and went into the synagogue on the sabbath

day. ... And ... the rulers of the synagogue [invited them to speak]. Then Paul stood up [as the lead speaker now], and ... said, "Men of Israel, and you [Gentiles] that fear God, give audience." ... Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious [Gentile] proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas [from now on Paul's name is listed first].

There were only two exceptions to Paul's name being listed first after this, both for wise reasons. First, when Paul healed a crippled man in Lystra, the pagans thought Barnabas was Jupiter, because they thought Paul was Mercury, since he was the spokesman. So Paul wisely let Barnabas lead in trying to stop the pagans from sacrificing to them, since Jupiter was considered the greater god, and since it was the priest of Jupiter who was going to offer sacrifice.

Acts 14:11-19. When the people [of Lystra] saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles [of the Congregation of Antioch Syria], Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they ... ran in among the people, crying out, ... "Sirs, ... we also are men." ... And there came there certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the [fickle] people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

And secondly, Paul wisely let Barnabas take the lead in giving their defense at Barnabas' home Congregation in Jerusalem.

Acts 15:12. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had worked among the Gentiles by them.

On Paul's second missionary journey, he and Barnabas split up over Paul's refusal to take Mark with them for on-the-job-training again, because Mark had abandoned them after leaving Cyprus.

Acts 13:13. When Paul and his company loosed from [the island of Cyprus], they came to [the mainland], ... and [Mark], departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

Acts 15:35-39. Barnabas determined to take with them ... Mark. But Paul didn't think it good to take him with them, who departed from them [after Cyprus], and went not with them to the work [in Galatia]. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.

Barnabas was doing a good thing in wanting to give his relative Mark (Col. 4:10) another chance. It was in keeping with Barnabas' character of being an encourager, and the meaning of his nickname, "who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, which is, being interpreted, 'The son of consolation,'" (Acts 4:36). But Barnabas was wrong to disobey the apostolic authority of Paul.

How should Barnabas have chosen between two good things, helping his relative Mark or helping Paul? Sometimes the way to decide between two good things is by how specific the commandment is. For example, we are to do good to all men, but other believers have priority. "Let us do good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith," Gal. 6:10. Men are to provide financially for relatives, but immediate family has priority. "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he ... is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. 5:8. We are to love all people, but the command for a husband to love his wife specifically, has priority over loving all people in general. But Mark was Barnabas' cousin, not his wife; and it wasn't that Mark's life was in danger or something, so Barnabas should have put his responsibility to the Lord's work first, and submitted to Paul's apostolic authority.

Acts 15:39-40. Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren to the grace of God.

Barnabas not only sailed to Cyprus, but right out of the book of Acts. He went on his own initiative, whereas the Congregation of Antioch Syria continued to endorse Paul, and his new coworker Silas, as their official representatives, since they were “recommended by the brethren to the grace of God” (Acts 15:40). Barnabas didn’t sail out of the whole New Testament though. He continued to minister independently from Paul. The Corinthians and the Colossians knew of him, for example.

1 Cor. 9:5-6. Have we not authority to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and [Peter]? Or I only, and Barnabas, have not we authority to forbear working?

Col. 4:10. Mark, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom you received commandments; if he comes to you, receive him. [This is about Mark going to Colossae, but it shows the Colossians already knew Barnabas.]

I’m sure Paul would have loved to give Mark a second chance to prove himself in a less critical situation, but he was right not to risk the Spirit-ordained, primary mission of the brethren in Acts, on someone who was batting 0 for 1. It’s not an inalienable right for anyone who wants to, to go on a missionary journey with an apostle, and there was plenty of other work for Mark to do. Later, after Mark proved himself reliable, Paul did welcome him back as a co-laborer.

Mark later worked with Peter and Silas in Babylon.

1 Pet. 5:12-13. By [Peter’s dictation to] Silas. ... The Congregation that is at Babylon ... salutes you, and so does Mark, my son.

And Mark later worked with Paul while he was a prisoner at Caesarea.



Col. 4:10. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner salutes you, and Mark, ... touching whom you received commandments, that if he comes to you, receive him.

And while Paul was a prisoner at Rome.

2 Tim. 3:9-11. [Timothy,] do your diligence to come shortly to me [Paul]. ... Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

Paul and Silas picked up another on-the-job-training intern, instead of Mark, when they got to Derbe.

Acts 16:1-3. Then [Paul] came to Derbe; ... and ... a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed, but his father was a Greek; which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go forth with him, and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters, for they all knew that his father was a Greek [and Paul didn't want to hinder the ministry].

From the time Paul started his 1st missionary journey in Acts 13, it seems he always had other men travelling and working with him. How many of Paul's co-workers were "called to the ministry?" Apparently only Barnabas. "The Holy Ghost said [probably through a prophet], 'Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them,'" Acts 13:2.

When they took Mark with them, there's no indication the Spirit said, "Separate Mark to me for the work," or for Timothy, "Separate Timothy to me for the work." Mark and Timothy may have expressed willingness to go on the mission, but Paul and Barnabas did the choosing, based on what they thought was good for the mission.

Paul chose Timothy because he "was well reported of by the brethren" (Acts 16:2). He refused Barnabas' insistence to bring Mark with them because he "departed from them [after Cyprus], and went not with them to the work" (Acts 15:38). Paul didn't ask either Mark or Timothy if they 'felt called' to join his mission.

Likewise, in Paul's instructions as to choosing elders and deacons in local Congregations, 'feeling called' is never listed as a criterion, which it would be, if it were a valid criterion. Our traditional religious culture and terminology is quite different from what the Bible teaches and describes.

1 Tim. 3:2, 8. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach. ... Likewise the deacons must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy money.

Titus 1:6-7. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless.

Hornok. I see little emphases in Scripture on a personal individual experience of [a call]. The focus seems to be not on calling but on qualification.<sup>52</sup>

Griffiths. The emphasis made by Scripture is never upon an individual volunteering or upon his own subjective sense of call, but always upon the initiative of others. Saul goes to Antioch [Syria] because Barnabas takes him there (Acts 11:25-26). ... Later, when Barnabas and Paul parted company, we are told that Barnabas "took Mark" (Acts 15:39) and Paul "chose Silas" (Acts 15:40). ... Subsequently, Paul "wanted" Timothy "to go with him" (Acts 16:3), though we are pointedly reminded that "he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium," so that the congregations were then consulted and involved in his going out.<sup>53</sup>

Acts 20:4. There accompanied [Paul] into Asia [Eph+], Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus.

There is no mention of any of them having felt called. They were appointed by their Congregations. "They are the

<sup>52</sup> Hornok, Subjective Revelation, 25.

<sup>53</sup> Griffiths, Who Really Sends, 13; in Bixby, Hearing the Call, 65.

messengers ['apostolos'] of the Congregations," 2 Cor. 8:23.

2 Tim. 4:10-12, 20. Demas has forsaken me, ... and is departed to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you. ... And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ... Erastus abode at Corinth, but Trophimus I have left at Miletus sick.

Where was any record of any of them having been called? The Holy Spirit's calling of Barnabas and Paul at Antioch Syria in Acts 13:2 was a unique interruption of Jesus into the mission of the Congregation to get the gospel moving again, from "Judaea ... to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

To receive direct revelation is to be a prophet. There are no prophets today, because prophets were the "foundation" (Eph. 2:20) of the Congregation. So no one is receiving direct revelation today, so no one can possibly be 'called' to the ministry, or missions, or to anything specific today. God has "called us [all] to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:3).

Hornok. We have all heard a pastor tell his congregation that he is waiting on God regarding the next series of sermons to preach. This indicates that he expects some sort of new word from God or feelings-centered brain flash from God before he can minister. Other pastors say that God told them to build a bigger building, or create a new ministry program. The implication is that if the congregation does not follow the pastor's lead in this area, they are disobeying God. In a November 2003 Christianity Today article entitled, "Mr. Jabez Goes to Africa," the author relates how [the author of the best-selling book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, and] the founder of Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, Bruce Wilkinson, had a "burning bush" experience at a Wendy's restaurant while reading a biography of Hudson Taylor. Wilkinson was stunned when he realized that he may have just had a conversation with God, in which he asked, "God, tell

me what do you want me to do,” and he sensed God’s reply: “I want you to keep the Great Commission.”<sup>54</sup>

So Wilkinson went to Africa. But he didn’t stay there.

Morgan. Prayer of Jabez author Bruce Wilkinson, ... has quit his ministry focused on defeating HIV/AIDS and retired from active ministry at age 58. One turning point was the inability of Swaziland’s King Mswati III and Wilkinson to agree on a meeting time in New York to discuss Wilkinson’s plan to build homes for aids orphans. A few days after this “perceived snub,” Wilkinson told staff at his Dream for Africa organization that he was stepping down. ... Dream for Africa had hoped to house 10,000 children on a 32,500-acre complex by the end of 2005.<sup>55</sup>

Dream for Africa still has a ministry described at [heartforafrica.org](http://heartforafrica.org); but if Wilkerson had not built the work on perceived direct revelation from God, he might still be laboring there despite the difficulties and changes required, or in some other useful endeavor.

Morgan. In late September 2005, [Wilkinson] was to launch the Dream Giver Coach Network to be merged with the American Association of Christian Counselors. But he “pulled the plug on the entire venture,” a source closely associated with Wilkinson told CT. “Bruce was quite broken at this time. [Dream for Africa] had physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially taken a serious toll on Bruce.”<sup>56</sup>

### **Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 6) New Territory**

The Word. Is. 52:14-15. The [Gentile] kings will shut their mouths at him, for that which had not been told them they will see, and that which they had not heard they will consider.

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<sup>54</sup> Hornok, Subjective Revelation, 19-20; quoting Morgan, Jabez Goes to Africa, 47.

<sup>55</sup> Morgan, Jabez Quits Africa.

<sup>56</sup> Morgan, Jabez Quits Africa.

Eph. 2:19-20. You ... are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

And Wisdom. Rom. 15:20. I have strived to preach the gospel where Messiah wasn't named.

Acts 13:13-14. When Paul and his company loosed from [the island of Cyprus], ... they came to Antioch in [Galatia].

Paul said he followed the principle of preaching in areas that hadn't yet been evangelized. That's why Paul set his sights successively on Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus, and Spain.

Rom. 15:20-22. I strived to preach the gospel, where Messiah was not named, lest I should build on another man's foundation. ... As it is written, "To whom he was not spoken of, they will see; and they that have not heard, will understand."

Even though Paul had wanted to visit the brethren in Rome for many years, he wasn't able to get there, because he gave it a lower priority. Rome already had believers there, who had heard the gospel while visiting Jerusalem (Acts 2:10), and other believers who went there because it was the capital of the Roman empire. Even after Paul finished evangelizing Galatia, Corinth, and Ephesus, and had handled the new Congregations' problems, the only way he could, in good conscience, visit Rome, was to do so on his way to Spain, another unevangelized area.

Rom. 15:23-32. For which cause also [preaching the gospel where Messiah was not named], I have been much hindered from coming to you [at Rome]. But now having no more place in these parts [having evangelized Galatia, Corinth, and Ephesus], and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I take my journey into Spain [which was still unevangelized], I will come to you [in Rome]. For I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way there [to Spain] by you, if first I am somewhat filled with your company. But now I go to Jerusalem to

minister to the saints. ... Therefore, when I have performed this, ... I will come by you into Spain.

## **Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 7) Contiguous Territory**

The Word. Acts 1:8. You will be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and in Samaria.

Mt. 19:19. Love your neighbor as yourself.

And Wisdom. Acts 13:13-14. When Paul and his company loosed from [Cyprus], they [went] to Antioch in [Galatia].

After Paul and Barnabas evangelized the island of Cyprus, because it was Barnabas' home area, they went to Galatia on the mainland, because that area was contiguous to the area of Tarsus, which was already evangelized.

Wikipedia. "Use of Interior Lines" is a strategy of warfare based on the fact that lines of movement and communication within an enclosed area are shorter than those on the outside. As the area held by a defensive force shrinks, the advantages increase. Using the strategy of interior lines, a partially surrounded or more centrally disposed force can more easily resupply and redeploy its units, and thus more easily mount a series of quick attacks at multiple locations. In the context of battlefield tactics, it allows more rapid concentration of resources (firepower and manpower) and so affords greater tactical flexibility.<sup>57</sup>

After Paul revisited the area of Tarsus and Galatia on his second missionary journey, he intended to go to Ephesus, because that was the next contiguous large population center. But the Spirit didn't let him go southwest to Ephesus, or northeast to Bithynia bordering the Black Sea, so he went northwest to Troas, a seaport. That's when he saw the vision of the man from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], saying, "Come over and help us."

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<sup>57</sup> Wikipedia, Interior Lines.

Acts 16:6-10. When [Paul, Silas, and Timothy] had gone throughout ... the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Spirit [probably through the prophecy of Silas, Acts 15:32] to preach the word in Asia [Eph+], ... they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit didn't allow them. And they ... came down [i.e., away from Jerusalem] to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and asked him, saying, "Come over ... and help us." And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us [a rare specific call even for the apostles] to preach the gospel to them.

The Holy Spirit only provided divine revelation at that point, because Jesus wanted Paul to do something contrary to normal wise principles and strategies. He wanted him to temporarily skip the contiguous area of Ephesus, and go to the next area of Greece.

Perhaps it wouldn't have been safe for Paul to go to Ephesus yet. Perhaps Jesus wanted Paul to meet Aquilla and Priscilla in Corinth first, so they could lay the foundation of the Ephesian ministry, as they eventually did. The famous "Macedonian Call," (Macedonia being the northern Greece region of Philippi and Thessalonica), was the exception, that proves the rule, that at all other times, Paul went into contiguous territory, according to wisdom.

Waltke. The apostle Paul took the gospel message to much of Asia Minor without ever having a specific divine intervention. When he did experience a special revelation, seeing a vision of a man calling him to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], he obeyed. But the special revelation of God was a rare and unique experience, even for Paul. ... Special revelation for guidance was not the normal apostolic experience. And at the time it was received (by Paul, by Philip, by Peter as he lay on his roof) it was not being sought. ... Special revelation came at a time when God wanted to lead them apart

from the normal ways in which His people make choices.<sup>58</sup>

Having desires to do good things doesn't constitute a call or guidance from God. "They ... were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia [Eph+]" (Acts 16:6), even though they desired to evangelize there.

Hornok. Paul's good desire of taking the gospel to Asia [Eph+] (Acts 16:7), his desire to visit the saints at Thessalonica (1 Thess 2:17–18) and Rome (Rom 1:13), while commendable, did not work out because of overriding circumstances. Good desires are just that - good desires. They are not ... a sign or message from God that we must pursue. ... When we seem to have an original or fresh idea come to mind, it should not be construed as new revelation directly from God, though a Christian song writer may say, "God gave me this song," or a Bible teacher may say, "God gave me this idea or insight." ... There are only two references to [being 'led by the Spirit'] in the life of the believer: Rom. 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and Gal 5:18, "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law." ... Both passages contrast the lifestyle of fleshly desires with the lifestyle of godly living. Choosing a godly lifestyle is equivalent to being led by the Spirit.<sup>59</sup>

### **Acts 13:14 (Antioch Galatia). 8) Focus on Cities**

The Word. Mk. 1:38. [Jesus] said to them, "Let's go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore I came forth."

Mt. 9:36. When [Jesus] saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they ... were ... as sheep having no shepherd.

Jon. 4:10-11. You [Jonah] had pity on the gourd, ... which came up in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I [God], spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than a hundred and twenty thousand

<sup>58</sup> Waltke, *The Will of God*, Locations 162-169.

<sup>59</sup> Hornok, *Subjective Revelation*, 24-27.



persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and also much cattle?

And Wisdom. Acts 13:14. They came to Antioch in [Galatia].

Paul always headed to the most populous, influential cities in each region he went to. He preferred cities with synagogues, so he could preach ‘to the Jew first,’ and so could gather those who were already believers under the old covenant, into the Congregation. And he preferred cities with Roman status and government offices, so he had some level of protection, or at least consistency. He only evangelized smaller towns, like Lystra and Derbe, when he was fleeing persecution.

Acts 14:1, 5-7. In Iconium, ... when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them, they were aware of it, and fled to Lystra and Derbe, ... and to the region that lies round about, and there they preached the gospel.

If they had gone further east than Lystra and Derbe, they would have run into Cilicia [Tarsus+], where Paul had already evangelized; or into Commagene, which was an unpredictable region.

Unger. [Paul] and Barnabas did not extend their endeavors beyond this significant boundary [of Lystra and Derbe] into the kingdom of Commagene, under Antiochus, who, although a Roman vassal, was independent. Paul’s labors were confined to the centers of Graeco-Roman culture, and his strategy did not comprehend a dubious field where kings [protected cults and had independence from Rome]. Paul manifested careful planning and concentration of effort in his missionary work in Asia Minor and was guided by principles that pointed his endeavors toward an immediate as well as long-range realization of success.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Unger, Iconium, 111.

On Paul's second missionary journey, Philippi was a sure target for their work, because it was a large city with Roman colony status.

Acts 16:12. From there to Philippi, which is the chief city of that [region], and a [Roman] colony.

Even in Roman cities like Philippi, they suffered persecution. But after they were beaten, and jailed, and asked to leave Philippi, they skipped the smaller towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia, as they headed toward the next major city.

Acts 17:1. When they had passed through [skipping] Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica.

When they were persecuted in Thessalonica, they went to the next city.

Acts 17:5-10. The Jews which didn't believe ... set all the city in an uproar. ... And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea.

Paul, broke his pattern of moving from city to city, when he stayed in Corinth, the main city in southern Greece, for an extended period, because he received direct revelation to do so. In a vision, Jesus promised Paul safety, so he could reach the many people Jesus had there; some that already believed in God under the old covenant, and some who would newly believe through the gospel.

Acts 18:1, 9-11. Paul ... came to Corinth. ... Then the Lord spoke to Paul ... by a vision, ... "Be not afraid, but speak, and don't hold your peace. ... No man will set on you to hurt you, for I have much people in this city." And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

And Paul extended his stay in Corinth even longer than the year and six months mentioned above, because the Roman ruler provided additional safety from Jewish persecution, and thus additional opportunity, there.

Acts 18:12-18. When Gallio was the deputy of Achaia [Cor+], the Jews made insurrection with one accord

against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, “This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.” And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, ... “If it be a question of words and names, and of your law, you look to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.” And he drove them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things. And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while.

Ephesus was the major city of the western part of Asia Minor; so Ephesus became Paul’s next base of operations.

Acts 19:9-10. Paul ... came to Ephesus, ... disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia [Eph+] heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Luter. Ephesus had grown to become the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire. ... In-depth, heart-inflaming education can ignite widespread, life-transforming evangelism, with afar-reaching cultural impact. A huge and rapidly expanding number of profoundly changed lives in Ephesus and the surrounding province (19:26) brought about such a huge “disturbance” (19:23, NIV) to the societal status quo that an angry riot ensued (19:28–40).<sup>61</sup>

The “seven Congregations which are in Asia,” addressed in Revelation 2-3 (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamon, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea), all grew out of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus. Paul also wrote the epistles of Colossians and Philemon to recipients in the same area.

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<sup>61</sup> Luter, Education from Ephesus, 34, 43-44

## **Acts 13:50-52 (Antioch Galatia). 9) Flee Persecution**

The Word. Mt. 10:16. Whoever will not ... hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. ... Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be as wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. ... When they persecute you in this city, flee into another.

And Wisdom. Acts 13:50-51. The Jews [of Antioch Galatia] stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their borders. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came to Iconium.

When Paul was persecuted, he didn't try to make a stand; he fled. As in fighting sin, we are to stand against some things, like false doctrine, and flee other things, like sexual temptation.

Stand Against False Doctrine. Eph. 6:12-14. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities. ... Therefore, take to you the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand in the evil day. And having done all to stand, stand therefore!

Flee Sexual Temptation. 2 Tim. 2:22. Flee ... youthful lusts.

Gen. 39:11-12. Joseph went into the house to do his [necessary household overseer] business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And [his master's wife] caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" And he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

There was a general pattern Paul experienced in the cities he evangelized. 1) Preach to the Jews, 2) preach to the Gentiles, 3) flee persecution, 4) repeat.

Paul’s Oft-Repeated Pattern in Acts				
Region	City	Preach to the Jews	Preach to the Gentiles	Flee Persecution
Galatia	Antioch	13:14-43	13:44-49	13:50-51
	Iconium	14:1a	14:1b-4	14:5-6
	Lystra	no synag.	14:6-18	14:19-20
	Derbe	no synag.	14:21	no persec.
Macedonia	Philippi	16:12-15	16:16-18	16:19-40
	Thessalonica	17:1-4a	17:4b	17:5-10a
	Berea	17:10b-12a	17:12b	17:13-15
Achaia	Athens	17:15-17a	17:17b-34	no persec.
	Corinth	18:1-8a	18:8b-18	no persec.
Ephesus	Ephesus	18:19-19:8	19:9-22	19:23-20:1

Luke often skipped over the details of the persecutions Paul suffered. He said the Jews and others, “raised persecution, ... and expelled them” (Acts 13:50) in Antioch Galatia, and “when there was an assault made, ... they were aware of it, and fled” (Acts 14:5-6) in Iconium. But Timothy and the others from that area knew more than Luke chose to record.

2 Tim. 3:10-11. You have fully known my ... persecutions [and] afflictions, which came to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured.

One of the worst things Paul probably endured was when he was stoned and left for dead at Lystra. After what Paul suffered in Galatia during his first missionary journey, he wrote to the Galatians, “From now on let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks [scars, branding] of the Lord Jesus,” Gal. 6:17.

**Acts 14:13-21a (Lystra). 10) Preach!**

The Word. Mk. 16:15. [Jesus] said to them, “Go into all the world, and preach [κηρύσσω, kyrusso] the gospel [εὐαγγέλιον, evangelion] to every creature.”

1 Cor. 1:17. Messiah didn't send me to baptize, but to preach-the-gospel [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelize]; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Messiah should be made of no effect.

And Wisdom. Acts 14:6-7. They ... fled to Lystra and Derbe, ... and there they preached-the-gospel [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelized].

Jesus commanded the brethren to preach. It's a myth that we can just live a good life in front of unbelievers and they will be attracted to the gospel. Unless they hear or read the words of the gospel, they can't be saved.

Rom. 10:13-17. Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how will they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ... As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” ... Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The only exception to this, is that a believing wife isn't supposed to preach to her unbelieving husband.

1 Pet. 3:1-2. You wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, if any obey not the word, they may also without the word be won by the behavior of the wives, while they behold your chaste behavior coupled with fear.

‘Preaching’ and ‘teaching’ aren't the same thing, and we shouldn't use the words interchangeably. ‘Preaching’ means ‘to make an announcement,’ like we might make a wedding announcement, and is translated from Greek words like ‘κηρύσσω, kyrusso,’ and ‘εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo.’ ‘Teaching’ means what we think of by

teaching, and is translated from Greek words like ‘διδάσκω, didasko.’

For example, Jesus preached, or announced, that the kingdom was at hand; but he taught about the law in the synagogues (since that’s all you were allowed to teach in the synagogues).

Mt. 4:17, 23. From that time, Jesus began to preach [κηρύσσω, kyrusso, announce] and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” ... Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching [διδάσκω, didasko] in their synagogues, and preaching [κηρύσσω, kyrusso, announcing] the gospel [good news!] of the kingdom.

The KJV translators did well to base their New Testament translation on the Byzantine family of Greek manuscripts, instead of the corrupt Alexandrian family the new versions are based on. But their religious baggage made them sloppy in translating Greek words into ‘preach.’ They said Paul ‘preached’ all night in Troas, but you don’t make an announcement all night to believers; you teach them, or address them.

Acts 20:7-9. On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to [No, he διαλέγομαι, dialegomai, addressed] them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. ... And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, ... and as Paul was long preaching [No, διαλέγομαι, dialegomai, talking], he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

The topics of Paul’s preaching, i.e. announcing, are listed in the following table.

Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (1)	
<b>Messiah is the Son of God</b>	Acts 9:20. Straightway he preached [κηρύσσω, kyrusso] <u>Messiah</u> in the synagogues, that he <u>is the Son of God</u> .
<b>The Word of God</b>	Acts 13:5. At Salamis, they preached [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] <u>the word of God</u> in the synagogues of the Jews.
	Acts 15:35-36. Paul ... and Barnabas continued in Antioch [Syria], teaching and preaching [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo] <u>the word of the Lord</u> . ... Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] <u>the word of the Lord</u> ."
	Acts 17:13. <u>The word of God</u> was preached [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] of Paul at Berea.

Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (2)	
<b>Jesus and the Resurrection</b>	Acts 13:31-32. We declare-glad-tidings [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelize] to you, how that the promise ... made to the fathers, God has fulfilled ... in that he has <u>raised up Jesus</u> again.
	Acts 17:3. <u>Jesus</u> , whom I preach [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] to you.
	Acts 19:13. <u>Jesus</u> , whom Paul [κηρύσσω, kyrusso] preaches.
	Acts 17:18. Some said, ... "He seems to be a setter forth [καταγγελεύς, katangeleus, heralder] of strange gods," because he preached [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo] to them <u>Jesus and the resurrection</u> .
<b>Baptism of Repentance</b>	Acts 13:34. John had first preached before [προκηρύσσω, pro-kyrusso] ... <u>the baptism of repentance</u> to all the people of Israel.
<b>Forgiveness of Sins</b>	Acts 13:38. Through this man is preached [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] to you <u>the forgiveness of sins</u> .



Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (3)	
<b>The Gospel</b>	Acts 14:7. They ... fled to Lystra and Derbe, ... and there they <u>preached -the-gospel</u> [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelized].
	Acts 14:21. When they had <u>preached-the-gospel</u> [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelized] to [Derbe], and had discipled many, they returned again to Lystra, ... Iconium, and Antioch [Galatia].
	Acts 16:10. After ... the vision, ... we endeavored to go into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to <u>preach-the-gospel</u> [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo, evangelize] to them.
<b>Turn to God from Idols</b>	Acts 14:15. We ... preach [εὐαγγελίζω, evangelidzo] to you that you should <u>turn from these vanities</u> [of idols] <u>to the living God</u> .
<b>The Way of Salvation</b>	Acts 16:17. These men ... show [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] to us <u>the way of salvation</u> .

Topics of Paul's Preaching in Acts (4)	
<b>God</b>	Acts 17:23. I found an altar ... to "The Unknown <u>God</u> ." Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, I declare him [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] to you.
<b>The Kingdom of God</b>	Acts 20:25. You ... among whom I've gone preaching [κηρύσσω, kyrusso] <u>the kingdom of God</u> , shall see my face no more.
	Acts 28:31. Paul ... received all that came in to him, preaching [κηρύσσω, kyrusso] <u>the kingdom of God</u> , and teaching [διδάσκω, didasko] those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah.
<b>Light</b>	Acts 26:23. That Messiah would suffer, ... be the first that would rise from the dead, and would show [καταγγέλλω, katangelo] <u>light</u> to the people [Israel] and to the Gentiles.

Can you imagine Paul going into a city like Ephesus, and setting up a drug rehabilitation ministry? He didn't even have to pray about it. "Father, should I set up a drug rehabilitation ministry here?" He already knew from the

Word that had previously been revealed to him that he should focus on the gospel; and so should we.

These kinds of things aren't the mission of the Congregation. They should be done by individuals and groups of individuals of the Congregation as part of their personal ministries to be salt and light in the world as they live out the love of God in their families and in society. But the Congregation needs to preach the gospel and teach the brethren. Paul preached the gospel, his helpers baptized those who believed, and he taught them. There was no time for anything else. Go, preach, baptize, teach, repeat!

Grudem. How does the book of Acts tell us that the Church grew? In Acts 6:7, "the word of God increased." In Acts 12:24, "the word of God grew and multiplied." In Acts 13:49, "the word of the Lord spread throughout all the region." In Acts 19:20, "the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily."<sup>62</sup>

Should preaching to Gentiles be different than preaching to Jews? Peter's preaching to the Gentile Cornelius in Acts 10, seems to be the same as his preaching to the Jewish people in Acts 2 and 3.

Preaching to Jews. Acts 2:29-31. The patriarch David, ... being a prophet, ... spoke of the resurrection of Messiah, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

Preaching to Jews. Acts 3:18. Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Messiah should suffer, he has so fulfilled.

Preaching to Gentiles. Acts 10:43. To [Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whoever believes in him will receive remission of sins.

Stott. Although it was addressed to a Gentile audience, its content was substantially the same as what he had been preaching to Jews. Indeed Peter [called] it both the message God sent to the people of Israel and the

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<sup>62</sup> Grudem, The Bible Alone.

good news of peace (reconciliation ...) through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.”<sup>63</sup>

We have only two, long evangelistic sermons of Paul; one at Antioch Galatia (Acts 13:14-46) to Jews and synagogue-associated, God-fearing Gentiles; and one at Athens (Acts 17:22-31) to secular Gentiles. We also have a short evangelistic one at Lystra (Acts 14:15-17) to Gentiles, and several descriptions of his preaching to Jews and synagogue-associated Gentiles, like this one in Thessalonica.

Acts 17:1-4. They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews, and Paul, as his manner was, ... reasoned with them out of the scriptures ... [1] that Messiah needed to have suffered and risen again, ... and [2] that this Jesus, whom I preach to you, is Messiah.

We should probably preach to the Gentiles, the same way Paul preached to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in Antioch Galatia (Acts 13:17-41). As for Paul’s sermon in Athens to the Athenian philosophers, it’s probably an example of the way we shouldn’t preach to Gentiles. It seems to have resulted in few converts because of its heavy use of philosophy instead of Old Testament scriptures. Where is the epistle to the Congregation at Athens?

Paul did have some fruit in Athens.

Acts 17:34. Certain men clave to him, and believed; among which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Though Athens was the first place mentioned where Paul preached in Achaia [Cor+]; Stephanus, among the firstfruits of Achaia, wasn’t mentioned as one of those who “clave to him” (Acts 17:34) in Athens. He probably became a believer in Corinth, and was one of the first believers in the region, though not the very first, which again shows that not many believed in Athens.

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<sup>63</sup> Stott, Acts, Locations 3341-3344.

1 Cor. 16:15. You know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia [Cor+], and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.

Paul left Athens without waiting for Silas and Timothy to arrive, without establishing a Congregation, and without being forced to leave because of persecution. In a contrary view, N. T. Wright says the Areopagus was a court, not a philosopher's venue; and when Paul was brought to the Areopagus, it was persecution, because it was a trial. He says Luke was just trying to downplay Paul's trial by saying the Athenians spent all their time listening to philosophy.

Acts 17:18-21. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics, ... took [Paul], and brought him to Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine is whereof you speak?" For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear, some new thing.

But Wikipedia says the Areopagus was a court in Greek classical times, meaning before the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC.

Wikipedia. In classical times, [the Areopagus] functioned as the court for trying deliberate homicide, wounding, and religious matters, as well as cases involving arson or olive trees.

So I believe Luke and Wikipedia over Wright, as it were, that Paul was giving an oration, not a legal defense, at the Areopagus. But it's worth knowing Wright's theory anyway.

Wright. Athens itself had staged the trial of Socrates (399 BC). ... What was Socrates's crime? Corrupting the young and introducing foreign divinities. ... "All the Athenians," ... [Luke says] "spend their time simply and solely in telling and hearing the latest novelty." He is doing his best to play down the seriousness of the charge against Paul. ... You do not take someone to the highest court in the land unless there are serious

questions to be addressed, with the undertones of a potential capital charge. ... Aeschylus describes the foundation of the court of the Areopagus itself, at which the god Apollo presided - and declared ... as part of the logic of trials for murder, that when people die ... there is no resurrection. ... Once we set aside the notion that [Paul] was trying out some arguments in “natural theology” and realize that he was speaking in self-defense, but also using the opportunity to score several points of his own within a framework cleverly designed to offset the wrong sort of reaction, we see the whole man at work. ... Paul is not trying to begin with Athenian cultural symbols and build up a philosophical argument that will arrive at Christian truth. He is managing at one and the same time to rebut the charge of “proclaiming foreign divinities” and to sketch a worldview ... in which it might just make sense to say that the One God has unveiled his purpose for the world by raising Jesus from the dead. ... “You will discover not only that idols are a shabby and misleading representation of the true God, but also that this God doesn’t live in temples made by human hands.” So much, then, for the majestic Parthenon, there in plain sight across the valley. ... The Stoics ... are wrong: the true God is the creator of all, not the divine depth within everybody and everything. He is set apart from the world, but he is not (this time against the Epicureans) detached from the world. ... History ... is moving forward toward a goal very different from either the Stoic “conflagration” or the Epicurean idea of everything simply dissolving into its component atoms. The goal is now a day of ultimate, world-righting justice. ... “Is Paul going too far? Is he now going to tease the judges with the news that their oh-so-superior court is at best a secondary forum?” ... The final punch line [regarding the resurrection] explicitly contradicts what Apollo himself had said at the foundation of this very court. ... People have sometimes sneered at Paul for a failed bit of philosophical theology. Hardly anyone was converted. ... But that wasn’t the point. What mattered is that Paul ... was acquitted. ... Paul had convinced them that the heart of his message was something to which their own

traditions ... might all along have been pointing. ... They would welcome another chance to ponder it all. But Paul ... was not going to stay long in Athens. ... He may ... have realized that to get off with a speech quite different from what the court might have anticipated could only be a temporary expedient.<sup>64</sup>

Some of the lack of fruit in Athens might have been because “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise” (1 Cor. 1:27), and the smart philosophers of Athens were not a very fertile field. But some of the problem might have been what Paul fixed as soon as he arrived in Corinth. “I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Messiah, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2). It looks like Paul realized he violated his own principles in Athens, and was careful not to do it again.

Gromacki. Some have concluded from Paul's statements (in 1 Cor. 2:1-5) that Paul preached a philosophical gospel in Athens, and that when he came to Corinth, he decided to preach Christ and him crucified.<sup>65</sup>

Many say we can't conclude this was the case.

Stonehouse. Without specific evidence to support such a conclusion it is incredible that [Luke] should have [recorded] apostolic preaching, which was intended to demonstrate how the gospel was not to be preached, and it is particularly incomprehensible that the Areopagus address should be regarded in that light when one contemplates the pains which Luke takes to portray the exceptional historical situation in which Paul found himself and the impressiveness with which the address itself is reported. Luke gives every impression of presenting Paul as a masterful orator who knew exactly how to suit his message to a distinctive and challenging situation. That Paul can have been thought of as in reality a failure can be accepted only if the most decisive proofs can be

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<sup>64</sup> Wright, Paul, 196-207.

<sup>65</sup> Gromacki, Preaching In Acts, 36.

mustered in support of that hypothesis. When one measures the consequences of the preaching, one must admit that they may not appear impressive. There was the repetition of the ridicule which had been expressed earlier; others continued to show the curiosity that had led to his being taken before the Areopagus (verse 32; cf. verse 18), )and thus there is no change in the general situation.<sup>66</sup>

Hemer. There is an old suggestion, not much in vogue in current academic circles, that Paul blamed his excursion into philosophy for his lack of success in Athens, and then determined to 'know nothing' among the Corinthians 'save Jesus Christ and him crucified' (1 Corinthians 2:2).<sup>50</sup> ... )The response was indeed limited, and that is frankly reported. But the speaker's responsibility was to present his case, whatever the response, and this is a masterpiece of cross-cultural communication.<sup>67</sup>

Others agree that Luke included Paul's speech to the Athenians as an example of what not to do. With Paul's high level of education, stunning powers of logic, and birthplace in the intellectual city of Tarsus, it certainly would have been a temptation to Paul to be able to expound philosophy in such a prestigious forum as the Areopagus in Athens.

Ramsay. It would appear that Paul was disappointed and perhaps disillusioned by his experience in Athens. He felt that he had gone at least as far as was right in the way of presenting his doctrine in a form suited to the current philosophy; and the result had been little more than naught. When he went on from Athens to Corinth, he no longer spoke in the philosophic style. In replying afterwards to the unfavorable comparison between his preaching and the more philosophical style of Apollos, he told the Corinthians that, when he came among them, he "determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 1 12); )and nowhere throughout his writings is he so

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<sup>66</sup> Stonehouse, Areopagus Address.

<sup>67</sup> Hemer, Speeches Of Acts, 257-8.

hard on the wise, the philosophers, and the dialecticians, as when he defends the way in which he had presented Christianity at Corinth.<sup>68</sup>

Paul's Athens' sermon to highly educated Gentiles was similar to his words to the uneducated Gentiles in Lystra, but that interchange didn't go very well either.

Acts 14:15-19. We ... preach to you that you should turn from these vanities to the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who in times past allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he didn't leave himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. ... And there came there certain Jews from Antioch Galatia and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

Paul used logic heavily in all his teaching and writings, but logic about the word of God, not logic about philosophy. Logic alone can't do miracles; only the word of God can.

Liefeld lists the topics covered in Paul's speech on the Areopagus, and believes it includes a lot of important doctrines not often found in evangelistic sermons; and he is sure Paul mentioned the death of Messiah, even though it's not explicitly recorded, because Paul ended with a statement about the resurrection.

Liefeld. [The Athens address] includes a number of important relevant doctrines, more, in fact, than are usually brought together in an evangelistic sermon. ... (1) God's creation of the world, (2) God's transcendence, (3) God as the source of human life, (4) God's sovereignty over human history and geography, (5) God's immanence, (6) God's non-corporeality, (7) God's forbearance, (8) God's righteous demands, (9) God's justice, and (10) Christ's role as appointed judge. Paul speaks of the resurrection of Christ - which

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<sup>68</sup> Ramsay, Paul the Traveller, Locations 3436-3441.



presupposes his death - so it is inconceivable that Paul did not speak of “Christ crucified” (1Co 2:2).<sup>69</sup>

But that is exactly the problem. All the topics that are rarely included in evangelistic preaching are not essential to evangelistic preaching, and adding the gospel indirectly on the end, seems far less effective, than preaching more of the actual words of God, instead of using secular poetry to illustrate it.

Haenchen “sees the doctrine of the resurrection as ‘tagged on in a sudden transition in verse 31.’”<sup>70</sup> Dibelius characterizes the concluding words as “the only Christian sentences in the Areopagus speech.”<sup>71</sup> So, I wouldn’t use Paul’s speech at Athens as a model of appropriate ‘contextualization’ of the gospel to highly-educated Gentiles.

On the other hand, Gentiles, highly educated or not, can benefit from learning about God from the Old Testament scriptures - his revelation and workings, Messianic prophecies, moral teachings, and examples from its narratives - just as well as Jewish people can. So I would take Paul’s preaching to the Jews at Antioch Galatia as our model for preaching to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 13:15-44).

We saw in the subsection “Acts 1:15-23. Matthias,” that Luke was careful to list as many miracles for Paul as for Peter. Might he also have been careful to list one big mistake for Peter in appointing Matthias (Acts 1:15-28), and one big mistake for Paul in preaching philosophy in Athens (Acts 17:18-34)?

### **Acts 14:21c-22 (Galatia). 11) Defense Before Offense**

The Word. Jn. 17:12. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name. Those that you gave

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<sup>69</sup> Liefeld, Interpreting Acts, Locations 1097-1107.

<sup>70</sup> Bruce, Acts, 248.

<sup>71</sup> Bruce, Acts, 342.

me I have kept, and none of them is lost, except the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

And Wisdom. Acts 14:21-22. When they had preached the gospel [in Derbe], and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch Galatia, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them.

When Paul reached the furthest point of his first missionary journey, the area of Derbe, he and Barnabas retraced their steps to solidify their gains before returning to Antioch Syria. And every time Paul began a new missionary journey, he first stopped to strengthen the Congregations along the way in the areas he had already evangelized.

When Paul started his second missionary journey, the primary purpose was to protect the gains he and Barnabas had already made, though I'm sure Paul had also thought about possibly going further after accomplishing that objective.

Acts 15:36. Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."

So Paul started his second missionary journey defensively.

Acts 15:41-16:6. [Paul] went through Syria and Cilicia [Tarsus+], confirming the Congregations. Then he came to Derbe and Lystra [where he added Timothy to his group]. ... And as they went through the cities, they delivered the decrees for them to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so the Congregations were established in the faith, and increased in number daily. Now when they had gone throughout ... the region of Galatia, [then and only then did they finally continue on into new territory].

And when Paul went on his third missionary journey,

...

Acts 18:23, 19:1. After he had spent some time [at Antioch Syria], he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia ... in order, strengthening all the disciples. ... [Only after that,] Paul, having passed through the upper borders, came to Ephesus.

Merkle. Do we press on “full steam ahead” and put all our forces on the front lines in order to engage more and more unreached people groups? Or do we spend time and energy fortifying and strengthening the progress we have already made so that the enemy does not steal the fruit of our labor? ... As the apostle to the Gentiles, [Paul’s] ... desire was to press on into new territories expanding the kingdom of God - not only numerically, but also geographically. ... However, ... Paul did not simply move on and abandon his previous works. ... Paul’s great concern for the ongoing need of missionary involvement in the churches he previously planted [is] a model for the need for theological education in missions. Eckhard Schnabel rightly explains: ... “He repeatedly visited the churches that he had established in Galatia, [and Greece]; he stayed for several years in Corinth and in Ephesus; he took time to write letters, to train new workers whom he sent to the existing churches with various tasks. Paul’s main concern evidently was not to reach as many people as quickly as possible with the gospel. He spared no effort, time and energy in safeguarding the consolidation of his missionary successes.” Paul’s mission strategy of continuing to strengthen his churches will be shown by (1) his practice of revisiting churches, (2) his practice of writing letters to churches, and (3) his practice of sending co-workers to churches.<sup>72</sup>

Marketing wisdom says it’s more expensive to acquire new customers than to retain old ones. “Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, the other gold.” And, “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle” (Prov. 18:19).

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<sup>72</sup> Merkle, *Education in Missions*, 50-51.

In the game of Risk, the attacker rolls one less dice than the defender, when they have the same amount of men, to represent the advantages of defense, and the increased costs of offense. Paul knew he was multiplying his ministry many times over, by sustaining the existing Congregations, and keeping them reaching out to others, rather than going from area to area prematurely, and gradually losing everything he had achieved in each area.

At the end of his third missionary journey, when he came to Troas, God blessed him with an open door to preach. But Paul didn't count it as guidance, only opportunity. Instead of going through the open door at Troas, he went to Philippi seeking Titus. He preferred to lose an opportunity to preach the gospel, than to lose anyone who was already a believer, especially one he also had great personal affection for, and which expanded his own ministry.

2 Cor. 2:12-13. When I came to Troas to preach Messiah's gospel, and a door was opened to me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went from there into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [seeking him].

After Paul walked away from the open door in Troas, he went to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and spent an extended period in Corinth, to edify and strengthen the brethren through his teaching.

Acts 20:1-3. Paul ... departed to go into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came to Greece, and abode there three months.

### **Acts 14:23 (Galatia). 12) Plant Congregations**

The Word. Mt. 16:18. Upon this rock I will build my Congregation.

Acts 1:1. The former treatise I have made ... of all that Jesus began ... to do.

And Wisdom. Acts 14:23. They ... ordained them elders in every Congregation.

1 Ths. 1:1. Paul, Silas, and Timothy, to the Congregation of the Thessalonians.

Wherever Paul evangelized, he planted Congregations. And unless he had to flee because of persecution, he didn't leave until he ordained elders in the new Congregations. Only after ...

Acts 14:23, 26. They had ordained them elders in every Congregation, [then] ... they ... sailed to Antioch Syria, from where they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

How did they find spiritually mature men in newly evangelized places? Because there were many Jews, Jewish proselytes, and God-fearing, synagogue-associated Gentiles who had already been saved by trusting in God and his word under the Old Covenant, who believed the message of the gospel about Jesus Messiah as soon as they heard it without fail. For example, Timothy had probably been saved as a child, through the Old Testament teaching of his Jewish mother and grandmother, though he didn't hear the gospel until later.

2 Tim. 1:5. When I remember the unfeigned faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that [is] in you also.

2 Tim. 3:15. From a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise to salvation through faith which is in Messiah Jesus.

Congregations Planted by Paul			
Jour- ney	Region /City	Epistle To	Elders and Deacons
1	<u>Galatia</u> Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe	Galatians	They ... ordained ... elders in every Congregation. Acts 14:20-23. The Congregations of Galatia. Gal. 1:1-2.
2	<u>Greece</u> Philippi, Thess., Berea, Corinth	Phil. 1, 2 Thess. 1, 2 Cor.	With the [elders] and deacons. Phil. 1:1.
3	Ephesus	Ephesians Colossians Philemon 1, 2 Tim.	[Paul] sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Congregation. Acts 20:17. At Ephesus; ... an [elder] ... must be blameless; ... deacons ... grave. 1 Tim. 1:1; 3:1, 8.

**Acts 14:26-28 (To Antioch Syria). 13) Keep in Touch**

The Word. Mt. 15:4. Honor your father and mother.

And Wisdom. Acts 14:26. [They] sailed to Antioch Syria, from where they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

Every time before Paul started another missionary journey, he returned to the Congregation at Jerusalem, because he recognized the priority of the Jews in the Congregation; and to the Congregation at Antioch Syria, where his missionary journeys had started.

After the 1st missionary journey, and before beginning the 2nd one, ...

Acts 14:26-28. [They] sailed to Antioch Syria, from where they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they came, and had gathered the Congregation together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.

And after the 2nd missionary journey, and before beginning the 3rd one to Ephesus, ...

Acts 18:18-22. Paul ... took his leave of the brethren, and sailed [from Corinth] to Syria. ... And when he had landed [near Jerusalem], and gone up [i.e., to Jerusalem, which is always 'up'], and saluted the Congregation, he went down [i.e., away from Jerusalem] to Antioch Syria.

Finally, after the 3rd missionary journey, and before beginning the 4th one to Rome, ...

Acts 21:1-20. After we [left the Ephesian elders, we], ... sailed into Syria, ... for there the ship was to unlade her burden, ... and went up [always up] to Jerusalem. ... And the day following Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were present. And ... he declared particularly what things God had worked among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord.

Paul wasn't able to go from Jerusalem to visit the Congregation in Antioch Syria this time, because he was arrested and put in prison while he was at the temple in Jerusalem.





## ***Ch 8. Acts 15:1-35. The Jerusalem Council***



*8. Paul Rebuking Peter (1603). Guido Reni (1575-1642)*

The saint beside the ocean pray'd,  
The soldier in his chosen bower,  
Where all his eye survey'd  
Seem'd sacred in that hour.

To each unknown his brother's prayer,  
Yet brethren true in dearest love  
Were they - and now they share  
Fraternal joys above.

8. Peter and Cornelius. John Keble (1792–1866)

### **Acts 15:1. The Situation in Antioch Syria**

Up until Acts 10, the Congregation was entirely Jewish, including Hebraic Jews and Gentile proselytes (Acts 2), Hellenistic Jews (Acts 6), and Samaritans (Acts 8). The Jewish brethren continued whatever degree of Jewish dress, keeping Kosher, and keeping the Jewish feasts each observed before they believed on Yeshua. God sent Peter to preach to the synagogue-associated Gentiles, Cornelius, and his friends, in Acts 10; and then Peter had to defend himself for doing so.

Soon afterwards, many Hellenistic Jews and synagogue-associated Gentiles in Antioch Syria heard the gospel and believed, so the Congregation at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to check it out, and Barnabas brought Paul from Tarsus to help him there (Acts 11:19-26). During that time, it was prophesied by Agabus, that there would be a great famine, so the Congregation at Antioch Syria sent Barnabas and Paul to Jerusalem with an offering. Paul took Titus, a synagogue-associated Gentile, possibly from Antioch Syria, with him, so that he could confront the issue early and in private with the apostles, before he ever went on his mission to Galatia.

Gal. 2:1-9. Then, fourteen years [after my last visit to Jerusalem], I went up [ALWAYS 'UP,' even during our current age after Messiah's death and resurrection] again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation [Agabus' prophecy of Acts 11:28], and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles [in the areas of Tarsus and Antioch Syria], but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But ... Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, wasn't compelled to be circumcised, [in spite] of false brethren ... who came in secretly to spy out our liberty which we have in Messiah Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage; to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you [Gentiles in general, since he hadn't met the Galatians yet]. ... And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars,

perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision.

It was wise of Paul to talk with the leaders James, Peter, and John privately first, about his message to the Gentiles. If he had let the brethren in general know about it first, he may have been reprimanded by the leaders, which could have severely hindered the acceptance of him and his message.

Why did Peter and the other apostles agree to let Paul bear the mission to the Gentiles when they knew they were all mandated to “be witnesses to me ... to the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8)? Because although they all had a mission to the Gentiles, Paul especially had a mission to the Gentiles. The others eventually did go out into the diaspora. Peter wrote an epistle from the Jewish communities in Babylon, to the Jewish believers in Asia Minor.

1 Pet. 1:1; 5:12-13. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Messiah, to the [Jewish] strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia [Eph+], and Bithynia. ... The Congregation that is at Babylon ... salutes you.

And the apostle John eventually went to Ephesus, and wrote to “the seven Congregations which are in Asia [Eph+]” (Rev. 1:11), while in exile on “the island [of] Patmos” (Rev. 1:9) in the Aegean Sea.

Non-synagogue associated Gentiles first began believing during Paul’s 1st missionary journey to Galatia.

Acts 13:44. The next sabbath day almost the whole city [including the non-synagogue associated Gentiles, of Antioch Galatia] came together to hear the word of God.

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch Syria, after completing their 1st missionary journey, they reported that ...

Acts 14:27. God ... had opened the door of faith to the [non-synagogue associated] Gentiles.

After that, Peter visited the Congregation in Antioch Syria, and ate with the Gentile believers there, as he had eaten with Cornelius and his Gentile friends in Acts 10. But then some men came from Judea and taught that to stay Kosher, the Jewish brethren shouldn't eat with the Gentiles unless they become Jewish proselytes.

Acts 15:1. And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, "Unless you are circumcised [ceremonially], after the manner of Moses, you can't be saved.

Peter, Barnabas, and the other Jewish brethren then imitated the example of the teachers from Judaea, and ate at separate tables from the Gentile brethren. If this practice had been allowed to continue, it would have resulted in Gentile believers being pressured to become Jewish proselytes in order to be full members of the Congregation.

Gal. 2:11-13. When Peter came to Antioch Syria, I [Paul] withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. Because before certain [teachers] came from James [but not sent by James], he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews disassembled likewise with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their disassembling.

Waltke. Make your decision in light of Scripture. ... When ... men from Jerusalem arrived [in Antioch Syria], [Peter] stopped eating certain foods ... and separated himself from the Gentile Christians. ... Paul saw that Peter was following human reason and disobeying God's Word. He was putting on a show for the benefit of the observers.<sup>73</sup>

## **Paul's Rebuke of Peter**

1) You know we don't keep the Law to become justified.

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<sup>73</sup> Waltke, The Will of God, Locations 1270, 1294-97.

Gal. 2:15-16. We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Messiah, even we have believed in Jesus Messiah, that we might be justified by the faith of Messiah, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh will be justified.

2) But if we're supposed to try keep the Law, even as obedience to a 'rule of life' after justification, then failure to try to keep the law would show we'd never been justified; just as if we were to continue in unrighteousness like murder or adultery after we were justified, would show we'd never actually been justified.

1 Cor. 6:9-10. Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God.

But the New Testament never says anything like ...

Never Said in the New Testament: Don't you know that lawbreakers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be deceived. Neither uncircumcised, nor sabbath breakers, nor non-Kosher keepers, nor non-tzitzit wearers, nor any other non-Torah observant people will inherit the kingdom of God.

At the moment a person's justified, he's put into Messiah by receiving the indwelling Spirit. He's now Messiah's creation; Messiah is accountable for the result.

Gal. 6:15. For in Messiah Jesus neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Therefore, ...

Gal. 2:17. If while we seek to be justified by Messiah, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Messiah the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build

again the things which I destroyed [the Law], I make myself a transgressor.

So the controversy was a also salvation issue; and not merely a 'rule of life' issue.

Acts 15:1. Unless you are circumcised [and keep the law, Acts 15:24], ... you can't be saved.

3) We're not under the law, any more than a dead and resurrected man is under the law.

Gal. 2:19-20. I through the law [by being condemned in Messiah on the cross] am dead to the law, so that I can live to God. I am crucified with Messiah, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

When Messiah came to earth and lived among the apostles, he wore tzitzit; though our artists never portray him that way.

Num. 15:37-40. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their [outer] garments throughout their generations, and that they put on the fringe of the borders a ribbon of blue. And it shall be to you for a fringe, so that you may look on it [so it wasn't supposed to be hidden on underwear], and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them.

But after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, glorified, he no longer wore tzitzit.

Rev. 1:12-13, 16. I saw ... one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle, ... and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength.

You can't say some of the Law, like tzitzit (Num. 15:37-40), has been done away with; and some of the Law, like "don't murder" (Ex. 20:13) is still in effect. Either the

whole Law has been done away with, or the whole law is still in effect.

Jas. 2:10-11. Whoever will keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, “Do not commit adultery,” said also, “Do not kill.” Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you have become a transgressor of the law.

Gal. 5:3. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised [to become a Jewish proselyte], that he is [claiming to be] a debtor to do the whole law.

The Law contains many things that are inherently moral or immoral for all times and all people, like “Don’t murder,” (Ex. 20:13). But it also contains many things that are amoral, meaning not inherently right or wrong for all times and all people, but only right or wrong during the specific times and for the specific people God commands them, like tzitzit and circumcision.

1 Cor. 7:19. Circumcision is nothing [inherently moral for all people and all times], and uncircumcision is nothing [inherently immoral for all people and all times], but [it only matters if you need to be circumcised for] the keeping of the commandments of God [to specific people at specific times, because obeying God is always moral and disobeying God is always immoral].

We who are in Messiah aren’t under the Law. “You are not under the law, but under grace,” Rom. 6:14. So now we honor our parents because it’s morally righteous and loving to do so, not because the law says to do so. The Law of Moses contains many things in common with “the Law to Messiah” (1 Cor. 9:21), since they are both built on righteousness, which is called “the righteousness of the law” (Rom. 2:26).

Many years ago, it was legal to make a right turn on red in California, but not in Pennsylvania. When a person came to a red light in Pennsylvania, he had to stop because of Pennsylvania law, not because of California law. When he came to a red light in California, he had to stop because

of California law, not Pennsylvania law. And he was also allowed to turn right on red after that stop when he was in California, because he wasn't then under Pennsylvania law. It's not that when he went to California, the Pennsylvania requirement to stop at red lights stayed in effect for him, and the Pennsylvania prohibition against turning right on red passed away. It's that now he was under California traffic laws, which had most things the same as Pennsylvania traffic laws, but also some things different.

Likewise, we honor our parents now because it's righteous to do so, not because we're under the Law, which also says to do so. But we don't wear tzitzit, because that's not part of inherent righteousness for all people and all times, but was only for people under the Law during the time of the Law.

It's not that the Law's requirement to honor our parents stayed in effect, while the Law's requirement to wear tzitzit passed away. The whole Law passed away. But honoring parents is not only part of the Law which passed away, but also right for all people and all times.

Heb. 8:13. In that he [God, through Jeremiah 31:31] said, 'A new covenant,' he made the first [covenant; the Law] old. Now that which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away [at the 70 AD destruction of the temple and the diaspora of the Jewish people].

The Law is eternal in the sense that all scripture and all words of God are eternal, and in the same sense that the scripture that contains God's command to Adam to be a vegetarian is eternal. But the Law is not binding on the Congregation any more than the portion of scripture that commanded Adam to be a vegetarian is binding on the Congregation.

Gen. 1:30. I have given every green herb for food.

Mt. 5:18. Truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle will in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled.



Teachers of the Law also went to the Congregations Paul and Barnabas had just established in Galatia, and convinced some of the Gentile believers there to become Jewish proselytes. That's why Paul wrote Galatians.

Gal. 1:6-7; 4:21, 30-31; 5:11, 13. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him [meaning from Paul himself] that called you into the grace of Messiah, to another gospel. ... Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? ... "Cast out the bondwoman and her son [Gen. 21:10]." ... We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. ... And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then the offence of the cross [to law keepers] would be ceased. [If you teach people they have to do good works to be saved, you're teaching the same thing the world teaches.] ... For, brethren, you have been called to liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

### **Acts 15:1. Epistle of Galatians**

Written at Acts 15:1 from Antioch Syria.

Acts 15:1. And there they remained a long time with the disciples [at Antioch Syria]. And certain men which came down [always 'down' from Jerusalem, in contrast to Reformed Theology which sees no difference] from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, "Unless you're circumcised after the manner of Moses, you can't be saved."

Written soon after Acts 14:27 when Paul reported to the Congregation at Antioch Syria how the Gentiles in Galatia had believed the gospel.

Acts 14:25-27. They ... [returned] to Antioch [Syria], from where they had been recommended ... for the work which they fulfilled, and ... rehearsed ... how [God] had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Gal. 1:6. I marvel that you are so soon removed from him [Paul] that called you into the grace of Messiah to another gospel.

Written before Acts 15:19 when the Jerusalem council decided Gentiles didn't have to become Jewish proselytes, and denied sending teaching out such in Acts 15:24, or Paul would have mentioned the council's decision in his letter to the Galatians, and Peter and Barnabas wouldn't have dissembled after this verdict.

Acts 15:19, 24. My sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles have turned to God. ... We have heard, that certain [men] which went [not, 'were sent'] out from us have troubled you, ... saying, "You must be circumcised, and keep the law," to whom we gave no such commandment.

Gal. 2:11-13. When Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face. ... For before certain [men] came [not, 'were sent'] from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he ... separated himself. ... And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, insomuch as Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

Written before Acts 16:4 when Paul and Silas delivered the Jerusalem council's letter to the Congregations of Galatia. The Galatians wouldn't have been persuaded by the circumcision teachers if they had already received the council's letter. Also, Galatians mentions Barnabas three times, who was on the first mission trip to Galatia, but never mentions Silas, who was on the second mission trip.

Acts 16:4-5. Then [Paul] came to Derbe, Lystra, ... and Iconium. ... As [Paul and Silas] went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so the Congregations were established in the faith.

### **Acts 15:2-20. The Jerusalem Council**

Although Peter accepted Paul's correction in Antioch Syria, the Torah teachers from Judea didn't, so the Congregation sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders there.

Acts 15:2. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question.

At the Jerusalem council, the apostles and elders agreed that Gentiles had no need to become Jewish proselytes. Paul and the other apostles were always in agreement, though other brethren within the Congregation were not.

Acts 15:4-20. When [Paul and Barnabas] came to Jerusalem, ... they declared all things that God had done with them [in Galatia among the Gentiles]. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was required to circumcise [the Gentile believers], and to command them to keep the law of Moses. ... And when there had been much disputing, Peter [who had recently been corrected by Paul on this issue], rose up, and said, ... “You know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. ... Now therefore why do you tempt God, to put a yoke on the neck of the [Gentile] disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” ... And ... James answered, ... “My sentence is, that we trouble them not, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God, but that we write to them, that they abstain from pollutions of [like eating meat that had been sacrificed to] idols, from fornication [more a Gentile than a Jewish problem], from things strangled [because they contain blood], and from [eating] blood [because of the Noahide, pre-Mosaic prohibition of Gen. 9:4].

We might suppose that would be the end of the issue, but Paul had to warn the Colossians later while he was in prison at Caesarea, ...

Col. 2:13-17. You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he has [resurrected] together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances [the Law]

that was against us, ... and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. ... Let no man therefore judge you in meat [offering], or in drink [offering], or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which [were and] are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Messiah.

Heb. 8:4-5. Priests ... offer gifts according to the law, ... [as a] shadow of heavenly things. ... For the law [is] a shadow of good things [that were and are] to come, and not the very image of the things.

Now if death and resurrection in Messiah freed the Gentiles from the requirement of becoming Jewish proselytes, then it also, the same way, freed our Jewish brethren from being under the law. Of course both Jewish and Gentile believers are free to observe the law if they want. Paul probably continued to dress in tzitzit, or he wouldn't have been invited to speak in the synagogue at Antioch Galatia.

Acts 13:14-16. After the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "You men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

Paul was observant of the Law when he ministered to Jewish people.

1 Cor. 9:20. To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law [the Gentiles], as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Messiah, that I might gain them that are without law, ... that I might by all means save some. And I do this for the gospel's sake.

Although Paul absolutely refused to allow the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem to pressure Titus to become a Jewish proselyte, he had Timothy circumcised, so that Timothy would be able to minister in the Jewish synagogues with him and Silas. Timothy was and remained a Gentile, because his father was Greek, and

biblical ethnicity is determined by the father's line. But Gentiles are free to be circumcised for ministry purposes so long as they know they're not obligated to be, and there's no personal advantage to them, by being circumcised. But Timothy's mother was ethnically Jewish, so the Jewish communities accepted him within the community of Israel as a Jew rather than as a Gentile proselyte.

Although Acts 15 settled the question of Torah observance for Gentiles, it didn't deal directly with the issue of Torah observance for Jewish brethren. Even on Paul's last recorded visit to Jerusalem in Acts 21, the Congregation in Jerusalem wasn't clear about how observant of the Law and customs the Jewish brethren should be. But I'll save that discussion for the section on Acts 21.

Acts 21:17-26. Paul went in with us to James; and all the elders were present. ... And [they] said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law; and they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. ... We have four men which have a vow on them. Take them, and purify yourself with them, ... that ... all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning you, are nothing; but that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, except only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication."



***Ch 9. Acts 15:36-18:18. Gentiles in Corinth***



*9. Paul at Athens (1515). Raphael (1483-1520)*

Why rather speak and write not of the realm  
He rules in heaven, and soon will bring below  
Unto the praise and glory of His name.  
Ah, foolish crowd! This world's thick vapours  
whelm  
Your eyes, unworthy of that glorious show,  
Blind to His splendour, bent upon His shame.

9. Resurrection. Tomm. Campanella (1568–  
1639). Tr. Symonds



*Mission: Corinth. Epistles: 2) 1 Thess. 3) 2 Thess.*

These three chapters recount Paul's second missionary journey. Paul went with Silas instead of Barnabas because of a disagreement over Mark. Paul began the journey with the stated intention of revisiting the Congregations they established in Galatia on the first missionary journey; but after revisiting those Congregations, he kept going on further west towards the next contiguous major city of Ephesus. But Jesus intervened and sent him to Greece instead; Philippi and Thessalonica in the north, and Corinth in the south.

### **Acts 16:12-15 (Philippi). 14) Baptize!**

The Word. Mt. 28:19. Having gone therefore, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

And Wisdom. Acts 8:36-38. They came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me to be baptized?" And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered, ... "I believe that Jesus Messiah is the Son of God." And ...



they both went down into the water, ... and he baptized him.

Acts 16:30-34. [The Philippian jailer] brought them out, and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Messiah, and you will be saved.” ... And they spoke to him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

Freeman. Baptism must be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, ... [yet] nowhere in Acts is anyone baptized with these words. Acts records the use of the name “Jesus Christ” (Ac 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; cf. Ro 6:3; Gal 3:27) and “the Lord Jesus” (Ac 8:16; 19:5). ... There is no reason to believe that the phrase was ever intended as a formula in the sense that every word had to be repeated exactly as it is stated here. ... If ... Jesus did believe himself to be uniquely and eternally related to the Father and to the Spirit, ... then there is a solid basis for what became the doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>74</sup>

There is no mention in the Bible of believers ever waiting until after a period of teaching before being baptized, like most Congregations force on new believers today.

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<sup>74</sup> Freeman, Great Commission, 18-19.

City/Acts	No Waiting Period Before Baptism (1)
<b>Jerusalem 2:38, 41</b>	Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the remission of sins." ... Then they that gladly <u>received his word were baptized</u> ; and <u>the same day</u> there were added to them about three thousand souls.
<b>Samaria 8:12</b>	<u>When they believed</u> Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Messiah, <u>they were baptized</u> , both men and women.
<b>Gaza 8:36-38</b>	"Here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip said, " <u>If you believe with all your heart, you may.</u> " And he ... said, "I believe that Jesus Messiah is the Son of God." And ... they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; <u>and he baptized him.</u>
<b>Damascus 9:18</b>	Immediately, there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and <u>he received sight</u> , and arose, <u>and was baptized.</u>

City/Acts	No Waiting Period Before Baptism (2)
<b>Caesarea 10:44-48</b>	The Holy Spirit fell on all them which <u>heard the word.</u> ... Peter answered, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have <u>received the Holy Spirit</u> as well as we?" <u>And he commanded them to be baptized</u> in the name of the Lord.
<b>Philippi 16:13-15, 32-34</b>	On the sabbath we went out ... where prayer was often made, ... and spoke to the women which resorted there. And a certain woman named Lydia ... <u>attended to the things which were spoken</u> of Paul. <u>And ... she was baptized</u> , and her household. ... They spoke to [the Philippian jailer] <u>the word of the Lord</u> , and to all that were in his house. And he took them <u>the same hour of the night</u> , and washed their stripes, <u>and was baptized</u> , he and all his, <u>immediately</u> , ... believing in God with all his house.
<b>Corinth 18:8</b>	Many of the Corinthians <u>hearing, believed, and were baptized.</u>

Cty/Acts	No Mention of Baptism
<b>Cyprus</b> <b>13:12</b>	Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, <u>believed</u> .
<b>Antioch Galatia</b> <b>13:43, 48</b>	The Gentiles ... were glad, ... and ... <u>believed</u> .
<b>Iconium</b> <b>14:1</b>	A great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks <u>believed</u> .
<b>Lystra, Derbe</b> <b>14:21-22</b>	When they had <u>preached the gospel</u> to [Derbe], and had taught many, they returned, ... confirming the souls of the <u>disciples</u> .
<b>Thessalonica</b> <b>17:1-5</b>	Some of them <u>believed</u> , ... and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.
<b>Berea</b> <b>17:12-13</b>	Many of them <u>believed</u> , also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.
<b>Athens</b> <b>17:34</b>	Certain men clave to him, and <u>believed</u> .
<b>Ephesus</b> <b>19:8-19</b>	All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. ... Many ... <u>believed</u> .

### **Acts 16:15 (Philippi). 15) Meet With the Brethren**

The Word. Jn. 13:35. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.

And Wisdom. Acts 16:15. And when [Lydia] was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house, and abide there.” And she constrained us.

Paul thought of himself, first and foremost, as a brother, and a servant of Jesus Messiah, like all believers, before he considered himself an apostle of Jesus Messiah.

Rom. 1:1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Messiah, called to be an apostle.

Paul often met with new brethren to lay hands on them so they would receive spiritual gifts; and to teach them, so

they would be edified. But it was equally important to Paul, to meet with believers so he himself would be refreshed, comforted, and strengthened.

Rom. 1:9-12. I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Rom. 15:29-32. I am sure that, when I come to you, I will come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Messiah. ... I [hope to] come to you with joy by the will of God, and ... with you be refreshed.

2 Cor. 2:1-2. I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness. For if I make you sorry, who is he then that makes me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

When Paul travelled through a city or town that had believers, he didn't take the opportunity to visit the tourist attractions, or check out the best restaurants, or take in a show. He met with the brethren, and lodged with them when possible, as we see on his last journey to Jerusalem, before his imprisonment and transfer to Rome.

Acts 21:3-18. We ... sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre, for the ship was to unload her cargo there. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days. ... And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way, and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again. And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and greeted the brethren, and abode with them one day. And the next day, we that were of Paul's company departed, and came to Caesarea. And we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the [original] seven [deacons]; and stayed with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. ... And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up [always 'up'] to Jerusalem.

Ch. 9. Acts 15:36-18:18. Gentiles in Corinth

There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we would lodge. And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

HOSTS AND HOSTESSES OF PAUL		
City	Host/Hostess	References
Philippi	Lydia	Acts 16:15
Thessalonica	Jason	Acts 17:7
Corinth, 1st Visit	Prisca & Aquilla	Acts 18:3
Corinth, 3rd Visit	Gaius	Acts 20:2-3; Rom. 16:23
Caesarea	Philip	Acts 21:8
Jerusalem	Mnason	Acts 21:16

POSSIBLE HOSTS AND HOSTESSES OF PAUL		
City	Host/Hostess	References
Jerusalem	Mary, Mark’s Mother	Acts 12:12; 11:30; 12:25
Derbe	Eunice, Timothy’s Mother	Acts 16:12; 2 Tim. 1:5
Ephesus	Prisca & Aquilla	Acts 19:8 ,10; 18:18-19
Ephesus?	Rufus’ Mother	Acts 19:8 ,10; Rom. 16:13

**Acts 16:16-24. Forbidden Forms of Seeking Guidance**

The Word. Jer. 23:16 KJV. They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. Jer. 23:16 NET. They are reporting visions of their own imaginations, not something the Lord has given them to say.

And Wisdom. Acts 16:16-18. A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying, ... [and she] followed Paul ... saying, “These men are the servants of the most high God!” ... But Paul ... said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Messiah to come out of her.” And he came out.

The demon-possessed girl that followed Paul around in Philippi, announcing they were servants of the most

high God, was theologically correct, but was distracting people from the message, like so-called miracles do today. And it was bad press, coming as it was from a demon. Paul cast the spirit out, and her masters lost the financial benefit of her fortune telling, and had Paul and Silas arrested, beaten, and imprisoned.

The Greek says the girl had a spirit of “Πύθωνα [pythona, Python]” which the KJV translated as “divination” (Acts 16:16). In Greek mythology, Python was the serpent, or dragon, that guarded the oracle at Delphi. The high priestess there was called the Pythia, and people came to her for direct revelation from Apollo specific to their circumstances for their decision making.

Wikipedia. The Pythia was ... widely credited for her prophecies inspired by being ‘filled by the spirit of the god’ (or enthusiasmos) [from ‘ἐν (en, in) θεός (theos, God) and οὐσία (ousia, substance)].<sup>75</sup> ‘Enthusiasm’ ... was originally used to refer to a person possessed by a god.<sup>76</sup>

Benjamin Doolittle, published a pamphlet in 1743, entitled “An Enquiry Into Enthusiasm,” in which he claimed humans have a natural desire for imagined direct revelation.

Doolittle. Jer. xxiii. 21, 26. I have not sent these Prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. ... If any come to Men under Pretence of large Communications from the divine BEING, and pretend to make them Sharers in it, this suddenly takes with them, and like Wild-Fire diffuses itself every where. ... There must then be something in-laid in the present Frame and Constitution of humane Nature, that like Tinder, must be ready to catch every Spark of this Fire. ...

And this I apprehend has generally gone under the Name of ENTHUSIASM. ... It is therefore a powerful Impression or Impulse made upon the Imagination, of having some great and wonderful Communications

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<sup>75</sup> Wikipedia, Pythia.

<sup>76</sup> Wikipedia, Enthusiasm.

from God, so as to be made in a very high Degree Partaker of that which is heavenly and divine; and therefore this exalts them in their own Thoughts, as being highly favoured of God, ... and makes them full of Life and Fire. ... And this makes them evermore despise REASON as an evil and dangerous Guide in Matters of Religion, and substitute seeing and feeling in the Room of it, they see such heavenly and divine Things clearly, and feel them strong in their Souls, and therefore despise all Reason and Argument as a mean, dull and beggarly Thing. ... They have a quick and sudden Way of coming at heavenly and divine Things; and this fills them with the highest Extacies of Joy and Comfort. ... God condescends now to reason with [man]. Isa. 1.18. ... But ENTHUSIASM instead of assisting, and strengthening this noble Power, labours to put it wholly out.<sup>77</sup>

As Doolittle said, the desire for direct, specific revelation from God for decision-making is one of 'humane nature' generally.

Waltke. Pagans devised all sorts of special tasks to help them determine the mind of God. ... The most popular was hepatoscopy, the study of the liver. ... One of the greatest kings of Assyria, Ashurbanipal, spent much of his life studying livers in order to divine the will of his god. ... Another method of looking for a sign was that of rhabdomancy, the use of arrows as a sign from the Lord. An example of this occurs in Ezekiel 21:21: "For the king of Babylon will stop at the fork in the road ... to seek an omen. He will cast lots with arrows, he will consult his idols, he will examine the liver." There were various ways to use arrows in determining the will of God. They could be cast, or tossed, to see which way they pointed, ... an ancient equivalent of spinning a lottery wheel. ... There are no examples [in the church] of explicitly seeking or finding God's will after Acts 1:24-26, in which the disciples drew lots to select Matthias as a replacement for Judas.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Doolittle, Enthusiasm, 1, 7-8, 18-19, 21.

<sup>78</sup> Waltke, The Will of God, Locations 252-270.

Robinson. Leo Oppenheimer, in the department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago, estimates that about ninety percent of the ancient cuneiform writings from Sumer, Assyria, and Babylon have to do with divination - the attempt to understand the mind of the gods when making important choices (Ancient Mesopotamia, University of Chicago, 1964).<sup>79</sup>

Divination is one form of forbidden will-seeking.

Wikipedia. Divination (from Latin *divinare* “to foresee, to be inspired by a god”, related to *divinus*, divine) is the attempt to gain insight into a question or situation by way of an occultic, standardized process or ritual. Used in various forms throughout history, diviners ascertain their interpretations of how a querent should proceed by reading signs, events, or omens, or through alleged contact with a supernatural agency. Divination can be seen as a systematic method with which to organize what appear to be disjointed, random facets of existence such that they provide insight into a problem at hand.<sup>80</sup>

God explicitly forbids using divination to seek revelation about his will for decision making purposes.

Deut. 18:9-15. When you come into the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that ... uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you. You shall be perfect with the Lord your God. For these nations, which you will possess, listened to observers of times, and to diviners. But as for you, the Lord your God has not permitted you to do so.

Below is a table of various translations of the forbidden practices of Deuteronomy 18:10-11, several of which have

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<sup>79</sup> Robinson, Decision Making, Locations 115-118.

<sup>80</sup> Wikipedia, Divination.



to do with trying to obtain revelation about the future and God's will for the purpose of decision-making.

<b>FORBIDDEN PRACTICES PER DEUT. 18:10</b> in Various Bible Translations				
<b>ASV</b>	divination	augury	enchanter	sorcerer
<b>ERV</b>	don't try to learn what will happen in the future	fortune teller	magician	witch or sorcerer
<b>GNV</b>	witchcraft	regarder of times	marker of the flying of fowls	sorcerer
<b>KJV</b>	divination	observer of times	enchanter	witch
<b>NIV</b>	divination	sorcery	interprets omens	witchcraft
<b>OJB</b>	diviner of divination	soothsayer, astrologer	interprets omens	witch
<b>WYC</b>	asks questions of diviners	takes heed to dreams	chittering of birds	witch

FORBIDDEN PRACTICES PER DEUT. 18:11 in Various Bible Translations				
DBY	charmer	inquires of a spirit of Python	sooth-sayer	consults the dead
KJV	charmer	consulter with familiar spirits	wizard	necromancer
MSG	casting spells	holding séances or channeling with the dead		
NIV	casts spells	medium	spiritist	calls up the dead
NLV	uses secret power	helps people talk to spirits	talks to spirits	talks with the dead
NLT	cast spells	mediums	psychics	call forth spirits of the dead
NRS	casts spells	consults ghosts	consults spirits	seek oracles from the dead
WYC	enchanter/ tregetour [magician, trickster]	take counsel of them that have a fiend speaking within them	false diviners	seek of dead men the truth

**Acts 17:1-34. Thessalonica to Corinth**

Paul, Silas, and Timothy left Luke in Philippi and went on to Thessalonica [CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY]. While they were in Thessalonica, the Philippians sent financial support to them.

Phil. 4:15-16. Now you Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [to Achaia including Athens and Corinth], no Congregation shared with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only. For even in Thessalonica [the next Macedonian city after Philippi] you sent once and again to my need.

They didn’t stay long in Thessalonica before they left there because of persecution [FLEE PERSECUTION] and went on to Berea.

Acts 17:5-10. The Jews which didn’t believe, moved with envy, ... set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted

the house of Jason, and sought to bring [Paul and Silas] out to the people. And when they didn't find them, they drew Jason and certain brethren to the rulers of the city, crying, "These that have turned the world upside down are come here also, whom Jason has received." ... And when they had taken [a] security [deposit from these financially poor brethren as a guarantee Paul wouldn't preach there] of Jason, and of the other [brethren], they let them go. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas [and possibly Timothy also, or he went later] by night to Berea. [Luke had remained back in Philippi.]

When persecution also arose in Berea, Silas and Timothy stayed there to support the brethren [DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE], while some Bereans escorted Paul by ship to Athens.

Acts 17:13-15. When the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea, but Silas and Timothy abode there still. And they that conducted Paul brought him to Athens, and receiving a commandment to Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.

After Silas and Timothy came to Paul at Athens, he worried about the Thessalonians, but couldn't go to them without risking the loss of the huge security deposit the rulers had taken from the brethren to ensure Paul stayed away.

1 Ths. 2:14-18. You, brethren, became followers of the Congregations of God which are in Judaea in Messiah Jesus, for you also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, ... forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles so that they can be saved. ... Wherefore, we would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again [while I was at Athens], but Satan hindered us [by the security deposit taken from the brethren there].

So Paul and Silas sent Timothy back to Thessalonica [DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE]. God didn't give Paul any divine revelation that the Thessalonians were doing well, so he needn't worry; nor any divine revelation that they were doing poorly, so they needed Timothy's help.

1 Ths. 3:1-11. When we could no longer forbear [not "when God directed"], we [Paul and Silas] thought it good [not "were led to"] to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Messiah, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions, for yourselves know that we are appointed thereto. For truly, when we were with you, we told you before that we would suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass, as you know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent [Timothy] to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain.

Timothy visited the Thessalonians, and returned with a good report.

1 Ths. 3:1-11. But now when Timothy came from you to us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that you have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you, therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith. For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. ... Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.

But Timothy also reported the Thessalonians had some questions, including about the second coming of Messiah, so Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians.

1 Ths. 4:15-17. This we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain to the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ... The dead in Messiah shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.

Paul sent both Silas and Timothy back to Thessalonica with 1 Thessalonians, while he went on to Corinth alone. Eventually, Silas and Timothy returned from Thessalonica and met up with him in Corinth.

Acts 18:1, 5. After these things Paul [alone] departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. ... And when Silas and Timothy came [to Corinth] from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

This is the last mention of Silas in the book of Acts, and the last mention of Timothy until we see him in Ephesus with Paul. I think Luke wants us to assume they both stayed with Paul until he returned to Jerusalem, and then Timothy went on with Paul to Ephesus. But Silas eventually ended up with Peter in Babylon, and delivered Peter's epistle to the same areas Silas had already travelled with Paul.

1 Pet. 1:1; 5:12-13. Peter, ... to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia [Eph+], and Bithynia, ... by Silas, a faithful brother to you. ... The Congregation that is at Babylon ... salutes you, and so does Mark, my son.

I think the most likely chronology of Paul's writing of 1 and 2 Thessalonians, is as follows with Paul writing 1 Thessalonians from Athens, and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth. An alternative in which Paul writes both epistles from Athens is also presented, but Paul may not have stayed in Athens long enough for this scenario.

1 & 2 THESSALONIANS FROM ATHENS AND CORINTH				
1 Thessalonians from Athens				
1	Acts 17:14-15	Paul went from Berea to Athens.		
2	Acts 17:15	Silas and Timothy went from Berea to to Paul in Athens.		
3	1 Ths. 3:1-2	Paul and Silas sent Timothy from Athens back to Thess. to check on them.		
4	1 Ths. 3:6	Timothy returned from Thess. to Paul and Silas in Athens with a good report.		
5		Silas and Timothy (or just Timothy) went from Athens to Thess. with 1 Thess.		
		2 Thess. from Corinth		2 Thess. from Athens
6	Acts 18:1	Paul went on alone from Athens to Corinth.		Silas and Timothy (or just Timothy) returned from Thess. to Athens.
7	Acts 18:5	Silas and Timothy returned from Thess. to Paul in Corinth.		Paul sent Silas and Timothy from Athens to Thess. with 2 Thess.
8		Paul sent Silas and Timothy from Corinth to Thess. with 2 Thess.	Acts 18:1	Paul went on alone from Athens to Corinth.
9	2 Cor. 1:19	Silas and Timothy returned from Thess. to Paul in Corinth.	Acts 18:5 2 Cor. 1:19	Silas and Timothy returned from Thess. to Paul in Corinth.

The most popular alternative has Paul sending Silas to Philippi when he sent Timothy to Thessalonica to check on them, but this contradicts 1 Ths. 3:1-2.

1Ths. 3:2. We [Paul and Silas] thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy.

The reason this view has Silas going to Philippi is so both Silas and Timothy can rejoin Paul in Corinth, so he can write both 1 and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth.

Acts 18:1, 5. Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth. ... When Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia [Phi/Thess+] ...

But this would also require Silas to return from Philippi before Timothy returned from Thessalonica.

1 Ths. 3:6. When Timothy came from you [Thessalonians] to us [Paul and Silas], and brought us good tidings ...

So 1 Thessalonians was definitely written from Athens, and 2 Thessalonians was likely written from Corinth.

### **Acts 17:17. Epistle of 1 Thessalonians**

Written at Acts 17:17 from Athens.

Acts 17:16-18. While Paul waited for [Silas and Timothy] at Athens, ... he disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him.

Written before Acts 18:1 when Paul went alone from Athens to Corinth. After Silas and Timothy came from Berea to Paul in Athens, Paul and Silas sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to check on the Thessalonians, and Timothy returned to Paul and Silas in Athens with questions from them. So Paul sent Silas and Timothy to Thessalonica with 1 Thessalonians, and then went alone to Corinth.

1 Ths. 3:1-2, 6. When we [Paul and Silas] could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timothy, ... to establish you. ... But now, ... Timothy came from you to us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and love.

1 Ths. 1:1. Paul, Silas, and Timothy [all together at Athens] to the Congregation of the Thessalonians.

Acts 18:1. After these things, Paul [alone] departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.

**Acts 18:11. Epistle of 2 Thessalonians**

Written at Acts 18:11 from Corinth.

Acts 18:11. [Paul] continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them [at Corinth].

Written after Acts 18:1 when Paul went alone from Athens to Corinth.

Acts 18:1. After these things Paul departed from Athens and came [alone] to Corinth.

Written after Acts 18:5 when Silas and Timothy had delivered 1 Thessalonians from Athens and had rejoined Paul in Corinth.

Acts 18:5. When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], [etc.].

2 Ths. 1:1. Paul, Silas, and Timothy, to the Congregation of the Thessalonians.

Written before Acts 18:18 when Paul, Silas, and Timothy left Corinth after Silas and Timothy had returned to Paul and ministered there with him after delivering 2 Thessalonians.

2 Cor. 1:19. Jesus Messiah ... was preached among you [Corinthians] by us, even by me, Silas, and Timothy.

Acts 18:18. Paul ... tarried there ... a good while, and then ... sailed from there to Syria.

2 Thessalonians answered additional questions and problems the Thessalonians still had after receiving 1 Thessalonians.

2 Ths. 2:2-3. Don't be soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, ... by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Messiah is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day will not come, unless there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.



2 Ths. 3:6-15. Now we command you, ... that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. ... For ... we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. ... If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

### **Acts 18:4-17. Paul's Ministry in Corinth**

There's an interesting account of Paul's ministry in Corinth. As usual, Paul preached to the Jew first, and when the majority rejected his message, he went to the Gentiles, in this case by moving his preaching from the synagogue to the house next door.

Acts 18:4-7. [Paul] reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the [God-fearing] Greeks. ... And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, ... he departed from there, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

The result of this is that the ruler of the synagogue, believed, and Paul personally baptized him.

Acts 18:8. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized. ... And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

1 Cor. 1:14-17. I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius ... and ... the household of Stephanas.

Then a Jewish mob tried to get the Roman deputy to punish Paul, but when the unsaved Gentiles realized the

deputy wouldn't support the Jews, they beat the new ruler of the synagogue, Sosthenes.

Acts 18:12-17. When Gallio was the deputy of Achaia [Cor+], the Jews made insurrection ... against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat. ... And ... Gallio said, ... "If it be a question... of your law, ... I will be no judge of such matters."... Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

The believers must have reached out to Sosthenes after his mistreatment, because he later brought 1 Corinthians to them from Paul in Ephesus.

1 Cor. 1:1-2. Paul, ... and Sosthenes, our brother, to the Congregation of God which is at Corinth.

### **Acts 18:11 (Corinth). 16) Teach!**

The Word. Mt. 28:18-20. Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ... "Having gone, ... disciple all nations, baptizing them, ... teaching [διδάσκω, didasko] them."

And Wisdom. Acts 18:11. [Paul] continued [in Corinth] a year and six months, teaching [διδάσκω, didasko] the word of God among them.

Jesus commanded the Congregation, not only to evangelize and make disciples, or 'learners,' but then to teach the learners. Teaching is a job that's never done. Paul continued to teach the people he had earlier evangelized whenever he had the opportunity.

The content the Congregation should teach disciples is found in the epistles and the rest of the Bible, though at that time it was only available through the Old Testament, the apostles, the New Testament prophets, and the exercise of spiritual gifts in Congregation meetings.

***Ch 10. Acts 18:19-19:20. Gentiles in Ephesus***



*10. Paul at Ephesus (1649). Eustache Le Sueur (1617-1655)*

The great apostle, called by grace,  
Weaned from all works beside,  
Preached the same faith he once abhorred,  
[Messiah], whom he denied.

10. [Calling] of Paul. Henry Alford (1810–1871)



*Mission: Ephesus. Epistles: 4) 1 Cor. 7) 2 Cor. 8) Romans*

These two partial chapters (18:19-19:20) recount Paul's third missionary journey, to Ephesus, the main city on the west coast of Asia Minor. He also took a mission trip to Crete and Albania following a second visit to Corinth during this time, referred to in the epistles, but not in Acts.

### **Acts 18:19-19:1. Ephesus to Jerusalem to Ephesus**

When Paul left Corinth at the end of his second missionary journey, he dropped Priscilla and Aquila off in Ephesus to prepare for the new ministry there, and he stopped at the synagogue there, before going on to Jerusalem and returning to Ephesus.

Acts 18:18-24. Paul ... sailed from there [Corinth] to Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shaved his head in Cenchrea [Corinth's eastern seaport], for he had a vow [Paul observed Jewish rituals]. And came to Ephesus, and left them there, but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry a longer time with them, he didn't consent, but bid them farewell, saying, "I must by all means keep this feast that comes [Paul kept the

Jewish feasts] in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, if God will [Paul didn't know the future because he very rarely received any direct revelation for decision making - no 'still, small voice,' etc.]. And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up [meaning 'gone up to Jerusalem' since Jerusalem was, is, and always will be, 'up'], and saluted the Congregation, he went down [always 'down' going away from Jerusalem - does your doctrine match this?] to Antioch. And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples [Defense before Offence]. ... And ... having passed through the upper coasts [along the Black Sea], came to Ephesus

### **Acts 19:8-10. Preaching in the School of Tyrannus**

Acts 19:9-10. [Paul] went into the synagogue [in Ephesus], and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when some were hardened, and believed not, but spoke evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia [Eph+] heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks [Ἑλλήνων, Hellyn, Gentiles, not Hellenistic Jews (Ἑλληνιστῆς, Hellynistys)].

First, as always, Paul preached to Jews, Jewish proselytes, and God-fearing, synagogue-associated Gentiles in the synagogue. Some who had already been saved under the Old Covenant believed in Jesus as soon as they heard the gospel. A higher percentage of synagogue-associated Gentiles had already been saved by faith than of Jews, since it was more likely for Jews to just practice Judaism because their parents were Jewish, whereas the synagogue-associated Gentiles had to go against more of their own culture to join the Jews. All the believers continued to fellowship in the synagogue, since the Jewish

brethren and Paul continued to practice Jewish dress and customs to various degrees. Only after the unbelieving Jews began opposing them, did Paul separate the believers out to have their own meetings, and then he evangelized in the school of Tyrannus.

### **Acts 19:11-20. Miracles and Magic**

Paul perfumed amazing and unusual public miracles in Ephesus.

Acts 19:11-12. God worked special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

This cut into the business of itinerant Jewish healers and exorcists. They tried to use Paul's methods.

Acts 19:13-18. Then certain of the itinerant Jews, exorcists, took on them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."... And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, ... so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus, and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.

But Paul also made enemies thereby. When he will leave Ephesus, in Acts 20, he will remind the Ephesian elders ...

Acts 20:18-19. You know, from the first day that I came to Asia [Eph+], ... I have been ... serving the Lord ... with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.

Many who used magic were convicted by Paul's miracles.

Acts 19:19-20. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men. And they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

But this also resulted in much opposition to Paul. So much so that he was imprisoned at this time, though Acts doesn't record it.

### **Acts 19:20. Asian [Eph+] Imprisonment**

The next six chapters of this book covers a large part of Paul's ministry that occurred at Acts 19:20 that Luke omitted from the book of Acts. Luke didn't include this period in his narrative because 1) he wanted to limit the size of his manuscript, 2) it wasn't essential to the mission of Jesus and Paul in bringing the gospel to the Aegean Gentiles, and 3) most importantly, it included a lot of sufferings and disappointments, and Luke wanted Paul's decision in Acts 20:21 to go up to Jerusalem to suffer, to be the beginning of Paul's passion section in Acts in parallel with Jesus' decision to go up to Jerusalem to suffer. Luke made it simple for us, by leaving only this one big gap in his book, rather than scattering smaller gaps all over his narrative.

First in Acts 19:20 was Paul's Asian imprisonment.

Occurred at Acts 19:20 when Paul wrote the prison epistle of Philippians.

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Phil. 1:13. My bonds in Messiah are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places.

Occurred sometime after Acts 18:18 when Paul left Corinth for the first time.

Phil. 4:15-16. When I departed from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], [and thus during the Corinthian period] no Congregation shared with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only.

2 Cor. 11:9. When I was present with you [at Corinth], ... that which was lacking ... the brethren which came from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] supplied.

Acts 18:18. Paul ... took his leave of the brethren, and sailed from [Corinth] into Syria.

Phil. 4:10. Now at the last [sometime after the Corinthian period] your care of me has flourished again, wherein you were also careful, but you lacked opportunity.

Occurred sometime before Acts 19:21, when Paul decided to go up to Jerusalem, because Philippians was written before 1 Corinthians, which was written before Paul decided to go up to Jerusalem.

1 Cor. 16:3-4. Whomever you will approve, ... them will I send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And if it be appropriate that I go also, they will go with me.

Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit ... to go to Jerusalem.

Occurred sometime before Acts 20:5 when Luke rejoined Paul because of a vision Paul had revealing he would not be returning to the Aegean.

Acts 20:5. These going before tarried for us [including Luke] at Troas.

Occurred sometime before Acts 20:25 when Paul told the Ephesian elders about the vision, whereas when Paul wrote Philippians, he knew he would return to Philippi.

Acts 20:25. I know that you all ... will see my face no more.

Phil. 1:25-26. I know ... your rejoicing [will] be more abundant ... by my coming to you again.

Written sometime before Acts 23:11, when Paul was promised he would live to testify at Rome, whereas when he wrote Philippians, he was worried he might die.



Ch. 10. Acts 18:19-19:20. Gentiles in Ephesus

Acts 23:11. The Lord ... said, ... “As you have testified of me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”

Phil. 1:20; 2:17. Messiah will be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. ... And if I be offered [die] on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I ... rejoice.

Shortly after Paul left Ephesus in Acts 20, he wrote 2 Corinthians, in which he said he had been imprisoned frequently.

2 Cor. 11:23. In prisons, ... frequent.

But the only imprisonment Luke recorded for Paul before 2 Corinthians was one night in a Philippian jail.

Acts 16:23-26. They cast [Paul and Silas] into prison. ... And at midnight, ... suddenly there was a great earthquake, ... and immediately all the doors were opened.

Also in 2 Corinthians, Paul described his time in Ephesus in much more dismal terms than Luke did in Acts.

2 Cor. 1:8-10. We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia [Eph+], that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life, but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death.

During the time of this Asian imprisonment, Paul may have survived a day fighting wild animals at the stadium in Ephesus.

1 Cor. 15:30-32. Why do we stand in jeopardy every hour? ... I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what does it advantage me, if the dead rise not?

This may also have been the time that Ananias and Saphira risked their lives to save Paul. After saving him, they may have had to move away from Ephesus for their

safety. That might be why shortly after leaving Ephesus, Paul greets them in Rome in the epistle to the Romans.

Rom. 16:3-5. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Messiah Jesus, who have for my life laid down their own necks, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Congregations of the Gentiles [and us too!]. Likewise greet the Congregation that is in their house.

Luke may have hinted at an Asian [Eph+] imprisonment which the Ephesian elders knew about, when he told them at his departure ...

Acts 20:22. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem.

There has been much discussion as to whether there ever was an Asian [Eph+] imprisonment, and as to where the 'prison epistles' of Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were written from. Some speculated locations include Asia [Eph+], Caesarea, and Rome. Joel White lists some sources that support the different views in "The Imprisonment that Could Have Happened (And the Letters Paul Could Have Written There); a journal article that was a response to Ben Witherington's journal article "The Case of the Imprisonment that Did Not Happen: Paul at Ephesus." (Readers can ignore the detailed references which are only included here to demonstrate the extensiveness of the discussion, and for those who want to pursue further study on the topic.)

White. In a recent article, ... Ben Witherington has argued against the possibility that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus. This theory has gained traction in recent years among scholars who, for a variety of reasons, have begun to question the traditional view concerning the provenance [geographical location] of the so-called "Captivity Epistles" or "Prison Letters" in Rome, which commands majority support among scholars. [The Traditional View of Rome: Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Colossians and Philemon* (1879), 32; Moule, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon* (1968), 24; Bruce, *The*

*Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (1984), 32; Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (1996), 40–41; Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (2008), 46; Pao, *Colossians and Philemon* (2012), 23–25. Some scholars argue that the Prison Epistles were written in Caesarea. The Caesarean View: Dibelius, (1953), 52; Kümmel, (1980), 305–306; Lohmeyer, (1964), 14–15; Reicke, “Caesarea, Rome, and the Captivity Epistles,” in *Apostolic History and the Gospel* (1970), 278–80; Gunther, *Paul: Messenger and Exile: A Study in the Chronology of His Life and Letters* (1972), 98–104; Robinson, *Redating the New Testament* (1976), 61–85; Ellis, *The Making of New Testament Documents* (1999), 266–75.]

(continued). Witherington views the proposal as a passing fad that will soon fade away. In doing so, he ignores ... the fact that the theory has enjoyed steady support among European scholars since Deissmann first proposed it well over a century ago. [The Ephesian View: Deissmann (1908), Michaelis (1925), Duncan, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (1929)]. ... In any case, quite a few more recent scholarly studies have concluded that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus, probably only briefly, [Also the Ephesian View: Ollrog, (1979); Thiessen, (1995); Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (1996), 237; Suhl, (2007); Barnett, *Paul: Missionary of Jesus* (2008), 217; Omerzu, (2009); Riesner, “Pauline Chronology,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Paul* (2013), 20; Sanders, *Paul: The Apostle's Life, Letters, and Thought* (2015), 130–31.] and numerous commentators believe that Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians, ... or Philippians, or all four, derive from that period. [Also the Ephesian View: Wright, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon* (1986), 21–39; Martin, *Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon* (1991), 96–98; Luz, (1998); Bird, *Colossians and Philemon* (2009), 15; Keesmaat, “Colossians,” in *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: The New Testament* (2014), 558; Häußner, (2016).]<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> White, Imprisonment Response, 549, 551.

But the main evidence for an Asian [Eph+] imprisonment is that the epistle to the Philippians, a prison epistle, had to have been written from there.

### **Acts 19:20. Epistle of Philippians**

Written at Acts 19:20 from Asia (Eph+).

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Written after Acts 17:1 when Paul came to Thessalonica, since Philippians mentions the Philippians sent money to Paul in Thessalonica.

Acts 17:1. When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica.

Phil. 4:16. Even in Thessalonica you sent once and again to my needs.

Written after Acts 17:15 when Paul left Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and went to Achaia [Cor+], since Philippians mentions the Philippians sent money to him after he left Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. After Paul's Macedonian period, was the Corinthian period, when the Philippians also sent money to Paul.

Acts 17:15. They [of Berea in Macedonia] that conducted Paul, brought him to Athens [in Achaia].

Phil. 4:15-16. You Philippians also know, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], no Congregation shared with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only.

2 Cor. 11:9. When I was present with you [at Corinth], and was in want, ... that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] supplied.

Written after Acts 19:1 when Paul began his ministry in Ephesus after leaving Corinth, since "at the last" was

sometime after the period after leaving Macedonia (the Corinthian period).

Acts 18:18; 19:1. Paul ... sailed from [Corinth] to Syria. ... And ... [eventually] came to Ephesus.

Phil. 1:7; 4:10. Philippi Sent Money to Paul While He Was in Prison Sometime After Corinth. In my bonds, ... you all are partakers of my grace. ... I rejoiced ... that now at the last [sometime after Corinth] your care of me has flourished again, wherein you were also careful, but you lacked opportunity.

Written before Acts 19:21, because Paul wrote 1 Corinthians before he had definitely decided to go to Jerusalem, and he wrote Philippians before 1 Corinthians, since he mentioned a promise he made in Philippians in 1 Corinthians.

Phil. 2:24. I trust in the Lord that I ... will come [to you in Philippi] shortly.

1 Cor. 16:3. When I come [for my 2nd visit to Corinth], whomever you'll approve by your letters, them I'll send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And if it's appropriate that I go also [Paul hadn't yet decided when he wrote 1 Cor.], they will go with me. Now I'll come to you [for a 2nd visit to Corinth] when I'll pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], for I do [definitely] pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [since he had promised the Philippians a visit].

Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Written before Acts 20:5 when Luke rejoined Paul because of a vision Paul had that he wouldn't return to any areas he had already evangelized; whereas Paul wrote Philippians when he believed he would return to Philippi.

Phil. 1:25-26; 2:24. I know that I will abide and continue with you, ... that your rejoicing may be more

abundant ... by my coming to you again. ... I trust in the Lord that I ... will come shortly.

Acts 20:5. These going before tarried for us at Troas.

Acts 20:25. Now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

Written before Acts 23:11, when the Lord promised Paul he would live to testify at Rome; whereas when Paul wrote Philippians, he was worried he might die.

Acts 23:11. The Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul. For as you have testified of me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

Phil. 1:20; 2:17. Messiah will be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. ... And if I be offered [die] on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

Written before Acts 28:30 when Paul wrote 2 Timothy while living in a rented house in Rome. Timothy was with Paul when he wrote Philippians, but Timothy had never been to Rome yet when Paul wrote 2 Timothy.

Acts 28:30. Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house [in Rome], and received all that came in to him

Timothy Was With Paul When Paul Wrote Philippians.  
Phil. 1:1. Paul and Timothy ... to all the saints ... at Philippi.

Timothy Had Not Yet Been to Rome When Paul Wrote 2 Timothy. 2 Tim. 4:9. Be diligent to come shortly to me [in Rome].

We Know Because None of the Romans 16 People in Rome Greeted Timothy in 2 Timothy. 2 Tim. 4:21. Eubulus greets you, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. [Timothy knew these Romans from having met them outside Italy, like in Philippi or Ephesus.]

The traditional view is that Philippians was written from Rome, mostly because Paul mentioned a ‘praetorium’ and ‘Caesar’s household’.

Phil. 1:13. My bonds in Messiah are manifest in all the palace [πραιτώριον, praitorion, praetorium].

Phil. 4:22. All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar’s household.

‘Praetorium’ meant either a governor’s residence, or the Praetorian Guard, the elite Roman army unit of the emperor’s bodyguard; but was sometimes “also given to any large house or palace.”<sup>82</sup> The term usually referred to a governor’s residence in the New Testament.

Jerusalem. Mk. 15:16 (Also, Mt. 27:27, Jn. 18:28, 33). The soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium [πραιτώριον, praitorion]; and they call[ed] together the whole band.

Caesarea. Acts 23:35. [Felix] commanded [Paul] to be kept in Herod’s judgment hall [πραιτώριον, praitorion, praetorium].

Various commentators say there was no palace at Ephesus, but I don’t know their sources. Even the most famous building there, the temple of Artemis, built on swampy ground to reduce earthquake damage, was silted over and not rediscovered until 1869. So there could have been a palace at Ephesus, or another building called the praetorium, that hasn’t yet been found.

Sometime between the reigns of Augustus and Hadrian, the capital of Asia [Eph+] was officially moved from Pergamon to Ephesus, but we don’t know what year.

Worth. We would expect Ephesus’s inherent importance to attract considerable preferential treatment and the equivalent of “branch” offices that, over time, would easily tend to become the “main” offices of provincial administration. Furthermore, as a much larger cosmopolitan city than Pergamon, Ephesus would probably be the residence preferred by

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<sup>82</sup> Smith, Dictionary, 57494-57495 Kindle.

the governor, regardless of where the official capital was located.<sup>83</sup>

Even if the governor didn't live at Ephesus, he had to conduct trials at major cities in his province.

Kinman. An 'assize' was the regular journey of a duly authorized Roman magistrate during which he held court to administer justice, both civil and criminal, in the principal cities within a province.<sup>84</sup>

Also, Paul could have been imprisoned at Pergamon. Though Paul mentioned fighting beasts at Ephesus, he said his troubles were in Asia [Eph+], which would include Pergamon, which has the ruins of a palace on its acropolis.

2 Cor. 1:8-10. We would not ... have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia [Eph+].

Paul would have wanted to visit Pergamon for several reasons. It was notorious for idolatry. The Great Altar of Pergamon, now relocated to the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, may have been what John referred to as "Satan's Throne" (Rev. 2:13). There was a huge library there, though reduced in size by Marc Antony's gift of 200,000 rolls to Cleopatra. Pergamon also dominated the parchment trade., "Bring ... the books, but especially the parchments," 2 Tim. 4:13. The Jewish itinerant miracle workers, or the practitioners of magic, could have ambushed Paul there, and imprisoned him there while awaiting the governor's assize.

As for "they that are of Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22), Ephesus was a Senatorial province, which meant its proconsul was chosen by the Senate, instead of by the emperor. And that meant the procurators, the emperor's direct representatives, exercised additional authority in such provinces to counterbalance the proconsul's power. The following quote illustrates the power of Nero's procurators in Ephesus.

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<sup>83</sup> Worth, *Cities of the Apocalypse*, 48.

<sup>84</sup> Kinman, *Pilate's Assize*, 283.



Tacitus, AD. 54-58. The first death under the new emperor [Nero, was] that of Junius Silanus, proconsul of Asia [Eph+]. ... Agrippina [Nero's mother], having contrived the murder of [Silanus'] brother, ... dreaded his vengeance. ... Silanus in fact was the [great-]great-grandson of Augustus. ... The agents of the deed were Publius Celer, [procurator directly under Nero], and Helius, a freedman; men who had the charge of the emperor's domains in Asia [Eph+]. They gave the proconsul poison at a banquet.<sup>85</sup>

One man that went from Philippi to minister to Paul during his imprisonment in Asia [Eph+] almost died from sickness.

Phil. 2:25-30. I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my ... companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger [ἀπόστολος, apostolos, apostle/representative, of and by the Congregation of Philippi], and he that ministered to my wants. For he ... was full of heaviness, because that you had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick near to death, but God had mercy on him, and ... on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ... Hold such in reputation, because for the work of Messiah he was near to death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

Using the travel times from Philippi to Ephesus, we can determine that Paul must have been imprisoned in Asia [Eph+] for at least 35 days.

Acts 20:6 says Paul's voyage from Philippi to Troas took 5 days, but that's probably an upper limit of how long the west to east voyage would take. Casson thought Paul's voyage must have included a stopover at the island of Samothrace;<sup>86</sup> while Ellicott said it could have been due to unfavorable wind and currents.

Ellicott. The voyage from Troas to Philippi ... had taken only three days ... (Acts 16:11-12), but the ship had now [Philippi to Troas in Acts 20:6] to contend against the

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<sup>85</sup> Tacitus, Annals, 13.1.

<sup>86</sup> Casson, Speed Of Ancient Ships, 144.

south-west current that set in from the Dardanelles, and probably also against the Etesian winds blowing from the north-east that prevail in the Archipelago in the spring.<sup>87</sup>

Casson gives the following data for travel times for sailing ships.

BYZANTIUM TO CAESAREA TRAVEL TIMES <sup>88</sup>			
Days	Total	Byzantium - Rhodes	Rhodes - Caesarea
Southeast Bound	9	5	4
Northwest Bound	20	10	10

Using Acts 20:6 for Philippi to Troas, Acts 16:11-12 for Troas to Philippi, and Casson’s estimates for the other parts, we estimate the following breakdown.

ESTIMATED PHILIPPI - CAESAREA TRAVEL TIMES							
Dir	Phil Caes	Phil Eph	Philippi	Troas	Eph.	Rhodes	Cae- sarea
SE	13	7	Start >	5 (Acts 20:6)	2*	2*	4
NW	21	7	3 (Acts 16:11-12)	4*	4*	10	< Start
* Byzantium-Rhodes = 5 days so leaving out Byzantium-Troas 4 est., Troas-Eph. 2 est. and Eph-Rhodes 2 est. Rhodes-Byzantium = 10 days so leaving out Troas-Byzantium 8 est., Rhodes-Eph. 4 est. and Eph.-Troas 4 est.							

<sup>87</sup> John Ellicott, Bible Commentary, Kindle 170513.

<sup>88</sup> Casson, Speed Of Ancient Ships, 145-146.



*Sailing Days from Philippi to Caesarea and Back*

TRAVEL TIMES FROM PHILIPPI TO EPHESUS AND BACK		
for Phl. 4:14; 2:19-20, 25-26		
Days	Direction	Trip Purpose
7	NW	News of Paul’s Imprisonment to Philippi
7	SE	Philippi Sends Epaphroditus to Caesarea
7	NW	Philippians Hear Epaphroditus Is Sick
7	SE	Epaphroditus Hears Philippians Are Sorrowful
7	NW	Paul Sends Epaphroditus & Timothy to Philippi
35 Days		Total Trip Days

Some commentators say Philippians had to be written from an Asian [Eph+] imprisonment, because it would have taken too much time for all the journeys regarding Epaphroditus if the imprisonment was at Caesarea or Rome. But I don’t think the travel times are a problem even for Caesarea.

TRAVEL TIMES FROM CAESAREA TO EPHESUS AND BACK		
for Phl. 4:14; 2:19-20, 25-26		
Days	Direction	Trip Purpose
21	NW	Secundus and Sopeter Return to Thess./Berea
13	SE	Philippi Sends Epaphroditus to Caesarea
21	NW	Philippians Hear Epaphroditus Is Sick
13	SE	Epaphroditus Hears Philippians Are Sorrowful
21	NW	Paul Sends Epaphroditus & Timothy to Philippi
89 Days		Total Trip Days
2+ Years		Length of Caesarean Imprisonment

**Acts 19:20. Epistle of 1 Corinthians**

Written at Acts 19:20 from Ephesus.

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Written after when Paul left Corinth.

Acts 18:18. Paul ... sailed from [Corinth] to Syria.

Written before Acts 19:21, when Paul decided to go to Jerusalem.

Paul Decided to Visit Jerusalem. Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit ... to go to Jerusalem.

Paul Hadn’t Yet Decided to Visit Jerusalem When He Wrote 1 Corinthians. 1 Cor. 16:3-6. When I come, whomever you will approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And if it be appropriate that I go also, they will go with me. ... It may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that you may bring me on my journey wherever I go.

Before writing 1 Corinthians, Paul had written a non-scripture letter to the Corinthians. Not everything an apostle wrote was scripture.

1 Cor. 5:9. I wrote to you [previously] in a letter not to keep company with fornicators.

The Corinthians wrote back, asking him questions.

1 Cor. 7:1-2. Now concerning the things you wrote to me about ...

While Paul was in prison in Asia [Eph+], some Corinthians came to encourage him, but also reported immorality.

1 Cor. 16:17. I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for that which was lacking [encouragement-wise, since Paul only accepted financial support from Philippi] on your part they have supplied.

1 Cor. 5:1-5. It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles.

Some brethren had also come from Philippi to support Paul while he was in prison. Paul wrote back to the Philippians while he was still in prison, but he didn't write back to the Corinthians until after he was released.

Phil. 1:13, 30; 4:10. My bonds in Messiah, ... the same conflict which you saw in me [when Paul was imprisoned in Philippi], and now hear to be in me [now that he's imprisoned in Asia, Eph+]. ... I rejoiced ... that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again. ... You have done well, in that you did communicate with my affliction.

We know Paul wrote Philippians before 1 Corinthians, because he refers to a promise he made in Philippians in 1 Corinthians.

Phil. 2:24. I trust in the Lord that I ... will come [to you in Philippi] shortly.

1 Cor. 16:5. Now I'll come to you [for my 2nd visit to Corinth] when I'll pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], for I do [definitely] pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [since he had promised the Philippians a visit].

Some Corinthians that met in Chloe's house (the Congregation only met in various houses, never in 'church buildings') informed him about divisions.

1 Cor. 1:10-12. It's been declared to me, ... by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you; ... that every one of you says, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Messiah."

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to address their problems and answer their questions. He also told them to store up money each Sunday for the poor believers in Jerusalem, as he had directed the Galatian Congregations.

Paul said he would come to them sometime after Pentecost, which is always in the spring, because he had too many opportunities in Ephesus to leave yet, even though he mentioned he was still at risk from many adversaries. He planned to come and spend some time with the Corinthians, and maybe even winter there, since sea travel was too dangerous during the winter. And then he would either accompany their representatives to Jerusalem with their offering, or he would go somewhere else. He didn't know, because he wasn't led by divine revelation in any form for most of his decisions.

1 Cor. 16:1-9. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Congregations of Galatia, even so do you. On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, ... that there be no gatherings when I come [for my 2nd visit]. And when I come, whomever you will approve by your letters, them I will send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And if it be appropriate [not 'if the Lord leads'] that I go also, they will go with me. Now I will come to you [for my 2nd visit] when I pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], ... and it may be [he couldn't know for sure since he didn't make his decisions via direct revelation] that I will ... winter with you, that you may bring me on my journey wherever I go. ... I trust [not, 'God led me'] to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit [not 'if the Lord leads']. But I will tarry at

Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great and effective door is opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Paul said he will stay at Ephesus until Pentecost because he had an open door there, meaning a lot of opportunities. But if he had a lot of opportunities, why leave at Pentecost? Because Paul had even more important goals to reach, and he didn't take open doors (i.e. opportunities) to be guidance for decision-making.

At this time, Paul didn't yet know if he would winter with the Corinthians or not, or whether he would accompany the offering to Jerusalem or not, because God didn't usually guide him by direct revelation. And he wouldn't eventually make his decision by "praying about it" to see "if the Lord leads," but only "if it be appropriate" (1 Cor. 16:4) and "if the Lord permit" (1 Cor. 16:7).

Waltke. Make your decision according to your circumstances [not as if they're guidance but to make wise use of your options]. ... As Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth, he told them that he wanted to visit them, but he added, "After I go through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], I will come to you - for I will be going through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. Perhaps I will stay with you awhile, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey wherever I go. I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit: I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me" (1 Corinthians 6:5-9). Notice how Paul was flexible. ... He had the ability to change his schedule according to the circumstances.<sup>89</sup>

This collection for the poor believers at Jerusalem was a very important project to Paul, because he hoped it would further unify Jews and Gentiles in the Congregation. Paul had sent Timothy and some other brethren to Philippi while he was in prison.

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<sup>89</sup> Waltke, *The Will of God*, Locations 1336, 1344-49.

Phil. 2:19. I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly to you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

Paul had told Timothy and the brethren to go on to Corinth before returning to report how the Philippians were doing.

1 Cor. 4:17. I sent to you Timothy [after Philippi per Phil. 2:19], ... who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which are in Messiah, as I teach every where in every Congregation.

1 Cor. 16:10-11. Now if Timothy comes [after Philippi per Phil. 2:19], see that he may be with you without fear, for he works the work of the Lord, as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him, but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come to me, for I look for him with the brethren.

Timothy's weakness (2 Tim. 1:7-8), like Mark's (Mk. 14:51-52; Acts 13:13) was fear. So Paul said, "See that he may be with you without fear." Several years later, when Paul was imprisoned at Rome, Timothy came to him there, despite his fearfulness, even though it was very dangerous, and he was imprisoned himself, but eventually released (2 Tim. 4:6, 9; Heb. 13:23).

Apollos had returned to Ephesus from Corinth. Paul had wanted him to go with Timothy and the brethren, but Apollos always worked independently, and never submitted to Paul's apostolic authority.

1 Cor. 16:12. As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come to you with the brethren, but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he will have convenient time.

Even the first time Apollo went to Corinth, he only went because "he was disposed" (Acts 18:27) to do so, not in coordination with the brethren, though they provided him with letters of recommendation. Apollos probably had quite an ego, thus his eloquence. But Paul was always willing to work with him, and support his ministry, because his doctrine was good.



Acts 18:24. Apollos, ... an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures.

### **Acts 19:20. Second Visit to Corinth**

Occurred at Acts 19:20.

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Occurred after Acts 18:18 when Paul left Corinth the first time.

Acts 18:18. Paul ... sailed from [Corinth] to Syria.

Occurred at Acts 19:20, after Paul wrote Philippians and 1 Corinthians.

Phil. 2:19, 24. I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly to you. ... I trust in the Lord that I ... will come [to you in Philippi] shortly.

1 Cor. 16:5, 10-11. Now I'll come to you [for my 2nd visit to Corinth] when I'll pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], for I do [definitely] pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [since he had promised the Philippians a visit]. ... Now if Timothy come, see that he may be with you without fear, ... but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come to me; for I look for him with the brethren.

Occurred before Acts 20:1 when Paul left Ephesus and then wrote 2 Corinthians.

Acts 20:1. Paul ... departed [from Ephesus] to go into Macedonia.

2 Cor. 7:5-6. When we came into Macedonia, ... God ... comforted us by the coming of Titus [from Corinth].

Occurred before Acts 20:3 when Paul wrote Romans during his third visit to Corinth.

Acts 20:2-3. And when he had gone over those parts, ... he came into Greece [e.g. Achaia/Corinth] , and stayed there three months.

Rom. 15:19. From Jerusalem and round about to Albania, I have [already] fully preached the gospel of Messiah [during his 2nd visit to Corinth].

Paul's second visit to Corinth included a mission trip to Crete and Albania. Luke didn't include Paul's second visit to Corinth in Acts, because he didn't want to begin focusing on Paul's disappointments until after Paul's decision to go up to Jerusalem. He also knew the trip was already covered in Paul's epistles. And the trip didn't really further Jesus' mission through Paul. Crete was the largest island of the Aegean, so Paul had to visit there, but it already had significant numbers of believers. And Albania wasn't really part of the main mission to the Gentiles of the Aegean.

This journey is also when Titus, the Gentile whose freedom from circumcision Paul had defended years before in Jerusalem, became a prominent coworker with Paul. Titus is mentioned twelve times in the New Testament; in Galatians, 2 Corinthians, 2 Timothy, and Titus; but never in Acts. It's probably not because he was a close relative of Luke. Luke was Jewish, and Titus was Jewish on his mom's side. But rather because nothing Titus was involved in, like his work in Corinth, Crete, and Albania, furthered Paul's essential mission.

Titus' not being forced to be circumcised during Paul's Acts 11:30 visit to Jerusalem was too early in Luke's book to bring up the issue of Gentiles and the Law, which Luke dealt with in Acts 15. Finally, Luke may have been somewhat disappointed with Titus. Although Paul had praised him for having been self-motivated in going to Corinth, the same characteristic may have caused him to return to Albania under his own initiative, when he hadn't been sent by Paul, thus leaving Luke alone in Rome with Paul during the difficult days of his trial and execution.

2 Cor. 8:16-17. Thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation, but being more forward, of his own accord he went to you.

2 Tim. 4:10-11. Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed [not ‘was sent’] to Thessalonica; Crescens [is departed] to Galatia; Titus [is departed] to Albania. Only Luke is with me.

The reason we know there was a second visit to Corinth, unrecorded by Luke, is that 2 Corinthians says Paul was on his way to Corinth for a “third time” (2 Cor. 13:1), but Acts only records two visits (Acts 18:18, 20:2). Basil calls the trip, “Paul’s flying visit to Corinth,”<sup>90</sup> because he doesn’t see much time available for it during Paul’s ministry in Ephesus, for some reason he doesn’t expound upon.

I added Crete to the trip, because it’s so close to Corinth, and Paul’s visit there (Titus 1:5), also isn’t recorded in Acts. I added Albania, because Paul said he evangelized Albania before he wrote Romans during his third visit to Corinth (Rom. 15:19). By adding these two places to the itinerary of Paul’s second visit to Corinth, there’s no longer any need to assume a release and second Roman imprisonment for Paul, which isn’t recorded in Acts.

First Visit to Corinth. Acts 18:1. Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.

Implied Second Visit to Corinth. 2 Cor. 13:1. This is the third time I’m coming to you.

Visit to Crete. Titus 1:5. For this cause I left you in Crete.

Visit to Albania. Titus 3:12. Come to me to Nicopolis [near Albania].

Paul’s Mission to Albania Was Before His Third Visit to Corinth. Rom. 15:19. From Jerusalem, and round about to Albania, I have [already] fully preached the gospel of Messiah.

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<sup>90</sup> Basil, Paul’s Companions, 206.

Third Visit to Corinth. Acts 20:2-3. When he had gone over Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], ... he came to Achaia [Cor+], and stayed there three months.

2ND VISIT TO CORINTH VS. 2ND-ROMAN IMPRISONMENT	
Epistles in All Caps	
Traditional View	2nd Visit to Corinth View
	Speculated Asian Imprisonment PHILIPPIANS
Ephesus: 1 CORINTHIANS	
	Speculated 2nd Visit to Corinth Crete, Albania, 1 TIMOTHY, TITUS
Macedonia: 2 CORINTHIANS Corinth: ROMANS	
Caesarean Imprisonment	
Roman Imprisonment	
After Speculated Release Crete, Albania, 1 TIMOTHY, TITUS	
Speculated 2nd Roman Imprisonment	

So the traditional view is speculative also.

Basil. We do not know the order of his journeys [after the speculated release from Roman imprisonment]. ... The only certain facts are that ... Paul visited Crete, Macedonia [including Albania], and the Archipelago [including Ephesus], and on different occasions had expressed hopes of visiting Spain, Philippi, Ephesus, Colossae, and Nicopolis. Every plan of his journeys during the years A.D. 62-64 is necessarily hypothetical. [If you believe these things happened after a hypothetical second imprisonment at Rome.]<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Redlich, Paul and His Companions, 117.



*Mission: 2nd Visit to Corinth. Epistles: 5) 1 Tim. 6) Titus*

When Timothy returned to Ephesus from Corinth (1 Cor. 16:11), Paul asked him to stay and watch over things, while he went to Corinth to collect their offering, and possibly accompany it to Jerusalem.

1 Tim. 1:1-3. Paul, ... to Timothy. ... I besought you to remain at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], so that you would charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

Paul brought Titus, Artemis, and Tychicus with him. He later called his second visit to Corinth “a painful visit” (2 Cor. 2:1, NIV). Paul didn’t collect the Corinthians’ offering as he had planned, or go to Jerusalem, or stay in Corinth long. Instead of wintering with them, he used the time to evangelize some skipped areas. He probably already had Crete and Albania in mind when he wrote ...

1 Cor. 16:3-7. Them I will send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem, and if it be appropriate that I go also, they will go with me. ... And it may be that I will stay, yes, and winter with you, that you may bring me on my journey wherever I go, ... but I trust to tarry a while with you [on my 2nd visit to you], if the Lord permit.

After leaving Corinth, Paul went to Crete, only a nine-hour ferry trip from Athens today, but a longer voyage of course then. There were already believers in Crete (Acts 2:11). So Paul left Crete to go to Albania because he only put his efforts into unevangelized areas [NEW TERRITORY]. But he left Titus there to organize the Congregations.

Titus 1:5. For this cause I left you in Crete, so that you would set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed you.

Then Paul, Artemis, and Tychicus went to the northwest coast of Greece, and evangelized as far as modern Albania.

Rom. 15:18-19. From Jerusalem, and round about to [Albania], I have fully preached the gospel of Messiah.

Titus 3:12. When I shall send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis.

Meanwhile, Apollos finally found it convenient to go to Corinth.

1 Cor. 16:12. Apollos ... will come when he will have convenient time.

But seeing the contentions there, and hearing that Paul had gone on to Crete, he also went on to Crete.

Titus 3:13. Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently.

## **Acts 19:20. Epistle of 1 Timothy**

Written at Acts 19:20 from Albania.

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul wrote Philippians and 1 Corinthians, and then went to Philippi and Corinth for his second visit to Corinth.

Ch. 10. Acts 18:19-19:20. Gentiles in Ephesus

Phil. 1:25-26; 2:24. I know that ... your rejoicing [will] be more abundant ... by my coming to you again [2nd visit to Philippi]. ... I trust in the Lord that I ... will come shortly.

1 Cor. 16:5-6. Now I will come to you [for a 2nd visit to Corinth], when I will pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], for I will pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. ... And it may be that I will remain, yes, and winter with you, that you may bring me on my journey wherever I go.

1 Tim. 1:3. I asked you to remain still at Ephesus, when I went to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] [for his 2nd visit to Corinth], so that you would charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul was not well received in Corinth at his second visit, and so didn't accompany their offering to Jerusalem at that time, or stay or winter there, but instead used the time to evangelize some skipped areas.

2 Cor. 2:1 NIV. I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you [like the 2nd one].

Titus 3:13. Come to me to Nicopolis [near Albania], for I have determined to winter there.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul went to Albania, because when he was in Corinth and Crete, he didn't hope to return to Ephesus soon, but after he spent some time in Albania, he could say he hoped to return to Ephesus soon.

1 Tim. 3:14. These things I write to you, hoping to come to you shortly.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul found Nicopolis to be a good place to spend the winter, and probably sent at the same time as his letter to Titus.

Titus 3:12-13. When I shall send ... [for you], be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis, for I have determined [not 'God told me' or 'led me'] to winter there.

Written at Acts 19:20 before Paul finished wintering in Albania, because after he finished wintering in Albania he knew he would return to Ephesus soon, whereas when he wrote 1 Timothy, he only hoped to return soon.

1 Tim. 3:14. These things I write to you, hoping [not 'knowing' because God didn't usually guide him by direct revelation] to come to you shortly.

Written before Acts 20:3, when Paul made his third visit to Corinth, when he wrote Romans, and told them he had already evangelized as far as Albania.

2 Cor. 13:1. This is the third time I'm coming to you.

Rom. 15:19. From Jerusalem, and round about to [Albania] [during his 2nd visit], I have [already] fully preached the gospel of Messiah.

On his third visit to Corinth, Paul didn't leave Timothy in Ephesus, like he did on his second visit.

Acts 19:21-22. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem. ... So he sent into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] two of them that ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia [Eph+] for a season.

Acts 20:4. There accompanied him [back] into Asia [Eph+], ... Timothy.

Paul wrote the epistle of 1 Timothy to instruct Timothy (and we who come after) in his Congregational ministry in Ephesus.

1 Tim. 3:14-16; 4:13. These things I write to you ... so that you can know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the Congregation of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. ... Until I come, give



attendance to [public scripture] reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

### **Acts 19:20. Epistle of Titus**

Written at Acts 19:20 from Albania.

Acts 19:20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul had a bad second visit with the Corinthians, and went on to Crete, instead of going to Jerusalem with their offering or staying with them through the winter. (See previous sections.)

Written at Acts 19:20 after Paul left Titus in Crete and went on to evangelize the west coast of Greece as far as Albania, and had found that Nicopolis would be a good place to winter.

Titus 3:12. Come to me to Nicopolis, for I have determined [not ‘God told me’ or ‘led me’] to winter there.

Written at Acts 19:20 after Apollos had found “convenient time” (1 Cor. 16:12) to go to Corinth, where he heard Paul had gone to Crete, and followed him there.

Titus 3:13. Send [or accompany] Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be lacking to them.

Written at Acts 19:20 before Paul finished wintering in Nicopolis. Probably written at the same time 1 Timothy and the severe letter to Corinth. (See the section on 1 Timothy.)

Written before Acts 20:3, when Paul made his third visit to Corinth, and wrote Romans, saying he had finished evangelizing as far as Albania.

Rom. 15:19, 25. From Jerusalem, and round about to Albania, I have fully preached the gospel of Messiah. ... But now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

When Paul left Titus in Crete, he told him he would send a letter back to let him know where to meet him, once he had seen Albania, and knew where he would winter.

Apollos had never shown himself willing to submit to Paul's apostolic authority, so he may have been planning to go to his hometown of Alexandria in Egypt. In any case, with Titus 3:13 (quoted above), Apollos journeyed out of the New Testament.

Acts 18:24. A certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures. [If a Jew can have a Gentile name with the the pagan god 'Apollo' in it, there's no reason a man with the name 'Luke' can't be a Jew rather than a Gentile also.]

Paul always seemed to go to extremes to be gracious towards Apollos. He didn't seem to hold Apollos responsible for the divisions in Corinth, even though he was the hero of one group.

1 Cor. 1:11-13. It has been declared to me ... that there are contentions among you, ... that every one of you says, "I'm of Paul;" and "I of Apollos;" and "I of [Peter];" and "I of Messiah." Is Messiah divided?

And Paul always seemed willing to work with Apollos. Whereas Paul had rebuked Peter publicly because of doctrinal error, Apollos' problem seemed only to lie in being difficult to work with, which is to be expected since Apollos' valuing of eloquence was also likely accompanied by a high opinion of himself, even though he did let Priscilla and Aquila correct his doctrine. Paul provides a role model for all in working with others, even those who are difficult to work with, so long as their doctrine is wholesome.

During the times of the apostles, their authority and accompanying power in the Spirit maintained unity among the Congregation leaders, and the problems were with the people (Acts 15:24; 21:18-22; 1 Cor. 1:11-12; 1 Cor. 16:12; Titus 3:13). But towards the end of the apostolic times, the problems began to originate with corrupt

leaders (Acts 20:29-31; 1 Tim. 1:3, 19-20; 2 Jn. 1:10; 3 Jn. 1:9-12; Rev. 2:2).

Titus eventually met Paul in Nicopolis. Paul wrote a (non-scripture) severe letter, and sent it to Corinth with Titus and Artemas, while he and Tychicus returned to Ephesus. Tychicus stayed in Ephesus until he met Paul in Troas for the trip to Jerusalem (Acts 20:3-5); while Titus and Artemas met Paul in Macedonia while Paul was heading towards Corinth for his 3rd visit there.

2 Cor. 2:1. I made you sorry with a letter.

2 Cor. 12:18. I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother [Artemas].

Acts 20:1. Paul ... departed [from Ephesus] to go into Macedonia.

2 Cor. 7:5-6. When we came into Macedonia, ... God ... comforted us by the coming of Titus [and probably Artemas, from Corinth].

Acts 20:4. Tychicus, ... going before tarried for us at Troas.

The following is what Edwards said about this period in Paul's mission.

Edwards. We have translated and condensed ... the Introduction to the Commentary on the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, published in Göttingen in 1850, by Dr. J. E. Huther of Schwerin. ... [Re a Second Roman Imprisonment vs. an Asian Imprisonment:] Dr. Huther, if he has not completely established the theory of a second imprisonment, has at least rendered it much more probable than that of a single imprisonment, on which Wieseler has lately expended so much pains. ... [Re the First Epistle to Timothy:] ... There then remains (supposing that the Epistle was written in that portion of Paul's life recorded by Luke in the Acts [which is my supposition]), only the supposition that the journey of the apostle from Ephesus to Macedonia, mentioned 1 Tim. 1:3, when Timothy was left behind at Ephesus, occurred during the two or three years' abode of Paul in Ephesus,

without being mentioned by Luke. This supposition, which Mosheim and Schrader favored, Wieseler (*Chronologie des Apostolischen Zeitalters*) ... has endeavored to prove as the only one which is correct. ... 1 Cor. 16:17. 2 Cor. 2:1. 12:14. 13:1, 2. 12:21 place it beyond doubt, that Paul, before he wrote the Epistles to the Corinthians [I would say before he wrote 2 Corinthians], had been in Corinth not once but twice, though in the second instance he stayed but a short time [many commentators mention this journey had to be short without giving any basis as to why]. For this journey, of which Luke says nothing, there is no other place in the history of the Apostle, except during his abode in Ephesus (Wies. pp. 233 seq.), so that it is necessary to regard the journey to Macedonia mentioned 1 Tim. 1:3, as identical with the one to Corinth, and to conclude that the first Epistle to Timothy was written on this journey from Macedonia [but I would place it from Albania]. But there are several objections to this theory. [The ones he mentioned don't sound worth mentioning here.] ... [Re The Epistle to Titus:] ... The third supposition, that Paul undertook the journey to Crete from Ephesus, before his departure to Macedonia [in Acts 20:1], and from thence wrote the epistle to Titus, has been defended by Wieseler with great acuteness. According to this view, Paul, having remained something over two years in Ephesus, journeyed, through Macedonia, 1 Tim. 1:3, (namely the second journey, not mentioned in Acts) to Corinth; on this journey, which was short [proof please?], Titus accompanied him; with Titus he went to Crete; on his departure he left Titus there; he returned to Ephesus [I would say after Albania], and there [I would say from near Albania] wrote the epistle to Titus.<sup>92</sup>

Unfortunately, I can't find a copy of Wieseler's *Chronologie des Apostolischen Zeitalters* in English, nor the works of Mosheim and Schrader referred to.

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<sup>92</sup> Edwards, Pastoral Epistles, 318-28.

## **Part 4. Acts 19:21-28:31. Paul's Passion**



## ***Ch 11. Introduction to Paul's Passion***



*11. Paul's Calling (1690). Luca Giordano (1634-1705)*

Whose is yon form, stretched on the earth's cold  
bed,

With smitten soul and tears of agony,  
Mourning the past? Bowed is the lofty head -  
Rayless the orbs that flashed with victory.  
Over the raging waves of human will

The Saviour's spirit walked - and all was still.

11. Saul the Persecutor. Thomas Roscoe (1791–  
1871)

### **Purpose of This Section**

As discussed in the “Introduction to Acts” section, Acts ends with a long passion narrative for Paul (Acts 20b-28), like all four gospels end with a long passion narrative for Jesus. Jesus' sufferings were completed, in a non-propitiatory way, in Paul, through whom Jesus completed his mission of bringing salvation to the Gentiles in Acts 12:25-19:20.

The last 9 1/2 chapters of Acts is Paul's passion narrative, but Luke also uses it to continue his main message, that the Congregation is comprised of both Jew and Gentile, without loss of identity to either; and to present his main purpose, that the Congregation from 70 AD onwards should guard against losing its Jewishness.

### **Some Parallels Between Paul's Passion and Jesus'**

There are many parallels between Jesus' passion narratives at the end of each gospel, and Paul's passion narrative in these last 9 1/2 chapters of Acts.

#### **Jesus Prophesied His Suffering Three Times While Going Up to Jerusalem.**

1) Lu. 9:22. The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

2) Lu. 9:44. The Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

3) Lu. 18:31-34. We're going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man will be accomplished. For he will be delivered to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spit on, and they will scourge him, and put him to death, and the third day he will rise again.

#### **Paul's Suffering Was Prophesied Three Times While Going Up to Jerusalem.**

Acts 20:25. I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem. ... The Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. ... I know that all you, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God will see my face no more.

Acts 21:4. And finding disciples, ... [they] said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Acts 21:10-11. A certain prophet, named Agabus ... said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So will the Jews at



Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”

It Was Prophesied The Jews Would Deliver Jesus to the Gentiles. Mt. 20:18-19. The chief priests and ... the scribes ... will condemn him to death, and will deliver him to the Gentiles.

It Was Prophesied The Jews Would Deliver Paul to the Gentiles. Acts 21:11. So will the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and will deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

Jesus Sent Disciples Ahead. Lu. 9:51-52; 10:1. And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face. ... After these things the Lord appointed another seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place where he himself would come.

Paul Sent Disciples Ahead. Acts 19:21-22. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem. ... So he sent into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] two of them that ministered to him.

Jesus Wouldn't Turn Back. Lu. 9:51. When the time had arrived that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

Paul Wouldn't Turn Back. Acts 20:22. Now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem. Acts 21:12-14. Both we, and they of that place, begged him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, “What do you mean to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased.

Jesus Prayed Alone in Gethsemane. Mt. 26:36. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here, while I go and pray over there.”

Paul Prayed Alone Near Troas. Acts 20:13-14. We went before by ship [around the peninsula], and sailed to Assos,

... for so had [Paul] appointed, deciding himself to [cut across the peninsula] by foot. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in.

Jesus Submitted to the Will of God. Lu. 22:42. Father, if you be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.

Paul Submitted to the Will of God. Acts 21:12-14. "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem." ... And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Herod Antipas Desired to See Jesus. Lu. 9:9. Herod said, "John have I beheaded, but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him." Lu. 23:8. When Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad, for he had been desiring to see him for a long time, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

Herod Agrippa II Desired to See Paul. Acts 25:22 (Phillips Version). Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I have been wanting to hear this man myself." "Then you shall hear him tomorrow," replied Festus.

Jesus Was Rejected by a Hysterical Crowd. Lu. 23:18-23. They cried out all at once, saying, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas." ... Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spoke again to them. But they cried, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." ... And they were insistent with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified.

Paul Was Rejected by a Hysterical Crowd. Acts 22:22-23. They ... lifted up their voices, and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." And ... they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air.

Jesus Had a Religious Trial Followed by a Civil Trial. Lu. 22:66; 23:1-2. [Religious Trial] As soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him to their council. ... [Civil Trial] And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him to Pilate. And they began to accuse him.

Paul Had a Religious Trial Followed by a Civil Trial. Acts 21:30; 24:1. [Religious Trial] The next day, ... he ... commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them. ... [Civil Trial] And after five days, Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the [Roman] governor against Paul.

Jesus Was Charged With Rabble Rousing and Sedition. Lu. 23:2, 5. We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar. ... He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

Paul Was Charged With Rabble Rousing and Sedition. Acts 24:5. We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world [from Antioch Syria to the world].

Jesus Rebuked Them When an Officer of High Priest Struck Him. Jn. 18:22-23. When [Jesus] had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do you answer the high priest so?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike me?"

Paul Rebuked Them When an Officer of High Priest Struck Him. Acts 23:1-4. Paul ... said, ... "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him, "God will smite you, you whited wall." And they that stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?"

Jesus Was Scourged. Jn. 19:1. Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Paul Was Almost Scourged. Acts 22:24-25. The chief captain commanded him to ... be examined by scourging. ... And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion that stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?"

Jesus Was Declared Innocent Three Times

Pilate. Lu. 23:4. I find no fault in this man.

Pilate. Lu. 23:14. I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof you accuse him. No, nor yet Herod. For I sent you to him, and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done to him.

Pilate. Jn. 19:6. They cried out, saying, “Crucify him, crucify him.” Pilate said to them, “You take him, and crucify him, for I find no fault in him.”

### Paul Was Declared Innocent Three Times

Tribune Lysias. Acts 23:29. Whom I perceived ... to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.

Governor Festus. Acts 25:25. I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death.

King Agrippa. Acts 26:31. This man does nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

Jesus Was Executed Because the Romans Yielded to Jewish Pressure. Jn. 19:8-15. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid. ... Pilate sought to release him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar. ... Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar.”

Paul Remained Imprisoned Because the Romans Yielded to Jewish Pressure. Acts 24:27. After two years, Porcius Festus came into [Governor] Felix' office, and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

#### FOUR GENERATIONS OF HERODS AGAINST THE GOSPEL

***Herod the Great tried to kill Jesus.*** "Herod, ... was exceedingly angry, and sent ... and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, ... from two years old and under," Mt. 2:16.

***His Son, Herod Antipas beheaded John the Baptist.*** "Herod, on his birthday, ... when the daughter of ... Herodias ... danced and pleased Herod, ... the king sent an executioner, ... and beheaded [John] in the prison," Mk. 6:21-22, 27. ***And mocked Jesus.*** "Herod, with his men of war, set him at naught, and mocked him, and clothed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate," Lu. 23:11.

***His Nephew, Herod Agrippa executed James.*** "Herod ... killed James the brother of John with the sword," Acts 12:2.

***His Son, Herod Agrippa II failed to recommend releasing Paul.*** "Agrippa said to Festus, 'This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Caesar,'" Acts 26:32.



## ***Ch 12. Acts 19:21-21:17. Going Up to Jerusalem***



*12. Paul's Prophesied Arrest (1687). Louis Cheron (1660-1713)*

Enough, O Paul, enough; and now  
A crown in Heaven awaits thy brow,  
Thy earthly toils are nearly done,  
Thy heavenly prize is all but won;  
Long toss'd by ills, on land and sea,  
The shore is all but gain'd by thee.

12. Awaiting Departure. Parisian Breviary. Tr.  
Isaac Williams

### **Acts 19:21. Paul's Decision to Go Up to Jerusalem**

Acts 19:20 was the high point in Paul's ministry and the completion of Jesus' ministry to bring the gospel to the islands of the Gentiles, the Aegean.

Acts 19:10-12; 19-20. All they which dwelt in Asia [Eph+] heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or [tentmaking work] aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. ... Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men. And they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

From this point on, things would go downhill; outwardly, of course, because even in suffering, God will accomplish his purposes. Paul believed his ministry in the Aegean was finished. Not that the Congregations there no longer had significant problems, but that they had mature kinds of problems. Jesus had finished laying a strong foundation for the Congregation in the Aegean though Paul.

Eph. 2:19-20. You ... are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

1 Cor. 3:9-10. You are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given to me, as a wise master builder, I [Paul] have laid the foundation.

Opposition was rising against Paul, both inside and outside the Congregations. Some were claiming he wasn't really an apostle. His relations had been strained with the Congregation in Corinth, and he had recently sent them a severe letter. And it was becoming dangerous for him to remain in Ephesus.

2 Cor. 1:5, 8-10. The sufferings of Messiah abound in us. ... For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia [Eph+], that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.



What about Paul's principle of 'DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENCE?' By this time, there were many laborers in the areas he had evangelized who were mature enough to carry on the work independently from him. His work would survive and continue to spread from there to other places in the world, even though false teachers would enter into some Congregations.

Acts 20:29-30. I know ... that after my departing grievous wolves will enter in among you [in Ephesus], not sparing the flock. Also, of yourselves will men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

And now the Congregation Paul established among the Gentiles of the Aegean was sure to survive even if some individual Congregations might not survive.

Rev. 1:20; 2:5. The seven candlesticks ... are the seven Congregations. ... I will come ... and will remove your candlestick [in Ephesus] out of its place, unless you repent.

So, according to Paul's principles of 'NEW TERRITORY' and 'CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY,' Paul decided it was time for him to evangelize Spain, the next unevangelized, contiguous region west of Corinth, since Rome already had Congregations there. After accompanying the offering to Jerusalem, he planned to go to Rome, and establish a base there, to support his mission to Spain, like the Congregation at Antioch Syria, supported his missions to Galatia and the Aegean.

Rom. 15:20-25. I strived to preach the gospel, where Messiah was not named, ... for which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you [because Rome had a lower priority since it was already evangelized]. But now having no more place in these parts [the work was mature, and so it was also unnecessary for him to stay there and face the growing personal opposition], and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you. For I trust to see you in

my journey, and to be brought on my way there by you.  
... But now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

### **Acts 19:21-20:1. The Collection for the Saints**

Before going to Spain, Paul wanted to bring an offering from the predominantly Gentile Congregations of the Aegean, to the poor of the predominantly Jewish Congregation at Jerusalem, to foster unity between the two equal branches of the Congregation. He said all predominantly Gentile Congregations owe a debt to the predominantly Jewish Congregations.

Rom. 15:26-27. It has pleased them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+] [they volunteered, while Paul had asked Galatia and Ephesus], to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It has pleased them truly, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of [the Jews] spiritual things, it's also their [the Gentiles] duty to minister to them [the Jewish brethren] in physical things.

Does your Congregation recognize its God-stated obligation to support Jewish ministries, or do errors in your Congregation's doctrine, like from Reformed Theology, prevent it from acknowledging the continuing distinctions between Jews and Gentiles, both within and outside the Congregation?

When Paul had visited Corinth the second time, to collect their offering, though it didn't work out at that time, he had planned for Corinth's representatives to meet up with Galatia's representatives, like in Ephesus or Antioch Syria, on their way to Jerusalem.

1 Cor. 16:1. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Congregations of Galatia, even so do you [in Corinth].

But after the year delay since Paul's second visit to Corinth, the Galatian Congregations had finished their collection, and had sent representatives to Paul in Ephesus, before he went to Corinth for the third time.

2 Cor. 9:2. [Corinth] was ready [to give] a year ago [when Paul made his 2nd visit]. Acts 20:4. There accompanied Paul to Asia [Eph+], ... Gaius of Derbe [in Galatia].

Paul had also gotten Asia [Eph+] to participate.

Acts 20:4. And of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus.

Also, by this time the Congregations of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea had heard about the plan, and pleaded to be allowed to participate, despite their own poverty.

2 Cor. 8:1-4. The Congregations of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], ... [despite] their deep poverty, pray[ed] us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take on us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

Rom. 15:26-27. It has pleased them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

When Paul had written 1 Corinthians, he didn't know if it would be appropriate for him to accompany the offering to Jerusalem or not.

1 Cor. 16:3-4. When I come [for my 2nd visit], whomever you shall approve by your letters, them I will send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And if it be appropriate [not "if God leads"] that I go also, they will go with me.

Now, almost a year after the second visit to Corinth, knowing it was time to move on, Paul was certain he wanted to accompany the offering to Jerusalem.

Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Paul's original preference was to 1) sail directly from Ephesus to Corinth, to make sure the Corinthians had accepted his corrections, and were going to follow through with the collection this time, 2) go on to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] to pick up their collection and representatives, 3) go back to Corinth to pick up their collection and representatives, and 4) sail to Jerusalem from there.

Plan 1) Ephesus > Corinth > Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] > Corinth > Jerusalem

2 Cor. 1:15-16. I was minded ['thought in my mind,' not 'was led'] to come to you first, so that you could have a second benefit, and to pass by you to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and to come again out of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] to you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.

But he decided to put Corinth off until last, because he didn't look forward to possibly having to rebuke them when he next saw them.

Plan 2) Ephesus > Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] > Corinth > Jerusalem > Rome > Spain

2 Cor. 1:23. I call God for a record on my soul, that to spare you, I came not as yet to Corinth.

Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Rom. 15:25, 28. Now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. ... When therefore I have performed this, ... I will come by you [Romans] to Spain.

In the meantime, Paul sent Timothy and Erastus ahead to prepare the Congregations for the collection.

Acts 19:22. So he sent to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] two of them that ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia [Eph+] for a season.

Waltke. Acts 19:21-22. 2 Cor. 1:15-18, 23-24; 2:1 Make Your Decision according to an Overall Strategy. ... Paul had a definite vision for his life, according to his heart's desire. ... "I planned to visit you first so that you might benefit twice. I planned to visit you on my way to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and to come back to you from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and then have you send me on my way to Judea. ... [But] it was in order to spare you that I did not return to Corinth. ... So I made up my mind that I would not make another painful visit to you. (2 Corinthians 1:15-18, 23-24; 2:1) Paul knew what he wanted to do and where he wanted to go. He had an overall strategy that he was working from.<sup>93</sup>

Don't confuse Paul's plans for a second visit to Corinth, talked about in 1 Corinthians 16; with his plans for a third visit, talked about in 2 Corinthians 8-9.

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<sup>93</sup> Waltke, The Will of God, Locations 1351-60.

PAUL’S 2ND AND 3RD VISITS TO CORINTH (1)	
Second Visit	Third Visit
<b>Soon after Pentecost.</b> 1 Cor. 16:8. I will remain at Ephesus until Pentecost.	<b>About 4 months before the Passover a Year Later.</b> Acts 20:2-3, 6, 16. He ... remained [at Corinth] three months. ... We sailed away from Philippi after [Passover]. ... He hurried ... to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.
<b>Planned to stay a long time and maybe winter there.</b> Acts 16:6. It may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you. ... I trust to tarry a while with you.	<b>Planned to stay until about a month before Passover.</b> Acts 20:3. When the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria [on a Passover pilgrimage vessel], he purposed to return through Macedonia.
<b>Didn’t know if he would go to Jerusalem, or someplace else, from there.</b> 1 Cor. 16:4-6. Them I will send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem, and if it’s appropriate that I go also, they will go with me. ... [Otherwise], you may bring me on my journey wherever I go.	<b>Knew he would go to Jerusalem from there.</b> Acts 19:21. Paul purposed ... to go to Jerusalem. 2 Cor. 1:15-16. I was minded to come to you ... and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.
<b>Planned to go through Philippi to Corinth.</b> 1 Cor. 16:5. I will come to you, when I will pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], for I do pass through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].	<b>Planned to go to Corinth first, but then changed his plans to go to Philippi first.</b> 2 Cor. 1:15-16. I was minded to come to you [Corinth] first, so that you could have a second benefit, and to pass by you to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and to come again out of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] to you. 2 Cor. 1:23. To spare you I came not as yet to Corinth. Acts 20:1-2. Paul ... departed to go to Macedonia, and when he had gone over those parts, ... he came to [Corinth].
	<b>A year later than the second visit.</b> 2 Cor. 8:10. You, who have begun before, not only to participate, but also to have come up with the idea, a year ago.

PAUL'S 2ND AND 3RD VISITS TO CORINTH (2)	
Second Visit	Third Visit
<b><u>Sent Timothy and brethren ahead to Philippi and Corinth to return to him in Ephesus.</u></b> Phil. 2:19. I trust ... to send Timothy shortly to you, that I ... may ... know your state. 1 Cor. 16:10-11. If Timothy come, ... conduct him ... in peace, that he may come to me, for I look for him with the brethren.	<b><u>Sent Timothy ahead to wait for him in Corinth.</u></b> 2 Cor. 8:16-19, 22. Titus ... went to you ... with ... the brother [Timothy], whose praise is ... throughout all the Congregations, and ... who was also chosen of the Congregations to travel with us with this grace. ... We have sent with them our brother [Erastus], ... we have oftentimes proved diligent, ... but now much more ... [to] you.
<b><u>Left Timothy in Ephesus to watch over things.</u></b> 1 Tim. 1:3. I asked you to remain still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].	<b><u>Sent Timothy ahead.</u></b> Acts 19:22. He sent to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] ... Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia [Eph+] for a season.
<b><u>Came with Titus, Artemas, and Tychicus.</u></b> Titus 3:12. When I shall send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis, for I have determined to winter there.	<b><u>Came with representatives from Macedonia.</u></b> 2 Cor. 9:4. Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, you) should be ashamed.
<b><u>Only Corinth and Galatia planned to participate.</u></b> 1 Cor. 15:3. When I come, whomever you will approve by your letters, them I will send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. 1 Cor. 16:1. Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, ... so do you.	<b><u>Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Asia [Eph+] also participated.</u></b> 2 Cor. 8:1-4. The Congregations of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] ... praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift. Rom. 15:26. It has pleased them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+] to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. Acts 20:4. There accompanied him to Asia [Eph+], Sopater of Berea; and of the Thess., Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus.

While Paul remained behind in Ephesus, after sending Timothy out ahead of his third visit to Corinth, there was a riot, because the success of Paul's preaching had reduced the sales of idols.

Acts 19:23-41. The same time [that Timothy and Erastus were away] there arose no small stir about that 'way' [meaning 'Messianism']. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, ... called together ... the workmen of like occupation, and said, "Sirs, you know ... that not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all [this region], this Paul has persuaded ... much people, saying that they are no gods, which are made with hands; so that not only this our craft is in danger, ... but also that the temple [one of the seven wonders of the ancient world] of the great goddess Diana should be despised. ... And the whole city was filled with confusion. And having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the amphitheater. ... And they drew [a Jewish man named] Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward [probably to differentiate themselves from Paul]. ... But when they knew that he was a Jew [and therefore also against idolatry], all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, "You men of Ephesus, what man is there that doesn't know how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? ... You ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. ... If Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, ... let them implead one another. ... For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar." ... And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

After the riot, Paul immediately left Ephesus with Gaius and Aristarchus, who had been dragged into the amphitheater by the mob.



Acts 20:1. And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called to him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].

Tychicus and Trophimus waited in Ephesus for Paul to pick them and the Ephesian offering up by ship on his way from Corinth to Jerusalem.

Acts 20:4b-5. Of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus; these going before [to Troas from Ephesus] waited for us at Troas.

It wasn't only pagan Gentile opposition that was increasing against Paul, but also unbelieving Jewish opposition.

Acts 20:18-19. You [Ephesians] know, from the first day that I came to Asia [Eph+], after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.

Not only did the Jews lie in wait to ambush him in Ephesus, but also in Corinth. Paul had planned to sail on a pilgrim ship from Corinth, to Ephesus, and then to a port near Jerusalem, so he could be there for Passover, but he had to change his plans.

Corinth. Acts 20:3. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].

And Luke lists two more such plots over the next two years. One at the beginning of his Caesarean imprisonment ...

Jerusalem. Acts 23:12-13. Certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. Indicate to the chief captain that he bring him down to you tomorrow, ... and we, before he ever comes near, are ready to kill him.

And once at the end of his Caesarean imprisonment ...

Caesarea Two Years Later. Acts 25:2-3. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed [Governor Festus] against Paul, and asked him, ... that he would send for him to Jerusalem, [their men] laying wait in the way to kill him.

To get to Philippi, Paul had to go through the seaport of Troas. So the first thing he did, was to leave some of his things in Troas with a man named Carpus. Paul figured he could send for the stuff from Rome after he delivered the offering to Jerusalem.

2 Tim. 4:13. The coat that I left at Troas with Carpus, ... and the books, ... [and] the parchments.

Passing through Troas, Paul found an open door to evangelize. But Titus hadn't returned yet from taking Paul's severe letter from Albania to Corinth when Paul returned from Albania to Ephesus. So since Paul was worried about Titus, he walked away from the open door at Troas, and went on to Philippi hoping to find Titus. Every time the New Testament mentions an open door for Paul, he walked away from it. Open doors indicate opportunities, not divine guidance.

2 Cor. 2:12-13. When I came to Troas to preach Messiah's gospel, and a door was opened to me of the Lord, [but] I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother; [so] taking my leave of them [in Troas], I went from there [to Philippi].

## **Acts 20:2a. Epistle of 2 Corinthians**

Written at Acts 20:2a from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].

Acts 20:2a. Paul ... departed to go into Macedonia.

Written after Acts 20:1 when Paul left Ephesus, and met Titus in Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] coming from Corinth.

Acts 20:1. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, ...

2 Cor. 2:12-13; 7:6. When I came to Troas, ... I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother, but taking my leave of them, I went from there to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. ... Nevertheless, God, ... comforted us by the coming of Titus.

Written before Acts 20:3, when Paul visited Corinth a third time.

Acts 20:3. He came into Greece [Achaia/Corinth], and stayed there three months.

2 Cor. 9:3-4. I sent the brethren, ... so that ... you may be ready, lest by chance if they of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] come with me, and find you unprepared, we, that we say not you, should be ashamed.

2 Cor. 13:1-5. This is the third time I'm coming to you. ... I ... tell you in advance, as if I were present the second time, ... that [when] I come again, I will not spare.

When Paul went into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] from Ephesus, his opposition and troubles continued, but a good thing that happened to him was that Titus arrived from Corinth with the news the Corinthians had received Paul's severe letter well, and had disciplined those who had transgressed.

2 Cor. 7:4-16. I am filled with comfort, I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation. For, when we had come into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless, God, that comforts those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more. For though I made you sorry with a letter, ... what carefulness it worked in you, yes, what clearing of yourselves, yes, what indignation, yes, what fear, yes, what vehement desire, yes, what zeal, yes, what revenge! In all things you have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. ... Therefore, ... exceedingly the more we joyed for the joy of Titus, because his spirit

was refreshed by you all. For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth. And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, while he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

Paul wanted the Corinthians to have their collection ready when he got there, especially since he had told the Philippian and Thessalonian Congregations, who were giving very sacrificially, that Corinth had come up with the idea over a year ago. Paul sent 2 Corinthians to Corinth with Titus, Timothy, and Erastus, so they could get the collection ready before he came to Corinth. The Galatian and Macedonian [Phil/Thess+] representatives travelled with Paul to Corinth because Paul planned go from Corinth to Jerusalem on a Passover pilgrim ship. Paul planned to pick up the Ephesian representatives when the ship stopped in Ephesus or Miletus.

2 Cor. 8:1-7, 16-23; 9:2-5. Moreover, brethren, we want you to know of the grace of God bestowed on the Congregations of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], how that in a great trial of affliction, ... their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. For to, ... and beyond their ability, they were willing of themselves, praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and take on us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. ... Inasmuch that, we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. ... But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went to you. And we have sent with him the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the Congregations [Timothy], and ... who was also chosen of the Congregations to travel with us with this grace. ... Avoiding this, that any man should blame us [accuse them of embezzlement] in this abundance which is administered by us, providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also

in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother [Erastus], whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you [Erastus was from Corinth]. Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow helper concerning you, or our brethren [that will be accompanying Paul from Macedonia (Phil/Thess+)] be enquired of, they are the messengers ['apostles' in Greek] of the Congregations. ... For ... I boast of you to them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], that Achaia [Cor+] was ready a year ago; and your zeal has motivated very many. Yet I have sent the brethren [Titus, Timothy, and Erastus], lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, you may be ready; lest haply if they of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, you) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. Therefore, I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren [Titus, Timothy, and Erastus], that they would go before to you, and make up beforehand your bounty.

It was wise of Paul to provide many witnesses to accompany the offering, "that no man should blame us in this abundance [of money] which is administered by us" (2 Cor. 8:20). Paul had enough detractors and accusers in Corinth already without exposing himself to charges of embezzlement. When Paul reached Corinth, he stayed with them three months, during which time he wrote the great doctrinal letter of Romans.

### **Acts 20:3a. Epistle of Romans**

Written at Acts 20:3a from Corinth.

Acts 20:2b-3a. [Paul] came into Greece, and stayed there three months.

Written after Acts 20:2b when the offering was collected from Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Corinth.

Rom. 15:26. It has pleased them of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+] to make a certain

contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

Written before Acts 20:3b when Paul left Corinth to bring the offering to Jerusalem.

Rom. 15:25. Now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

Acts 20:3b-4a. When the Jews laid wait for Paul, as he was about to sail to Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. And there accompanied him into Asia [Eph+] ...

The Congregation at Rome hadn't been started by an apostle, but by people from Rome who had heard the gospel while visiting Jerusalem, and by believers from elsewhere who went to the capital of the empire for various political, business, and personal reasons over time.

Paul had never been to Rome. He told them he had heard a lot about them, and had long wanted to visit, but had been delayed by opportunities and problems in the Aegean areas he had evangelized.

Rom. 1:8-15. I thank my God through Jesus Messiah for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world [since Rome was the capital]. For God is my witness, ... that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request, if by any means, now at length, I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come to you. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift [by the laying on of his hands], to the end you may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come to you, but was hindered up until now [by Aegean opportunities and problems that had higher priority than Rome], so that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am a debtor to both the Greeks, and to the Barbarians. ... So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Paul sent his greetings from Corinth to Rome in Romans 16, beginning with those whom the Corinthians knew. Phebe, had business in Rome, and carried Paul's letter from Corinth. She wasn't a 'deaconess' of the Congregation, which would be the transliteration of the Greek word 'δῆκονος, diakonos', because she certainly wasn't "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:12); but she was one of many 'servants' of the Congregation, which is a translation of the Greek word 'δῆκονος, diakonos', like the many others who were listed as laboring in Romans 16.

Rom. 16:1-2. I commend to you Phebe, our sister, which is a servant of the Congregation which is at Cenchrea, that you receive her in the Lord, as becomes saints, and that you assist her in whatever business she has need of you, for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also.

Of the 28 other times the Greek word 'diakonos' occurs in the New Testament, only three times it is transliterated as 'deacon' (Phil. 1:1; and 1 Tim. 3:8, 12). The normal translation is 'servant,' and often a transliteration of deacon isn't even a possibility.

Jn. 2:5-7. His mother said to the servants [δῆκονος, diakonos, not 'deacons'], "Whatever he says to you, do it. ... Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water."

Rom. 13:3-4. Rulers are ... the minister [δῆκονος, diakonos, not 'deacon'] of God to you, ... for he bears not the sword in vain.

2 Cor. 11:14-15. Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [δῆκονος, diakonos, not 'deacons'] are also transformed as the ministers [δῆκονος, diakonos, not 'deacons'] of righteousness.

Corinth was the seaport on the western (Rome) side of Corinth's isthmus, and Cenchrea was Corinth's seaport on the eastern (Ephesus) side. Graphically, it looks like ...

Rome < Ionian Sea < Corinth-ISTHMUS-Cenchrea > Aegean Sea > Ephesus

So Paul went through Cenchrea when he left Corinth to return to Antioch Syria after his second missionary journey, for example.

Acts 18:18. Paul ... sailed from [Corinth] to Syria, ... having shaved his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow.

By the time Paul got to Corinth for his third visit, Aquila and Priscilla had left Ephesus, and returned to Rome to establish a base for Paul's mission to Spain. Aquila and Priscilla's chosen mission in life was to support the expansion of the gospel, and the work in Ephesus was already mature. The Corinthians would have wanted to send greetings to them, since they knew them well. Paul had originally met them in Corinth, when the emperor had temporarily expelled the Jews from Rome.

Acts 18:1-2. Paul ... came to Corinth, and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.

Rom. 16:3. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, ... [and] the Congregation that is in their house [in Rome].

The Corinthians also knew Epaenetus, which is why he was greeted right after Priscilla and Aquila.

Rom. 16: 5. Salute my well-beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia [Cor+] to Messiah.

This is also another example of how the KJV New Testament, based mostly on the Byzantine texts, is more dependable than modern versions, based mostly on the so-called "oldest and best" manuscripts, of the corrupt Alexandrian and Latin manuscripts, which have Epaenetus as the firstfruits of Asia [Eph+], instead of Achaia [Cor+]. There is a theory that Romans 16 was originally part of a letter written to Ephesus, but Sanday and Headlam have adequately addressed that theory.<sup>94</sup>

Beginning with Mary in verse 6, Paul greets people from Ephesus who were in Rome at the time.

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<sup>94</sup> Sanday, Romans, 1794 Kindle.



Rom. 15:6-7. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labor on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my [Jewish] kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Messiah before me.

Andronicus and Junia had been imprisoned sometime before this, like during the Jewish persecution that followed Stephen's martyrdom, during Herod's persecution in Jerusalem, or during the time Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus, before he wrote 2 Corinthians and Romans, but neither Paul nor they were imprisoned when he wrote "my fellow-prisoners" in Romans 15.

Acts 8:1-3. At that time [following Stephen's martyrdom] there was a great persecution against the Congregation which was at Jerusalem. ... As for Saul, he made havoc of the Congregation, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Acts 12:1. About that time, Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Congregation.

2 Cor. 11:23. In prisons, ... frequently.

"Of note among the apostles" (Rom. 15:7) doesn't mean they were top-notch apostles, even better than Peter and Paul; but rather that they were believers the apostles had taken note of, since they had been believers from the beginning in Jerusalem, and had endured imprisonment for the faith.

Rom. 16:13. Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Paul calls Rufus' mother his own out of endearment. Probably he had lodged with them for an extended period at some time. This is probably the same Rufus that Mark mentioned in his gospel, because Mark's gospel is thought to be directed to Roman readers, and those readers would be interested in hearing of someone they might know in the gospel narratives, and there's no other reason for Mark to have mentioned this detail.

Mk. 15:21. And they compelled one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

God graciously allowed Tertius, to whom Paul dictated Romans, to insert his name into eternal scripture at this place in the text.

Rom. 16:21-22. Timothy ... salute[s] you. I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you.

And the wealthy Erastus is mentioned next to a simple brother Quartus, who happened to be in the room while Paul was dictating.

Rom. 16:23. Erastus the chamberlain of the city salutes you, and Quartus a brother.

Paul had sent Erastus and Timothy ahead from Ephesus. Erastus probably had to resign his administrative duties as chamberlain of Corinth during the years he ministered to Paul in Ephesus. The Erastus of Acts 19:22, Romans 16:23, and 2 Timothy 4:20 are probably all the same person, because he is always associated with both Timothy and Corinth.

Acts 19:22. He sent into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+ and then on to Corinth] two of them that ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia [Eph+] for a season.

2 Cor. 8:18, 22; 9:3. We have sent with [Titus] the brother whose praise is in the gospel [Timothy], ... and we have sent with them our brother [Erastus who was from Corinth], whom we have oftentimes proved diligent, ... but now much more ... on the great confidence which I have in you. ... I have sent the brethren [Titus, Timothy, and Erastus], ... that, as I said, you may be ready [with your collection].

Erastus was still at his home city of Corinth when Paul wrote his last epistle about four years later.

2 Tim. 4:20. Erastus stayed at Corinth.

## **Acts 20:3b (Corinth). 17) Make Wise Flexible Plans**

As mentioned earlier, Paul's first plan in finishing his third missionary journey, was to go from Ephesus to Corinth first, so he could visit the Corinthians twice.

Plan 1). 2 Cor. 1:15-16. Ephesus > Corinth > Thessalonica > Philippi > Thessalonica > Corinth > Jerusalem > Rome > Spain

But then he changed his plans because he decided to save the Corinthians for last, because he didn't look forward to having to rebuke them.

Plan 2). 2 Cor. 1:23; Acts 19:21. Ephesus > Philippi > Thessalonica > Corinth > Jerusalem > Rome > Spain

But in the end he didn't follow plan 1 or 2. A plot to ambush him on the pilgrim ship from Corinth to Judaea for Passover forced him to retrace his steps back to Philippi, who got the "second benefit" (2 Cor. 1:15) instead of Corinth.

Plan 3). Acts 20:3. Ephesus > Philippi > Thessalonica > Corinth > Thessalonica > Philippi > Jerusalem > Rome > Spain

Paul was planning to take a Passover pilgrim ship from Corinth to Ephesus, where he would pick up Tychicus and Trophimus with the offering from Asia [Eph+], and then sail on to Jerusalem. But the Jews discovered his plans, and packed the ship with assassins posing as pilgrims, to ambush Paul on the voyage. Paul found out about it, and sent a message on the pilgrim ship, to Tychicus and Trophimus, to meet him and the others in Troas.

Acts 20:3. When the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail to [Jerusalem], he purposed to return through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+].

And his plans never included arrest and imprisonment, which is what actually happened.

What Actually Happened. Acts 21:33; 24:27; 27:1; 28:16. Ephesus > Philippi > Thessalonica > Corinth > Thessalonica > Philippi > Jerusalem > Caesarean Imprisonment > Roman Imprisonment

Does this sound like someone who received direct revelation from the Spirit of God via inward impressions for all his decisions? If God was giving Paul supernatural guidance, why did he have to change his plans so often? But since God only rarely gave anyone, even to the apostle Paul, supernatural guidance for anything, even something as important as completing Jesus' mission to the Gentiles, why would he give non-apostle believers today, daily supernatural guidance as to what job they should take, or where they should find a parking space? In the book of Acts, God intervened with direct guidance only in rare cases to save Jesus' mission of Acts 1:8. Instead of listening for an inner voice or receiving any direct revelation, the apostles almost always used the Word and Wisdom to make their decisions.

### **Acts 20:4. The Messengers (Apostles) of the Congregations**

Representatives had been appointed by the Congregations of Galatia, Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], Achaia [Cor+], and Asia [Eph+], to accompany Paul and the offering to Jerusalem.

Acts 20:4. There accompanied him into Asia [Eph+], Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy. And of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus.

He didn't say, "and Gaius and Timothy of Derbe," even though Timothy was also from the area of Derbe. So Timothy may have travelled as Corinth's representative. The Corinthians may also have asked Paul to represent them, to reassure him of their love and confidence after the strain in their relationship described in 2 Corinthians.

Zahn speculates that “of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus” in Acts 20:4, could be the same as “Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], Paul's companions in travel” in Acts 19:29, that had been dragged into the amphitheater in Ephesus. “Companions in travel,” didn’t mean they had previously been so, but that they became so after the riot. He thinks ‘Secundus’ may be another name for ‘Gaius,’ that was used in Acts 20:4 because there was another Gaius in the group, “Gaius of Derbe” (Acts 20:4), because Secundus is only mentioned here in the New Testament.<sup>95</sup>

THE MESSENGERS (APOSTLES) OF THE CONGREGATIONS		
Region	Congregations	Messengers (Apostolos)
Galatia	Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe	Gaius of Derbe
Macedonia	Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea	Sopater of Berea Aristarchus of Thess. Secundus [Gaius?] of Thess.
Achaia	Corinth	Timothy (of Derbe)
Asia	Ephesus, Colossae, Laodicea	Tychicus of ? Trophimus of Ephesus Acts 21:29

It’s interesting Luke lists the Congregations’ representatives that accompanied the offering, but doesn’t say anything about the offering itself in Acts, except for one passing reference later in Acts 24:17, during Paul’s defense before Governor Felix in Caesarea.

Acts 24:17. Now after many years, I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

But Luke wants us to focus, not on the money the Gentile Congregations sent to Jerusalem, but on the Gentile representatives themselves that they sent, all dedicated to the work of the gospel. Paul brought them to Jerusalem as a firstfruits offering of the finished work of Jesus’ mission to the Aegean Gentiles. And how the Jewish Congregation in Jerusalem would respond to these Gentile

<sup>95</sup> Zahn, Introduction NT, 4782 Kindle.

brethren was more important than how they would respond to their monetary offering.

Rom. 15:16. That I would be the minister of Jesus Messiah to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

When Paul and the Galatian, Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and Achaean [Cor+] messengers ('apostles' of the churches in Greek, but not apostles of Jesus Messiah) were ready to board the pilgrim ship to Jerusalem, a plot was discovered to assassinate Paul on the ship, so he and the representatives went back through Macedonia. And Paul sent a message via the ship to the Asian [Eph+] representatives that he had planned to pick up in Ephesus or Miletus (near Ephesus), to meet them in Troas instead.

Acts 20:4b-5. And of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus; these going before tarried for us at Troas.

### **Acts 20:6a. Passover in Philippi**

When Paul, Timothy, Gaius of Derbe, Aristarchus, Secundus (Gaius of Thessalonica?), and Sopater got to Philippi, they celebrated the Passover there with the brethren, including Luke, even though Philippi was a predominantly Gentile Congregation, since now they were too late to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem. This showed that Paul and the Gentile Congregations celebrated Passover and Unleavened Bread (Matza) in harmony with the Jewish brethren within their Congregations. Paul then left Philippi in time to make it to Jerusalem for Pentecost.

Acts 20:6, 16. We sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread [Passover]. ... Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because ... he hurried, if it were possible [he didn't know for sure because God didn't guide him with direct revelation], for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

On his voyage from Caesarea to Rome, Paul also mentions Yom Kippur.

Acts 27:9. Sailing was now dangerous, because the [fall Day of Atonement] Fast was now already past [winter was beginning].

Paul, Jesus' ambassador to the Gentiles, still wore tzitzit and dressed like an observant Jew. Otherwise, the synagogue leaders in Antioch Galatia wouldn't have asked him to speak.

Acts 13:15. After the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "You men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

The Congregation in Corinth was mostly Gentile, but Paul had taught them all about the Jewish feasts, and he listed most of them in 1 and 2 Corinthians.

Passover (Pesach) and Unleavened Bread. 1 Cor. 5:7-8. Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump [of dough], as you are unleavened. For even Messiah, our Passover [lamb], is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let's keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Firstfruits. 1 Cor. 15:20. Now Messiah has risen from the dead, and become the Firstfruits of them that slept.

Pentecost (Shavuot). 1 Cor. 16:8. I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

Trumpets (Rosh Hashana). 1 Cor. 15:52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump [of 101 shofar blasts during the celebration of the feast], for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we [who are still alive] will be changed.

Tabernacles (Sukkot). 2 Cor. 5:1. We know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal.

The Congregation at Corinth celebrated these feasts, not because they were required to do so, since Gentiles were never under the law and Jewish brethren have been freed from the law, but because they were free to do so. Why not celebrate these feasts along with the Jewish believers of your Congregation? It will be educational, it will foster ties to reach out to the unbelieving Jewish community, and it will discourage the kind of spiritualizing and allegorizing of scripture that has led Reformed theology into so much error. How infinitely better to celebrate these biblical holidays in your Congregation, versus the pagan Roman Catholic false religious holidays and seasons, like so-called Lent etc.

No one could be around Paul without being 'Judaized,' or rather 'Jewish-ized.' That's one reason God chose him as the apostle to the Gentiles.

Phil. 3:5. Of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

Acts 22:3. Brought up in [Jerusalem], [taught] at the feet of Gamaliel.

Acts 23:6. Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee.

Bock. Why is [Paul] so anxious to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost? It is because he keeps the feasts.<sup>96</sup>

## **Acts 20:5. Luke Rejoins Paul at Philippi**

Acts 20:5-6. These [the Asian (Eph+) representatives] going before tarried for us at Troas, and we sailed away from Philippi after the days of [Passover and Unleavened Bread], and came to them to Troas.

Notice the second "we" portion of Acts begins here. This is an amazing thing! Paul had not been planning to come back to Philippi on his way to Jerusalem. The Jewish plot to assassinate him on the Passover pilgrim ship from Corinth, had redirected Paul to Luke here in Philippi, just like the Spirit's prohibition of evangelism in Ephesus and

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<sup>96</sup> Bock, Acts, Kindle 15804.



Bithynia, had redirected Paul to Luke in Troas, at the start of the second missionary journey. And once again, Luke is suddenly ready to leave his established life at a moment's notice, and join Paul on his mission, though three months earlier when Paul went through Philippi on his way to Corinth, Luke had no intention of going with Paul and the Congregations' representatives to Jerusalem.

Luke was a fastidious collector and organizer of historical data. For such a detail-oriented person to pick up in a moment's notice, and go on a journey for the next five years of his life, when Paul unexpectedly passed through Philippi, because of a last minute change in plans, is amazing.

Paul had probably seen Luke as the Macedonian man in his vision at Troas, since I haven't heard of any distinctive clothing by which you could know a man was a Macedonian in a vision, and thereby God simultaneously call both Paul to Greece, and Luke to Paul. Likewise, in Philippi, Paul had a vision which informed him he wouldn't be returning to any of the areas he had already evangelized, to once again both inform Paul and reenlist Luke.

Acts 20:25. I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

Now both Paul and Luke knew, that if Luke was ever going to write a history of Jesus' ministry to the Judaeans in a gospel, and to the diaspora Jews and the Gentiles through Paul in a second book, the book of Acts, he would have to leave everything and go with Paul now. Long sea voyages and imprisonments are the best times to get interviews with busy apostles, and that's what Paul and Luke's life would be like for the next five years.

### **Acts 20:13-14. Paul's Gethsemane**

From Troas, Paul took the shorter 20 mile walk across the Troad peninsula, while the others picked him up after sailing the longer distance around the peninsula by sea. It

was a pleasant road, but was he walking alone because he was thinking about how things had turned around since the peak of his success in Ephesus, and about the prophetic indications of his sufferings to come at Jerusalem. He may have been remembering how Silas, Timothy, and he had walked the same road, in the other direction, to Troas where Paul had the vision that began the ministry to Greece.

Acts 20:13-14. And we went before to ship, and sailed to Assos, there intending to take in Paul, for so had he appointed, minding [thinking/reasoning, not 'feeling led of God'] himself to go afoot. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in.

### **Acts 20:15-38. Farewell Speech to the Ephesian Elders**

Acts 20:15-17. And ... we came to Miletus, for Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time [in Ephesus]: for he hurried, if it were possible [which he couldn't know since he almost never received direct revelation for guidance], for him to be at Jerusalem [to celebrate in the temple] the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the Congregation.

Paul and his company probably took a ship in Troas that planned to skip Ephesus and stop in Miletus, because they might have had to wait several more days to book a ship that planned to stop in Ephesus. Paul probably sent his message to Ephesus for the Ephesian elders to come to him by public courier on horseback. It was faster for the message to go by horseback, and the elders to walk to Paul; than for Paul and his companions to walk to Ephesus, and then walk back to Miletus.

Acts 20:18-38. And when [the elders from Ephesus] had come to him, [Paul] said to them, ... "Now, behold, I go bound in the spirit [this may be a veiled reference to a previous physical imprisonment in Asia (Eph+)] to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to

me there, except that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But none of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear to myself, so that I can finish my race with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel. ... And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. ... Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Congregation of God, which he has purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ... And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace. ... And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.



## ***Ch 13. Acts 21:18-26:32. Caesarean Imprisonment***



*13. Paul Before Agrippa (1875). Nikolai Bodarevsky (1850-1921)*

The Apostle spake. “Paul, thou art mad,”  
With a loud voice Prince Festus said.  
What, will the prince outspoke the voice  
That pierced to Lazarus in his grave,  
And stilled the clamouring winds for those  
Who said, “We perish; Jesus, save?”

13. The Witness of Paul. Thomas Toke Lynch  
(1818–1871)

### **Acts 21:16-21. Arrival In Jerusalem**

When Paul and the Gentile brethren reached Jerusalem, they stayed with a brother from Cyprus the Caesarean brethren recommended. Being from Cyprus, he was probably more open to having the Gentile representatives in his home than many of the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem were.

Acts 21:16. There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old [and thus Jewish?] disciple, with whom we should lodge.

When they met the Jewish Congregation the next day, the brethren weren't thrilled with either the monetary offering or the Gentile representatives themselves, which was another disappointment to Paul during this period. The Jerusalem elders rejoiced in Paul's work among the Gentiles very briefly, and then immediately voiced their concern about false rumors Paul had prohibited Jewish brethren from keeping the Law.

Acts 21:18-21. Paul went in with us [Luke and the Gentile messengers] to James, and all the elders [of the Congregation of Jerusalem] were present. And ... [Paul] declared particularly what things God had worked among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord [briefly] --- and said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe. And they are all zealous of the law, and they are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs."

The rumors were false that Paul had prohibited Jewish brethren, or even Gentile brethren, from keeping the law. He only said it wasn't required to keep the Law. We are free to keep it, and free not to keep it. We are not required to keep it, and not required not to keep it. Salvation is by grace through faith apart from works.

## **Catholic Prohibition Against Jewishness**

But the pagan Roman Catholic religion later actually did prohibit keeping the Law, or any Jewish customs, or any participation with the Jews in the synagogues. You can see from the following quotes, that until 300 AD. and beyond, the early Congregation continued to participate in significant numbers in Jewish festivals with unsaved (non-Messianic), ethnic Jews, and felt comfortable doing so, because the Jews are still and forever will be God's chosen ethnic people.

Ignatius of Antioch supposedly wrote an Epistle to the Magnesians in which he supposedly said, (the Catholic Church allowed only the worst of the writings of the supposed 'early church fathers' to survive, since God only miraculously preserves the Bible):

Ignatius. 110 AD. If we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace. ... Those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day. ... Let us learn to live according to the principles of Christianity. For whosoever is called by any other name besides this, is not of God. Lay aside, therefore, the evil, the old, the sour leaven. ... It is absurd to profess Christ Jesus, and to Judaize.<sup>97</sup>

God said ...

Lev. 23:5. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover.

But at the First Roman Catholic Church Council of Nicaea in 325 AD., Emperor Constantine decreed 'Christians' had to keep the Passover on a different day from the Jews. Constantine didn't really end persecution against believers by his supposed conversion to 'Christianity,' but rather transferred the persecution of believers, renamed heretics and dissenters, who chose to

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<sup>97</sup> Ignatius, Magnesians, 8-10.

follow the Bible, from the Roman government to the government-sponsored, pagan Roman Catholic religion.

Eusebius. After 325 AD. [A] difference ... arose ... with respect to the proper day of keeping Easter, some celebrating that festival in the manner of the Jews, and others following the custom of Christians. ... The emperor, therefore ... assembled ... a general council, [of] all the bishops to meet at Nice, in Bithynia.<sup>98</sup>

Constantine. After 325 AD. Let no malevolent demon ... expose the divine law, ... to slander and detraction. An internal sedition in the Church is, in my apprehension, more dangerous and formidable than any war, in which I can be engaged, ... and hoping that by my interference, a remedy might be applied to the evil, I sent for you all, without delay.

It seemed to every one [everyone who wanted to continue living that is] a most unworthy thing that we should follow the custom of the Jews in the celebration of this most holy solemnity, ... polluted wretches! ... Rejecting the practice of this people, ... let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews. ... In pursuing this course with a unanimous consent [or else!], let us withdraw ourselves ... from that most odious fellowship, ... that the purity of your minds may not be affected by a conformity in any thing with the customs of the vilest of mankind, ... so ... that we may have nothing in common with, ... and to have no fellowship with the perjury of the Jews.

Every thing was examined, until a unanimous sentiment [or else!], pleasing to God, ... was brought to light; so that no pretense was left for dissension or controversy respecting the faith. ... It should be considered that any dissension in a business of such importance, and in a religious institution of so great solemnity, would be highly criminal. ... Receive with cheerfulness the heavenly and truly divine command. For whatever is transacted in the holy councils of the bishops, is to be [considered] the divine will. ...

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<sup>98</sup> Eusebius, Another Letter of Constantine, following page 439 of the Ecclesiastical History, on page 9.



Wherefore, having announced to our beloved brethren what has been already written, it is your duty to receive and establish the arguments already stated, and the observance of the most holy day.<sup>99</sup>

Another council confirmed Constantine's Nicaean decision regarding Passover/Easter.

Synod of Antioch in Encaeniis. 341 AD. Canon 1. Whosoever shall presume to set aside the decree of the holy and great Synod which was assembled at Nice in the presence of the pious Emperor Constantine [yuck!], ... concerning the holy and salutary feast of Easter; ... let them be excommunicated and cast out of the Church; ... if any one ... presume, ... to exercise his own private judgment, ... by observing Easter [at the same time] with the Jews.

And another forbade keeping the sabbath and Jewish feasts.

Synod of Laodicea. After 363 AD. Canon 15. No others shall sing in the Church, save only the [appointed] canonical singers. Canon 28. It is not permitted to hold love feasts, as they are called, in the Lord's Houses, or Churches, nor to eat ... in the house of God. [So ended the Lord's Supper of 1 Cor. 11b and so began the little wafers and thimbles of grape juice.] Canon 29. Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day; and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ. Canon 33. No one shall join in prayers with heretics or schismatics [i.e. born-again, Bible-believing Christians]. Canon 37. It is not lawful to receive [food] portions sent from the feasts of Jews or heretics, nor to feast together with them [i.e. to observe Passover and the other Old Testament feasts]. Canon 38. It is not lawful to receive unleavened bread from the Jews, nor to be partakers of their impiety.

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<sup>99</sup> Eusebius, Another Letter of Constantine, following page 439 of the Ecclesiastical History, on page 52-54.

Gager. The most stunning literary testimony to Christians in local synagogues appears in a series of eight sermons preached at Antioch [Syria] ... by the towering figure of John Chrysostom. ... John is in an angry mood in these sermons. What set him off was the realization that members of his congregation were absent from church ... because they were celebrating the fall festivals of the Jews in the local synagogues.

Chrysostom 386 AD. The festivals of the pitiful and miserable Jews are soon to march upon us one after the other and in quick succession: the feast of Trumpets, the feast of Tabernacles, the Fasts. There are many in our ranks who ... will join the Jews in keeping their feasts and observing their fasts. ... Three hundred Fathers ... gathered together in the land of Bithynia and ordained [the day for observing Easter] by law; yet you disdain their decrees. ... God confined the festival [of Passover] to one city [Jerusalem], and later destroyed the city so that, even if it was against their wills, he might lead [the Jews] away from that way of life. ... Christ ... submitted to circumcision, kept the Sabbath, observed the festival days, and ate the unleavened bread. But He did all these things in Jerusalem. ... Paul ... surpassed all his contemporaries in the exact observance of that way of life. But after he ... came to realize that he was doing all this for his own hurt and destruction, he immediately changed. [Chrysostom must have never read Acts.] ... Are you a Christian? Why, then, this zeal for Jewish practices? ... [Do] you think the two religions are really one and the same? ... The Law bids them keep the feast, ... "in the place which the Lord your God chooses." ... When he overthrew the city, he destroyed the rest of the entire structure of that way of life. ... The Jews will recover neither their city [I wish we could send a messenger to hell to him with the news about Israeli statehood in 1948] nor their temple. ... On that day of judgment you must be afraid of hearing him who will judge you say: "Depart, I know you not. ... You were obstinate toward me and started up again the festivals to which I had put an end. ... The man who sets a Judaizing Christian straight, ... snatch[es] a soul from the fires of hell. ... Even if those

who observed the Fast are many, you my beloved, must not make a show and a parade of this calamity in the Church. ... If someone tells you that many have observed the Fast, stop him from talking so the rumor may not get around and become public knowledge. ... Therefore, let us now go forth, let us get busy and search for the sinner, ... even if we must go into his home. ... Say: 'How is it that you attend their services, how is it you participate in the festival, how is it you join them in observing the Fast?' ... Remind him of gehenna, ... that no small punishment awaits those who dare to do what he is doing. Remind him that Paul said: 'You who are justified in the Law have fallen away from grace.' Remind him of Paul's threat: 'If you be circumcised, Christ will be no advantage to you.' Tell him ... the fasting of the Jews drives from heaven the man who observes the Fast, even if he has ten thousand other good works to his credit.<sup>100</sup>

Whether Chrysostom is right that the Jewish feasts should only be observed in Jerusalem or not is irrelevant, since even Jewish believers are no longer under the Law, and thus free to decide both how observant to be, and also how to be observant. No one will suffer “Gehenna” for choosing to be observant so long as they’re trusting Messiah for justification by faith. And I don’t know which version of Acts Chrysostom was reading, when he said Paul “immediately changed,” or ever changed, his observances of the feasts and Jewish way of life after believing in Jesus.

Pope Eugene IV. 1441 AD. The Holy Roman Church [actually, the Unholy Pagan Roman Religion] ... firmly believes, professes and teaches that ... the Mosaic law ... after our Lord’s coming ... ceased, and the sacraments [yuck] of the New Testament began. [There are no ‘sacraments’ in the NT.] ... After the promulgation of the Gospel, ... they cannot be observed without the loss of eternal salvation. All, therefore, who after that time observe circumcision and the Sabbath and the other requirements of the law, the holy Roman

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<sup>100</sup> Chrysostom, Homilies Against The Jews.

Church declares alien to the Christian faith and not in the least fit to participate in eternal salvation.<sup>101</sup>

These pagan Roman Catholic church decrees, forbidding both Jewish and Gentile believers from keeping the Law, or any ceremonial parts of it, are exactly the kinds of things neither Paul, nor the New Testament, ever forbade, except that Gentiles were not supposed to become Jewish proselytes, though it wouldn't affect their salvation by grace if they did, so long as they didn't trust in it for their salvation.

### **Reformed Prohibition Against Jewishness**

And 'Reformed' Congregations are, by definition, merely 'reformed' Roman Catholic churches, not new entities entirely, and not completely reformed at that.

Luke's message in the last 9.5 chapters of Acts, is not merely that the Congregation should permit, but also that the Congregation should actively encourage and foster Jewishness. If the Congregation had heeded that message in the centuries after the apostles, Luther would never have written such anti-biblical, anti-God, anti-Jesus sentiments as he did in his booklet about the Jews, which the Nazis made heavy use of. Luther talks about the "Jewish Problem," and he thereby contributed to Hitler's "Final Solution."

Michael. Just about every anti-Jewish book printed in the Third Reich ... contained citations to and quotations from Luther.<sup>102</sup>

It's no accident that Kristallnacht, the German pogrom that is often referred to as the beginning of the Holocaust, occurred on Martin Luther's birthday, November 10. You might feel like you need a shower after reading Luther.

Martin Luther, Father of the Protestant Reformation and the Holocaust. 1543 AD. My God, what we Gentiles have to put up with! ... For God's sake, ... stop talking

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<sup>101</sup> Pope Eugene IV, papal bull.

<sup>102</sup> Michael, Holy Hatred, 119.

like that! ... By God! ... I found out that they called Christ a 'tola,' that is, a 'hanged highwayman.' Therefore I do not wish to have anything more to do with any Jew. ... You damned Jews ... are not worthy of looking at the outside of the Bible, much less of reading it. You should read only the bible that is found under the sow's tail, and eat and drink the letters that drop from there. ... The Jews ... are consigned by the wrath of God to the devil, who has not only robbed them of a proper understanding of Scripture, but also of ordinary human reason, shame, and sense. ... Therefore, they cannot be trusted and believed in any [non-scripture] matter either. ... Wherever you see a genuine Jew, you may with a good conscience cross yourself and bluntly say: "There goes a devil incarnate," ... for they really are possessed. ... Next to the devil, you have no more bitter, venomous, and vehement foe than a real Jew who [by] their lineage and circumcision infect them all.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). [We] might wonder why they are so particularly hostile toward Christians. They have no reason to act this way, since we show them every kindness [like Luther's booklet?]. ... The Jews, who are exiles, should really have nothing, and whatever they have must surely be our property. They do not work. [Gentile governments decreed it illegal for Jews to work except in occupations like lending.] ... A thief is condemned to hang for the theft of ten florins, ... but ... a Jew steals and robs ten tons of gold through his usury [lending]. ... They steal and murder where they can and ever teach their children to do likewise. ... They curse us Goyim [Gentiles] in their synagogues and in their prayers. [The Birkat haMinim, the thirteenth article of the Amidah prayer that is recited three times a day, does curse the Jewish Messianic 'heretics' and Christians in general, the Minim and the Notzrim.] ... These dreary dregs, this stinking scum, this dried-up froth, this moldy leaven and boggy morass of Jewry ... are nothing but rotten, stinking, rejected dregs. ... God in heaven and all the angels have to laugh and dance when they hear a Jew pass wind. ... That is the type of human beings, if I should or could call them that, [etc.] ... [Is] a Jew ... such a noble,

precious jewel that God and all the angels dance when he farts?

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). We do not know to the present day which devil brought them into our country. The country and the roads are open for them to proceed to their land whenever they wish. [It would have been suicide to try to emigrate to Islamic-held Jerusalem at that time.] If they did so, we would be glad to present gifts to them on the occasion; [it] would be good riddance. For they are a heavy burden, a plague, a pestilence, a sheer misfortune for our country. Proof for this is found in the fact that ... they were banished from France, ... which was an especially fine nest. Very recently they were banished by our dear Emperor Charles from Spain, the very best nest of all. ... This year they were expelled from the entire Bohemian crown land, where they had one of the best nests, in Prague. Likewise, during my lifetime they have been driven from Regensburg, Magdeburg, and other places. ... They hold us Christians captive in our own country. They let us work in the sweat of our brow to earn money and property while they sit behind the stove, idle away the time, fart, and roast pears. ... I wish that they were in Jerusalem. [So do they.]

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). We do not say that their women are haria, as they do with regard to our dear Mary. We do not curse them but wish them well, physically and spiritually. [As in Luther's booklet?] We lodge them, we let them eat and drink with us. We do not kidnap their children and pierce them through [like they do to ours]; we do not poison their wells [like they do ours]; we do not thirst for their blood [to drink it, as they do ours]. How, then, do we incur such terrible anger? ... Namely, that God has struck them with "madness and blindness and confusion of mind" [Deut. 28:28]. So we are ... at fault in not avenging all this innocent blood of our Lord, ... and the blood of the children they have shed ... which still shines forth from their eyes and their skin [from drinking it]. We are at fault in not slaying them.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). We must practice a sharp mercy. ... I shall give you my sincere advice: First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools. ... In Deuteronomy 13:12 Moses writes that any city that is given to idolatry shall be totally destroyed by fire. ... If he were alive today, he would be the first to set fire to the synagogues and houses of the Jews. ... Just as the Bible became unknown under the papacy in our day, so also, for Moses' sake, their schools cannot be tolerated. ... Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. ... Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings ... be taken from them. Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. ... Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews. [So how do they get to Jerusalem?] ... Let them stay at home [which was burned down?]. ... If you great lords and princes will not forbid such usurers the highway legally, some day a troop [mob] may gather against them, having learned from this booklet the true nature of the Jews and how one should deal with them. ... For you, too, must not and cannot protect them unless you wish to become become participants in their abominations.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). Sixth, I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash ... be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping. ... As said above, they have no other means of earning a livelihood than usury. ... Whenever a Jew is sincerely converted, he should be handed one hundred ... or three hundred florins, as personal circumstances may suggest. With this he could set himself up in some occupation for the support of his poor wife and children, and the maintenance of the old or feeble. [This way all who won't convert, starve to death.] ... If they wish to apply Moses' law again, they must first return to the land of Canaan. ... Seventh, I recommend putting ... a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hands of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. ... But if we are afraid that they might harm us or our wives, children, servants, cattle, etc., if they had to serve and work for us - for it is



reasonable to assume that such ... venomous, bitter worms are not accustomed to working, then let us emulate the common sense of other nations such as France, Spain, Bohemia, etc., ... [and] eject them forever from the country. For ... God's anger with them is so intense that gentle mercy will only tend to make them worse and worse, while sharp mercy will reform them but little. Therefore, in any case, away with them! I hear it said that the Jews donate large sums of money and thus prove beneficial to governments. Yes, but where does this money come from? [From us.] ... Do not grant them protection, safe-conduct, or communion with us.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). When you lay eyes on or think of a Jew you must say to your self: "Alas, that mouth which I there behold has cursed and execrated ... every Saturday my dear Lord Jesus Christ." ... Nor dare we make ourselves partners in their devilish ranting and raving by shielding and protecting them, by giving them food, drink, and shelter, or by other neighborly acts. ... I suppose that the princes will now wish to show mercy to the Jews, the bloodthirsty foes of our Christian and human name, in order to earn heaven thereby. ... What are we poor preachers to do meanwhile? In the first place, we will believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is truthful when he declares of the Jews who did not accept but crucified him, "You are a brood of vipers and children of the devil." ... I have read and heard many stories ... how they have poisoned wells, made assassinations, kidnapped children, as related before. ... For their kidnapping of children they have often been burned at the stake or banished (as we already heard). I am well aware that they deny all of this. However, it all coincides with the judgment of Christ which declares that they are venomous, bitter, vindictive, tricky serpents, assassins, and children of the devil who sting and work harm stealthily wherever they cannot do it openly. ... The Turks and other heathen do not tolerate what we Christians endure from these venomous serpents and young devils. ... Whoever feels the desire to shelter and feed them, to honor them, ... let him ... crawl into their behind and



worship this holy object. Then let him boast of his mercy.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). What are we going to answer God ... on the day of judgment, saying: "Listen, you are a Christian. You are aware of the fact that the Jews openly blasphemed and cursed my Son and Me, you gave them opportunity for it, you protected and shielded them." ... If we permit them to [blasphemy], ... and protect them to enable them to do so, then we are eternally damned together with them, ... even if we in our persons are as holy as the prophets, apostles, or angels. [Ever heard of justification by faith?] ... If we [tolerate the Jews], we together with the Jews and on their account will lose God the Father and his dear Son, ... and we will be eternally lost, which God forbid! ... Save our souls from the Jews, that is, from the devil and from eternal death.

.1543 AD (continued). Third [in another list], that they be forbidden on pain of death to praise God, to give thanks, to pray. ... Fourth, that they be forbidden to utter the name of God within our hearing. ... He who hears this name from a Jew must inform the authorities, or else throw sow dung at him ... and chase him away. And may no one be merciful and kind in this regard. ... If we know that they are doing this in secret, it is the same as if they were doing it publicly. ... In my opinion the problem must be resolved thus: ... They must be driven from our country. Let them think of their fatherland. ... They remain our daily murderers and bloodthirsty foes in their hearts. Their prayers and curses furnish evidence of that, as do the many stories which relate their torturing of children and all sorts of crimes for which they have often been burned at the stake or banished. ... Undoubtedly they do more and viler things than those which we know and discover.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). If I had power over the Jews, as our princes and cities have, I would deal severely. ... They ... slander us among their people, declaring that we Christians worship more than one God. ... I would assemble their scholars and their leaders and order them, on pain of losing their tongues

down to the root, to convince us Christians within eight days of the truth of their assertions. ... If they succeeded [the Christians get to judge that], we would all on the self-same day become Jews and be circumcised. If they failed, they should stand ready to receive the punishment they deserve. ... We must force them to prove their lies about us or suffer the consequences. ... It has pained me to mention their horrible blasphemy. ... I can well understand what St. Paul means in Romans 9:2 when he says that he is saddened as he considers them. [And Luther accuses the rabbis of twisting scripture!?!]

. 1543 AD (continued). I wish and I ask that our rulers who have Jewish subjects exercise a sharp mercy toward these wretched people, as suggested above. ... They must act like a good physician who, when gangrene has set proceeds without mercy to cut, saw, and burn flesh, veins, bone, and marrow. ... Deal harshly with them, as Moses did in the wilderness, slaying three thousand, lest the whole people perish. ... If this does not help we must drive them out like mad dogs, so that we do not become partakers of their abominable blasphemy and all their other vices and thus merit God's wrath and be damned with them. [Justification by faith, Luther? Anyone?] I have done my duty. Now let everyone see to his.

Luther. 1543 AD (continued). The Jews ask no more of their Messiah than that he be a [Bar] Kokhba and worldly king who will slay us Christians [It's true Messiah will slay the Gentiles for the Jews, Zech. 14:1-3.] ... The Jews will be the masters and will possess all the world's gold, goods, joys, and delights, while we Christians will be their servants. [True: Is. 61:5-6.] ... They beguile us mad Goyim [Gentiles] with their false doctrine, saying that the kingdom of the Messiah will ... bear the sword [He will: Rev. 19:11-21; Is. 63:1-6; Ps. 2:1-6.] ... The knowledge of the Messiah must come by preaching. ... The apostles used no spear or sword but solely their tongues. [And not as Luther did to inflame mobs or rulers to kill for them.] ... The Christian church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, is such a new people. [But Luther wants all believers to be Gentile.]

... So long an essay, ... good friend, you have elicited from me with your booklet in which a Jew demonstrates his skill in a debate with an absent Christian. He would not, thank God, do this in my presence! My essay, I hope, will furnish a Christian ... with enough material not only to defend himself against the blind, venomous Jews, but also to become the foe of the Jews. [I'm sure Luther succeeded in that.]<sup>103</sup>

In poor health, Luther travelled to his birthplace Eisleben on January 17, 1546. He preached four sermons there on February 14, and died there four days later. He ended his next to last sermon with a “final warning” about the Jews.

Luther. 1546 AD. Since ... I may die soon and not be able to preach to you [any longer], I will bless you with this. ... You have the Jews yet in the land, who do great harm. ... They are our public enemies, ... calling the Virgin Mary a whore, Christ, a bastard, and us changelings or abortions. ... If they could kill us all, they would gladly do it. They do it often, especially those who pose as physicians. ... They administer poison to someone from which he could die in an hour, a month, a year, ten or twenty years. They are able to practice this art. ... As a native [of Eisleben] I have wanted to say this to you as a final warning, that you do not become partners in another's sins. ... If the Jews would be converted, ... then we will gladly forgive them. If not, then we should not tolerate or permit them to be with us.

Calvin didn't urge persecution of the Jews, but he certainly carried the same tone as Luther. In his “Response to Questions and Objections of a Certain Jew,” he dealt with valid questions that most believers today probably couldn't answer, like the issue of Dyothelitism vs. Monothelitism, i.e. did Jesus have both a human and a divine will. But Calvin still derides the Jewish questioner for asking each question.

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<sup>103</sup> Luther, *The Jews & Their Lies*, 6, 15, 53, 64, 92-4, 97-9, 111, 113, 129-130, 149, 152-6, 159-180, 186-198, 203-4, 214-16.

Calvin. Those Jews babble brutish stupidity. ... If there were a trace of wit or right thinking amongst these cattle. ... The solution, ... which is of no importance to these pigs. ... The ignorance of men is not a reason for these dumb animals to scoff at the true faith. ... It is certainly made plain how these rabid dogs gnaw without discretion. ... They have been struck by a spirit of dizziness and madness. [Sounds like Luther.] ... These pigs so subvert all the principles of nature, that no trace of reason can be found amongst them. ... Their depraved and indomitable obstinacy merits that none of them be pitied, as they all delight in their evils while being oppressed by a great mass of miseries without end [in the diaspora]. ... It is a just reward of their malice, that God hath blinded them in such a manner as to be deprived of all judgment.<sup>104</sup>

It isn't just that doctrine affects practice, but also that practice affects doctrine. If the Jewishness of the Jewish part of the Congregation had been maintained, lending a Jewish tint to the whole Congregation, in accordance with the message of Acts, Calvin would never have been able to stray into the false doctrine of replacement theology.

Calvin. As the Jews have fallen from their place, the Gentiles have succeeded and occupied their position. ... As a punishment on the Jews, ... when they were repudiated there would be other children of God, whom he would substitute in their place. ... [Jesus] does not simply open to the Gentiles the temple of God, to connect them with the Jews and to unite them in true religion; but he first excludes the Jews, and shows that the worship of God would [instead] be exercised ... by the Gentiles ... to the utmost extremities of the earth.<sup>105</sup>

### **Acts 21:20-26. Paul's Promotion of Jewishness**

The Reformed Theology and anti-Jewishness of Luther and Calvin and their followers is very far removed from Paul, the Bible, and the heart of God.

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<sup>104</sup> Calvin, Response to a Certain Jew.

<sup>105</sup> Calvin, Commentaries, Kindle 366125-366131.

Acts 21:20. You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law.

If it had been a bad thing for the Jewish brethren to be living according to the Law, then this would have been a good time for the elders to call the Congregation together, and the elders, and the apostles James and Paul, could have corrected the error together. But it wasn't an error for them to be Torah observant. Instead, James and the elders were concerned about rumors Paul had been forbidding diaspora Jews from trying to be Torah observant.

Acts 21:21-25. They are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs. ... We have four men which have a vow. ... Purify thyself with them, and all may know that those things, which they were informed about you, are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the law. As for the Gentiles which believe, we have written [in Acts 15] ... that they observe no such thing.

In other words, "Some believe the rumors that you teach diaspora Jews to abandon Jewish customs, but we elders and leaders don't believe that of you." Can you say that too, that you don't believe Paul taught anyone to abandon Jewish customs? Or are you someone who does what Paul was wrongly accused of doing, forbidding Jewish believers to live according to the law, because you think it might detract from the gospel, or reduce the unity of the Congregation, or something?

The rumor wasn't true. Paul definitely didn't teach Jewish believers not to "circumcise their children" (Acts 21:21), because Jewish believers are still required to circumcise their children. Not because of the Law, but because of the Abrahamic covenant that predates the Law. Not for salvation, but for Jewish identity.

Gen. 17:10-14. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me, and you, and your seed after you. Every man child among you shall be circumcised, ...

and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his [Jewish] people; he has broken my covenant.

And Paul didn't teach the diaspora Jews not to "walk after the customs" (Acts 21:21). He taught that neither Jews nor Gentiles have to keep the Law, but both are free to keep the Law, with the caveats that Gentiles shouldn't become Jewish proselytes, and no one can rely on the Law for justification.

1 Cor. 7:18. Is any man called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised [abandon his Jewish identity]. Is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised.

Bruce. The truly emancipated man is not in bondage to his liberty.<sup>106</sup>

So James and the elders asked Paul to sponsor four men who had taken a vow, and to be ceremonially purified with them.

Acts 21:20-26. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple.

This purification also involved animal sacrifices. Jewish believers offered animal sacrifices, and so did Paul, because animal sacrifices were never intended to or able to take away sin. They only symbolize taking away sin by the substitutionary death and blood of Messiah.

Lev. 17:11. The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.

Heb. 10:4. It isn't [and never was] possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

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<sup>106</sup> Longenecker, *Apostle of Liberty*, 231.

Heb. 8:1-5. We have such a high priest, ... of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched [in heaven], and not man. ... On earth, ... priests ... serve to the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, “See ... that you make all things according to the pattern [in heaven] showed to you in the mount [Sinai].”

Heb. 9:12. By his own blood, he entered once into the holy place [in the tabernacle in heaven], having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Rom. 3:23-25. All have sinned, ... being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation [appeasement of God’s righteous anger] through faith in his blood.

The Lord’s Supper memorial will end when Jesus returns.

1 Cor. 11:26. As often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show [symbolize] the Lord’s death, until he comes.

In the future Messianic Kingdom, we will remember the Lord’s death through animal sacrifices instead of the Lord’s Supper.

Ezk. 40:40-41. [At] the entry of the north gate, were ... eight tables, whereon they slew their sacrifices [as part of the future Messianic Kingdom temple in Ezekiel 40-48].

So Paul offered God animal sacrifices in the temple. Did he also keep the Law?

Acts 21:22-25. Do this therefore that we say to you ... that ... all may know ... that you yourself also walk orderly, and keep the law.

Paul kept the Law when he was among Jews, and he didn’t, when it was necessary not to keep it, when he was among Gentiles.

1 Cor. 9:20. To the Jews, I became as a Jew; ... to them that are under the law, as under the law; ... to them that are without law [the Gentiles], as without law, being not without law to God; ... that I might by all means save some. And I do this for the gospel's sake.

But would your theology or Congregation have a problem with this? Would your Congregation be open to having someone like Paul teach there and open to having Messianic Jewish influences in your Congregation?

Bock. The passage raises important and hotly debated questions about Paul and the law. Many scholars think it theologically impossible (Conzelmann, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 1987: 180) or at least problematic for the Paul of the epistles to act in a way that suggests support for the law.<sup>107</sup>

Macgregor. Hausrath dismisses the story of Paul's vow at Jerusalem ... as incredible. "One could as well believe that Luther, in his old age, made a pilgrimage to Einsiedeln, walking on peas." ... Julicher insists that if the story is true, it records "an elaborate act of hypocrisy". ... And yet ... the historian should take his hero as he finds him, with all his inconsistency and his weakness. [Macgregor considers Paul's law keeping a weakness, but we should believe Paul and Luke over Macgregor.] ... "He was and he remained a Jew," says Harnack, "and yet with his doctrine of freedom limited by faith alone, he anticipated the development of a whole epoch." [In other words, Paul didn't live the new Jew-free religion that we eventually inherited because of him.] ... Logically he was done with vows and all their associated formalities, but emotionally he clung to them. [Macgregor assumes Paul was emotionally weak.] ... For his converts he nowhere suggests that Christian men were bound to abandon the Jewish practices (E.g. 1 Cor. 7:18) [Macgregor's right about that], though logic would have carried them to that conclusion [Macgregor doesn't understand the message of Acts]. So long as they did not imagine that God's favor was gained by keeping the Law, he was

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<sup>107</sup> Bock, *Acts*, Kindle 15792.



willing that they should do it such homage as their heart and habit suggested. It was a spacious nature, with room within it for many seeming contradictions [He thinks Paul was inconsistent.] ... Bacon ("Making of New Testament," p. 62) greatly exaggerates when he talks of Paul as taking "the apostolic view that the Christian of Jewish birth remains under obligation to keep the Law".<sup>108</sup>

But the problem isn't with Paul, Luke, the Bible, or God; but rather with the theologians that understand neither the Bible, nor the heart of God, about Jewish issues, as Longenecker explains.

Longenecker. Did the apostle of Liberty really continue in such Jewish practices as ... taking upon himself Jewish vows, keeping up the Jewish customs, worshiping in the Temple, claiming Pharisaic privileges, and accepting guidance from the elder apostles in Jerusalem? ... Are they evidences of inconsistency and vacillation; or is there an inner consistency of faith and life in the Apostle which we have failed to notice and which, when understood, can aid us in the ordering of our Christian lives?<sup>109</sup>

Luke wants us to understand that the Congregation should look like both a Jewish and Gentile entity. Gentile believers should be a little more Jewish, in being familiar with and comfortable in participating in Jewish things; and Jewish believers should be a little more Gentile, in not letting dietary laws, etc. prevent them from eating and fellowshiping with Gentiles. And both should be encouraged to continue to be distinctly themselves, showing preference to the others, in all love, acceptance, and unity in diversity, for the health and maturity of the Congregation, and for a testimony to the world, and even to angels.

Eph. 3:4-11. The mystery of Messiah, ... that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs [with the Jews], and of the same body [with the Jews], and partakers [with the

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<sup>108</sup> Macgregor, Christian Freedom, 71-73.

<sup>109</sup> Longenecker, Apostle of Liberty, 504-509.

Jews] of his promise in Messiah by the gospel, ... to the intent that now to the principalities and powers in heavenly places [angels] might be known by the Congregation the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Messiah Jesus our Lord.

The issue of Gentiles not needing to try to keep the Law as a way of life after justification had been decided in Acts 15, but the issue of whether Jews should try to keep the Law as a way of life after justification was not not similarly dealt with. Why did Acts 15 show the Congregation's rationale for not requiring Gentiles to try to keep the law, but in these last chapters of Acts, we are not given a rationale for why Paul and other Jewish believers often followed the Law?

Longenecker. In considering the thought of the Jewish church regarding the Law, we find our records strangely silent. Even in Acts 15, where there is the record of a council which met regarding the question of Gentile Christianity and the Law, there is no suggestion that the corollary subject of Jewish Christianity and the Law was ever raised - it being of course assumed that the latter would go on keeping it. But nowhere is there an attempt to express the rationale behind such observance.<sup>110</sup>

Possibly, the rationale for Jewish believers continuing to keep the law isn't spelled out, because each Jewish believer has to decide for himself how observant, if at all, he will be. It would be just as wrong to say Jewish believers may not try to keep the law, as it would be to say Gentiles have to try to keep the Law. But since Jewish believers are only permitted instead of commanded to observe the Law, there is a very wide range of acceptable behavior in this regards, as each person desires.

The worst thing that could happen, would be for the Congregation to no longer consider this to be an issue to be dealt with. By getting rid of all Jewishness, the Congregation has manifested its unhealthiness, by not

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<sup>110</sup> Longenecker, Apostle of Liberty, 255.

having any Jewish issue to deal with, unlike the early Congregation in Acts. Luke ended his book with these chapters, because he, though the Holy Spirit, knew the Jewish issue, rather than the Gentile issue, was the relevant problem the Congregation of the future would face, as Gentile believers began to significantly outnumber Jewish believers.

Bock. The passage [Acts 21:20-27] reflects the fact that the church's relationship to Judaism was still a concern at the time Luke wrote [i.e. finished writing Acts 28]. The scene [in Acts 21] reinforces and deepens the development of Acts 15 [by dealing with its complement or corollary].<sup>111</sup>

### **Acts 22-26. Summary of Paul's Speeches**

Acts 22-26 mainly consists of five speeches Paul gave in his defense, a letter from a Roman officer, and an explanation from Governor Felix to King Agrippa, during Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, and imprisonment in Caesarea.

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<sup>111</sup> Bock, Acts, Kindle 15785-15787.

SPEECHES IN ACTS 22-26					
Days	Place	Chp/ Spkr	To	# of vss	Topics
12	Jeru- salem	22 Paul	Jews	24	Damascus 5-16, Gentiles 21, OT Continuity 12-14
	Jeru- salem	23 Paul	High Priest	10	OT Continuity 6
	Jeru- salem	23 Lysias	Gov. Felix	6	Innocence 29
	Caesa- rea	24 Paul	Gov. Felix	23	OT Continuity 14-21
2 years (Acts 24:27)					
14 +	Caesa- rea	25 Paul	Gov. Festus	6	OT Continuity 8
	Caesa- rea	25 Festus	King Agrippa	14	Innocence 25
	Caesa- rea	26 Paul	King Agrippa	33	Damascus 12-18; Gentiles 17-23; OT Continuity 5-8, 22-23; Innocence 31

Or, an easier to remember version ...

PAUL’S FIVE SPEECHES IN ACTS 22-26	
Acts	Defense Before
22	The Temple Mob
23	The High Priest
24	Governor Felix
25	Governor Festus
26	King Agrippa

The amount of space Luke gives to this section shows it’s critical for understanding his purpose and message in Acts.

Bock. Luke spends more time on the defense speeches [in Acts] than he does on the missionary addresses. There are 97 verses of defense speech, which represent 39 percent of the prison-defense section. This compares with 47 verses of Pauline missionary speech,

or 21 percent of the missionary section. There are 239 prison verses and 226 missionary verses.<sup>112</sup>

Some think Luke gave so much space to this part of his book, because he wanted to use Acts as a legal defense for Paul's trial with Caesar. But, besides the book of Acts being too much for a busy Roman judge to read, as I mentioned before, Paul, who loved his people so much he was not only willing to die, but even to be accursed for them (Rom. 9:1-3), would never condone submitting a document in his defense that could expose his Jewish brethren to any additional Roman persecution.

One reason Luke mentioned these speeches was that Paul's witness before rulers fulfilled one of his divinely-appointed missions.

Acts 9:15-16. The Lord said to [Ananias], ... [Paul] is a chosen vessel to me, to bear my name before [1] the Gentiles, and [2] kings, and [3] the children of Israel.

It was also a fulfillment of part of the mission of all the apostles, per Jesus' earlier prophecy.

Jn. 16:2, 8-9. They will put you out of the synagogues. Yes, the time comes, that whoever kills you will think that he does God service. ... When [the Comforter] has come, he will reprove the world [including the rulers] of sin ... because they don't believe on me.

Mt. 10:17-20. Beware of men. For they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you will speak; for it will be given you in that same hour what you will speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father, which speaks in you.

But the main reason Luke gave so much space to this section, in harmony with his purpose in writing, was to

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<sup>112</sup> Bock, Acts, Kindle 16053-16056.

encourage future generations of the Congregation to nourish the Jewishness of the Congregation.

### **Acts 22. Paul's Defense Before the Mob**

While Paul was being ritually purified in the temple, in connection with the four Jewish believers who had taken vows and his financing of their sacrifices, he was arrested, because some Jews visiting from Ephesus during Pentecost, one of the three feasts in which God required Jewish males to assemble in Jerusalem (Ex. 23:14-17), thought he had brought Trophimus into the temple.

Acts 21:27-29. When ... the Jews which were of Asia [Eph+] ... saw him in the temple, [they] stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man, that teaches all men every where against the [Jewish] people, and the law, and this place; and further [has] brought Greeks also into the temple, and has polluted this holy place." For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus, an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.

After Paul was attacked by the mob in the temple, the Roman tribune that rescued and arrested him, allowed him to speak to the people. Paul said ...

Acts 22:3-19. I am truly a man which is [not was] a Jew, ... brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and ... was zealous toward God, as you all are this day. ... And ... as I ... came near to Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell to the ground, and heard a voice, ... "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute." ... And when I could not see for the glory [brightness] of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came to Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law [and this was many years after Pentecost], having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came to me, and stood, and said to me, "Brother Saul, receive your sight. ... The God of our fathers has chosen you." ... And ... when I came again

to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him saying to me, “Make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me. And I said, “Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on you.” ... And he said to me, “Depart [from Jerusalem], for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.”

Paul said, “I am a Jew,” not, “I was a Jew.” He said the observant, unbelieving Jews are nevertheless “zealous toward God,” despite their unbelief. Ananias was “a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews” even though Paul’s call was years after Pentecost. God is “the God of our [the Jews] fathers.” And Paul still “prayed in the temple” three years after he believed in Jesus. I can’t say, ‘three years after he was converted,’ because no Jewish believer changes religions; they just accept Jesus as the Messiah, and trust him as their savior.

Even that many years after Pentecost, the brethren often participated with their countrymen within the Jewish synagogues, which is why Paul beat them “in every synagogue” (Acts 22:19). And he didn’t beat “Christians,” because there were no such things, unless we mean ‘Messianics,’ but simply “them [Jews] that believed on you” (Acts 22:19).

The people listened until Paul mentioned his mission to the Gentiles.

Acts 22:21-22. He said to me, “Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.” And they gave him audience to this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live.”

It seems that early Jewish opposition was not as much to the message of the gospel, as it was to the Gentiles being able to share in that message. For example, in Antioch Galatia, the Jews calmly listened to what Paul taught, even though they were not convinced by it; but they were infuriated when they saw the Gentile crowds. God gave his covenants to the Jewish people, and to open the door for

the Gentiles to flood in is a valid concern in preserving Jewishness. There was some base pride involved, too.

Acts 13:42-45. When the Jews were gone out of the synagogue [no problem so far], the Gentiles pleaded that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. ... And the next sabbath day almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

### **Acts 23. Paul's Defense Before the High Priest**

The next day, the Roman tribune arranged a hearing for Paul before the high priest and the Jewish council. After Paul claimed to have a clear conscience, the high priest ordered Paul to be slapped. Paul responded aggressively, and then ...

Acts 23:4-5. They that stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" Then Paul said, "I didn't know, brothers, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your people [Ex. 22:28].'"

Paul taught that Jewish believers aren't under any part of the Law, because all believers died and rose in Messiah. But believers are still free to obey the Law, like the part in Exodus 22:28 that Paul quoted, if they so desire for various reasons, like for the sake of the gospel.

Bock. A key point is that Paul ultimately submits himself to the law here.<sup>113</sup>

Then Paul went on to present an unconventional defense.

Acts 23:6-10. When Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men and brethren, I AM a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." And when he had so said,

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<sup>113</sup> Bock, Acts, Kindle 16422-16423.



there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry, and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, "We find no evil in this man. But if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let's not fight against God." And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

Longenecker. [In] the ... account of Paul's defense before the Sanhedrin, ... Luke's apologetic purpose quite clearly come[s] to the fore: ... the debate Paul was engaged in regarding Christianity's claims must be viewed as first of all a Jewish intramural affair (cf. 23:7-10). ... [Rome couldn't be a good] arbitrator of intramural Jewish religious disputes. What Paul was preaching, in his view [and therefore which also should be in our view], was simply a variety of Judaism that did not happen to suit the leaders of the Jewish community.<sup>114</sup>

Paul said, "I am [still] a Pharisee," Acts 23:6. If you had been a Jewish Pharisee that had come to believe in Jesus, would your present theology still allow you to claim to be a Pharisee? If not, then there's something wrong with your theology, not with Paul's.

Marshall. Earlier in Acts the leaders of the Jerusalem church had been attacked by the Sadducees for preaching the resurrection from the dead (4:1f), and the Pharisees, or rather Gamaliel, had displayed a rather neutral attitude (5:33-39). What Paul was now in effect claiming was that one could be a Christian, while accepting the Pharisaic point of view [neither Jesus nor Paul believed in the Pharisaic oral law, but that wasn't a salvation issue], or more precisely, that Pharisaic Judaism found its fulfilment in Christianity.

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<sup>114</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 12234-12237, 10721-10722.

The Sadducean religion, however, needed a fundamental change in its presuppositions before it could become Christian.<sup>115</sup>

Stott. The anti-supernaturalist stance of the Sadducees was incompatible with the gospel. As Jesus himself said, ... they knew neither God's word nor God's power. Paul was a Pharisee. ... He shared with Pharisees the great truth and hope of the resurrection, on account of which he was on trial.<sup>116</sup>

Bruce. A Sadducee could not become a Christian without abandoning a distinctive theological tenet of his party; a Pharisee could become a Christian and remain a Pharisee - in the apostolic age, at least. The common view is that it was not until the final decade of the first century that the conclusive breach between Jewish Christians and other Jews took place, when the addition of the 'birkat haminnim', the prayer that "the Nazarenes and the heretics might ... be blotted out of the book of life," effectively debarred Jewish Christians from participation in synagogue worship. ... Luke never disparages the Pharisees: to him they represent what is best in Judaism, and some of them on this occasion show themselves to be not far from the kingdom of God [like the Pharisee that questioned Jesus in Mk. 12:28-34]. According to Ernst Haenchen, Luke is concerned to show "that the bridges between Jews and Christians have not been broken."<sup>117</sup>

In other words, the rabbis eventually expelled the brethren from the synagogues by adding prayers to the synagogue liturgy that cursed Jewish believers. And more to the point of Luke's purpose, since Jewish believers are still Jews, Gentile believers have the obligation to accept them as an equal part of the Congregation, while they retain all the Jewish character they desire.

After Paul gave his defense before Governor Felix, Jesus appeared to him and promised him he wouldn't die before testifying at Rome.

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<sup>115</sup> Marshall, Acts, 384.

<sup>116</sup> Stott, Acts, Kindle 6451-6454.

<sup>117</sup> Bruce, Acts 428-429, 437.

Acts 23:11. The following night the Lord stood by him, and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul, for as you have testified of me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also at Rome.

### **Acts 24. Paul’s Defense Before Governor Felix**

Paul’s next defense was before Governor Felix in Caesarea. The Jewish high priest and elders came down to Caesarea and accused Paul of stirring up crowds to sedition. He responded ...

Acts 24:11-18. Understand, that there are only twelve days since I went up [always ‘up’] to Jerusalem to worship. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, nor raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city. ... But I confess this to you, that after the way which they call heresy, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets, and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. ... Now after many years, I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. Whereon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

Longenecker. Could the Apostle of liberty [really] have said: 1. “I am a Pharisee.” [back in Acts 23:6 before the chief priest] ... 2. “With respect to the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am being judged,” [in Acts 23:6 before the high priest] when he was really being questioned for his preaching regarding the resurrection and person of Jesus Christ? ... 3. “I went up to worship at Jerusalem,” [here in Acts 24:11] whereas he hardly came for the primary purpose of worshiping in the Temple? ... 4. “I came to bring alms and offerings for my nation,” [here in Acts 24:17] when he really was bringing a collection for the poor Christians of the Jerusalem church?<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Longenecker, *Apostle of Liberty*, 239-240 Kindle.

Paul could genuinely say he was bringing alms for 'his' nation, Israel, when he brought alms for the poor Jewish believers in Jerusalem, because both things were equally true. The nation was his, and of all the Jewish believers. Jewish believers have dual citizenship before God; 1) as the believing remnant of Israel [Is. 65:8; Rom. 11:5], and 2) as the Jewish part of the Congregation.

And Paul could genuinely say he was coming to worship in the temple, because he really was. When the author of Hebrews said, "Jesus ... suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore to him outside the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb. 13:12-13), he wasn't advising Jewish believers to leave Judaism, but to remain firm and bear reproach, even if you get expelled from the temple and synagogues for your beliefs.

Acts 24:22-26. And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." [But Lysias never came.] And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come to him. ... He hoped also that money would have been given him from Paul, so that he might loose him, wherefore he sent for him the more often, and talked with him.

Felix kept delaying. But he let Paul roam freely within Herod's palace, and let him receive guests. Paul was in a confident mood, because of Felix's congenial attitude towards him, and because Jesus had promised a few days before, in Acts 23:11, that he would testify in Rome. So Paul wrote to Philemon saying he would stop to see him in Colossae on his way to Rome. Paul had been told by prophesy (Acts 20:25) he wouldn't return to any of the places he had already evangelized, but Paul had never yet been to Colossae or the other cities of the Lycus valley.

**Epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon**

Written at Acts 24:26 from Caesarea.

Acts 24:26-27. [Felix] also hoped that money would be given to him by Paul, so that he might release him, so he sent for him more often, and conversed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's office; and Felix, wanting to show the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Written after Acts 20:4, when Timothy (mentioned in Colossians and Philemon), Tychicus (mentioned in Colossians and Ephesians), and Aristarchus (mentioned in Colossians and Philemon) travelled to Jerusalem with Paul.

Acts 20:4. There accompanied [Paul] into Asia [Eph+] [and then on to Jerusalem], Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia [Eph+], Tychicus and Trophimus.

Written after Acts 20:5 when Luke (mentioned in Colossians and Philemon) rejoined Paul to go to Jerusalem.

Acts 20:5-6. These going before tarried for us at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi.

Written before Acts 27:6 when Aristarchus and Trophimus stayed on an Adramyttium ship going to Troas, while Paul and Luke transferred to another ship going to Rome.

We know Aristarchus was on the Adramyttium ship because Luke said he was. We can infer Trophimus was on it too, because there's no other time in the Acts narrative and the epistles that Trophimus could be left sick at Miletus, apart from pure conjecture. I try to be guided by scriptural mentions of potentially relevant things, with the assumption that every scriptural mention was put there for such a purpose by the human and divine authors, rather than adopting interpretations that leave no room for anything but pure speculation.

Acts 21:29. They had seen before with [Paul] in [Jerusalem] Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed Paul had brought into the temple.

Acts 27:1-2. When it was determined that we should sail to Italy, ... entering into a ship of Adramyttium [a city near Troas and on the way to Thessalonica], we launched, intending to sail by the coasts of Asia [Eph+] [where Trophimus was from]; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us [intending to go home to Thessalonica].

Acts 27:5-6. When we had sailed ... to Myra, ... there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy, and he put us [Paul and Luke] therein [while Trophimus and Aristarchus remained on the Adramyttium ship].

2 Tim. 4:20. I left Trophimus at Miletus [near Myra and Ephesus] sick. [Paul didn't say, "I left Trophimus sick at Myra, because although Paul said goodbye to him when Paul switched ships at Myra, Trophimus didn't get off the Adramyttium ship until Miletus.]

Acts 28:16. When we [Paul and Luke] came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard.

Written before Acts 28:39 when Paul wrote 2 Timothy and said Demas forsook him.

Acts 28:30. Paul dwelt two whole years [in Rome] in his own rented house.

2 Tim. 4:10. Demas has forsaken me, ... and has departed to Thessalonica.

<b>COWORKER ARRIVALS &amp; DEPARTURES - JERUSALEM/CAESAREA</b>						
	<b>Arrivals</b>			<b>Departures</b>		
<b>Co-worker</b>	<b>With Paul</b>	<b>Already in Jeru.</b>	<b>After Arrest</b>	<b>After Arrest</b>	<b>With Epistles</b>	<b>With Paul</b>
<b>Sopater</b>	Acts 20:4			Acts 20:4		
<b>Secundus</b>	Acts 20:4			Acts 20:4		
<b>Gaius</b>	Acts 20:4			Acts 20:4		
<b>Timothy</b>	Acts 20:4				Phm 1:1 2Tim 4:11	
<b>Tychicus</b>	Acts 20:4				Eph 6:21 Col 4:7	
<b>Aristarchus</b>	Acts 20:4					Acts 27:2
<b>Trophimus</b>	Acts 20:4					2Tim 4:20
<b>Luke</b>	Acts 20:5					Acts 27:2
<b>Demas</b>	2Tim 4:10			2Tim 4:10		
<b>Mark</b>		Acts 12:12				2Tim 4:11
<b>Justus</b>		Col 4:11				
<b>Onesimus</b>			Phm 1:10		Col 4:9	
<b>Epaphras</b>			Col 4:12 Phm 1:23			

Three of the messengers of the Congregations, Sopater (Berea), Secundus (Thessalonica), and Gaius (Galatia), probably returned home, and reported what had happened, after Paul was arrested. Timothy, Tychicus, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and Luke stayed in Caesarea to work with Paul while he was in prison. Demas, who was probably from Thessalonica, may also have come with

Paul to Jerusalem, though not as an official messenger of a Congregation, but possibly at his own expense, and stayed on with Paul in Caesarea.

Aristarchus may have been imprisoned in Caesarea a while. (Or he may have been imprisoned earlier in Asia [Eph+] and still be called a fellow prisoner when mentioned from Caesarea, like Andronicus and Junia who were imprisoned earlier, but still called fellow prisoners when mentioned in Romans 16:7.)

Col. 4:10. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you.

Luke used the time of Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea to do research by interviewing Paul and many in Jerusalem and Judaea so he could write Luke and Acts.

Lu. 1:1-4. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them to us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, ... it seemed good to me also, ... to write, ... so that you can know the certainty of those things.

Onesimus was an unbelieving runaway slave of Colossae, who stole money from his believing master Philemon, and probably walked about 4 days to Perga and its port Antalya, south of Antioch Galatia, to catch a ship for Caesarea, like Paul and Barnabas had done to catch a ship to Antioch Syria at the end of Paul's first missionary journey. Antalya is now Turkey's fifth largest city, and its biggest international sea resort.

Acts 14:25-26. When [Paul and Barnabas] had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia [Antalya], and from there sailed to Antioch, from where they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

Some believer in Caesarea must have brought Onesimus to see Paul, who led him to the Lord. Onesimus ministered to and with Paul until Paul sent him back to his master Philemon, with a request to free him.



The New Testament views servitude as an unfortunate economic reality of this present world, as even employees are hired servants of their employers. Whereas masters used to provide housing, food, and medical needs, modern employers just give a set wage, and if it's not enough to cover basic needs, 'too bad.' The New Testament forbids revolution, but encourages freedom and business ownership whenever possible.

1 Cor. 7:21. Are you called [to be a believer while] being a servant? Care not for it. But if you may be made free, use it [the opportunity to be free] rather.

Phm. 1:1, 8-14, 22-24. Though I might be much bold in Messiah to order you, ... yet for love's sake I rather beseech you, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Messiah. I beseech you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds. ... Whom I would have retained with me, that in your place he might have ministered to me in the bonds of the gospel, but without your mind I would do nothing, that your benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that you would receive him for ever, not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more to you? ... If you therefore count me a partner, receive him as myself. If he ... owes you anything, put that on my account. I Paul have written it with my own hand, I will repay it. However, I don't say to you how you owe me even your own self besides. Yes, brother, let me have joy of you in the Lord. ... Having confidence in your obedience I wrote to you, knowing that you will also do more than I say.

Paul hadn't ever visited the area of Colossae, so he didn't think the prophecy that he wouldn't return to the places he had already evangelized applied to Colossae, so he told Philemon he hoped to come and see him soon.

Phm. 1:22. Prepare me also a lodging, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given to you.

Epaphras may have founded the Congregations in the Lycus Valley. The area was hit by a devastating earthquake not many years after Paul wrote his epistles to them.

Col. 1:4-7; 4:13. Since we heard of your faith in Messiah Jesus, ... whereof you heard before in ... the gospel, which is come to you, as you also learned of Epaphras, ... who is for you a faithful minister of Messiah. ... He has a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

Phm. 1:23. There salute you, Epaphras, my fellow prisoner.

While Epaphras was in prison, Archippus would have to bear more of the leadership responsibilities at the Congregation that met at Philemon's house.

Phm. 1:1-2. Paul, a prisoner, ... and Timothy, ... to Philemon, ... and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the Congregation in your house.

Col. 4:17. Archippus, take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfil it.

Mark was probably already in Jerusalem when Paul and the messengers (or 'apostles') of the Congregations arrived with the offering, since that's where Mark lived.

Acts 12:12. When [Peter] had considered the thing, he came to the house [in Jerusalem] of Mary the mother of ... Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

Mark attached himself to Paul's service while Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea, and proved himself faithful. When Paul sent Timothy, Tychicus, and Onesimus to Colossae and Ephesus, Mark probably insisted on staying with Paul, though hoping to go to the Lycos Valley later.

Col. 4:10. Mark, sister's son to Barnabas, touching whom you received commandments, if he comes to you, receive him.

Mark may have left Caesarea on the Adramyttium ship with Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, and Trophimus; getting off

at Miletus with Trophimus, who was sick, since the next time we see Mark mentioned, he's near Timothy. And Timothy was probably in Ephesus, having escorted the escaped slave Onesimus to his master Philemon in Colossae, before going on to Ephesus with Tychicus, with the Ephesian epistle that was sent at the same time.

Timothy Probably Went with Tychicus and Onesimus to Colossae and Ephesus. Phm. 1:1, 10. Paul ... and Timothy ... to Philemon [of Colossae]. ... I beseech you for my son Onesimus, ... whom I have sent.

Col. 4:7-8. All my state will Tychicus declare to you, ... whom I have sent to you, ... so that he can know your state, with Onesimus, ... who is one of you.

Eph. 6:21-22. Tychicus ... I have sent to you, ... so that you can know our affairs.

2 Tim. 4:12. Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

Paul Called Mark to Rome from Near Timothy. 2 Tim. 4:11. Take Mark, and bring him with you [Timothy], for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

Demas abandoned Paul at this time, like Mark had once done years earlier. But whereas Mark had abandoned Paul out of fear of the dangers as they entered the region of Galatia, Demas abandoned Paul out of love for the world, like maybe to start a business back in Thessalonica. Although Paul wrote 2 Timothy from Rome, there's no reason to suppose Demas had ever been to Rome, but was probably with Paul in Caesarea right before Paul went to Rome.

Col. 4:14. Demas greet[s] you.

Phm. 1:23-24. There salute[s] you ... Demas.

2 Tim. 4:10-11. Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed to Thessalonica. ... Take Mark, and bring him with you, for [in contrast to Demas] he is profitable to me for the ministry.

Jesus, nicknamed Justus, who was “of the circumcision” (Col. 4:11), was probably also already in Jerusalem, when Paul and the messengers arrived.

Col. 4:11. [1] Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you, and [2] Mark, Jesus, which is called [3] Justus [καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰοῦστος, kai Iysous o legomenos Ioustos], ... of the circumcision, ... [4] Epaphras, ... salutes you. ... [5] Luke... and [6] Demas greet you.

Phm. 1:24. There salute you [4] Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Messiah Jesus [ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, en Christo Iysou], ... [2] Mark, [1] Aristarchus, [6] Demas, [5] Luke.

Or Alternatively. Phm. 1:24. There salute you [4] Epaphras, my fellow prisoner, and [3] Jesus Justos [καὶ Ἰοῦστος Ἰησοῦς, kai Ioustos Iysous], ... [2] Mark, [1] Aristarchus, [6] Demas, [5] Luke.

The epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written at the same time. They mention many of the same people.

PAUL’S COWORKERS MENTIONED IN COLOSSIANS+							
	Col	Phm	Eph	Acts 20:4-28:31	Ti	2 Tim	Heb
Luke	X	X		A		X	A
Timothy	X	X		X		X	X
Tychicus	X		X	X	X	X	
Aristarchus	#	X		X			
Mark	X	X				X	
Demas	X	X				X	
Epaphras	X	#					
Justus	X	?					
Onesimus	X	X					
#=Fellow Prisoner A=Author							

Only Tychicus is mentioned in Ephesians, because the topic of that letter is one for the universal Congregation, and thus not one conducive to specific, personal greetings.

The Ephesian epistle might have been written as a circular epistle for the Congregations near Ephesus, since it didn't include any specific greetings, and some manuscripts have a blank where the word "Ephesus" is, in "to the saints which are at Ephesus" (Eph. 1:1). It could be the same as the Laodicean epistle mentioned in Colossians. Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, were all in the Lycus valley within about 15 miles of each other.

Col. 4:16. When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Congregation of the Laodiceans; and you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

Ephesians and Colossians also have textual similarities that show they were written at the same time. For example, both use an identical description of Tychicus, "a beloved brother and faithful minister," "ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος," "ο agapytos adelphos kai pistos diakonos" (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7). And both describe the three superior-inferior, household roles very similarly.

EPHESIANS 5:21-6:9 COMPARED TO COLOSSIANS 3:18-4:1			
Inferior Position/Role		Superior Position/Role	
Ephesians	Colossians	Ephesians	Colossians
Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as to the Lord	Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as it is fit in the Lord	Husbands, love your wives	Husbands, love your wives
Children, obey your parents in the Lord	Children, obey your parents, ... pleasing to the Lord	Fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath	Fathers, don't provoke your children to anger
Servants, be obedient to ... your masters as to Messiah	Servants, obey in all things your masters, ... as to the Lord	Masters, treat your servants equally	Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal

The epistles of Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written from prison.

Eph. 4:1. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. ... Praying ... for me, ... that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.

Col. 4:3-18. Praying also for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Messiah, for which I am also in bonds. ... Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you; and Mark. ... Remember my bonds.

Phm. 1:1, 8-14, 22-24. Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Messiah. ... I ... beseech you, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Messiah, ... for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds, ... whom I would have retained with me, that in your place he might have ministered to me in the bonds of the gospel. ... I trust that through your prayers, I shall be given [released] to you. There salute you Epaphras, my fellow prisoner.

PRISON EPISTLE LOCATIONS	
Traditional View	Asian/Caesarean View
	<u>Speculated</u> <u>Asian [Eph+] Imprisonment</u> Phil
	<u>Caesarean Imprisonment</u> Eph, Col, Phm
<u>Roman Imprisonment</u> Eph, Col, Phm, Phil	<u>Roman Imprisonment</u> 2 Tim, Hebrews (by Luke)
<u>Speculated 2nd Roman Imprisonment</u> 2 Tim	

It makes more sense that God would have continued to use Paul to write scripture during the two plus years he was at imprisoned at Caesarea, in circumstances conducive to writing, instead of jamming most of his epistle writing into the two years he was imprisoned at Rome, and a very speculative second Roman imprisonment. The following map shows Paul’s steady

productivity in writing, including during his two plus years in Caesarea, rather than leaving that period as a blank, as regards epistle writing, as most teachers do.



*Paul's Steady Epistle Writing*

**Locations of Paul's Coworkers in Acts**

The following tables show the locations of major coworkers of Paul at different times, based on information from Acts and the epistles.

MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL - KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS
AnS=Antioch Syria. Arb=Arabia. Alb=Albania. AnS=Antioch Syria. Ath=Athens. Bab=Babylon. Ber=Berea. Col=Colossae. Cor1,Cor2,Cor3=1st,2nd,3rd Visits to Corinth. Cyp=Cyprus. Dm=Damascus. Eph=Ephesus. Gal=Galatia. Jer=Jerusalem Mac=Macedonia. ns=Non-Scripture Letter Phi=Philippi. Rm=Rome. Tar=Tarsus. Ths=Thessalonica. Tro=Troas. >=Travel. i=Implied. Shaded columns are travel columns.

MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL THROUGH CORINTH (1)								
Paul's	Prep				Mission			
Acts	6:8-12:24				12:25-19:20			
Place	Tarsus				Galatia		Corinth	
Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
City:	Jer	Dm	Tar	AnS	>	AnS	>	Cor1
Years:	?	3	14	1+		?		1.5+
Epistles						Gal	1Th 2Th	
Paul	Jer	Jer Dm Arb Dm Jer Tar	Tar	AnS Jer AnS	Cyp Gal AnS	Jer AnS	Gal Tro Phi Ths Ber Ath Cor1	Cor1
Barna- bas	Jer	Jer	Jer	AnS Tar AnS Jer AnS	Cyp Gal Ans	Jer AnS	Cyp Gal	Gal
Titus			AnS	AnS Jer	Ans			
Mark			Jer	Jer AnS	Cyp Jer	AnS	Cyp Jer	Jer
Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Numbers followed by a parenthesis refer to column numbers. Underlined abbreviations refer to cities and regions.

**Paul.** 1) Jer Acts7:58; 8:1,3; 22:3. 2) Dm Acts9:2,3,8. Arb/Dm Gal1:17. Jer Acts9:26; Gal1:18. Tar Acts9:30. 3) Tar Gal2:1. 4) AnS Acts11:26. Jer Acts11:30; Gal2:1. AnS Acts12:25. 5) Cyp Acts13:4. Gal Acts13:14. AnS Acts14:26. 6) Jer Acts15:4. AnS Acts15:30. 7) Gal Acts16:1. Tro Acts16:8. Phi Acts16:12. Ths Acts17:1. Ber Acts17:10. Ath Acts17:14. Cor1 Acts18:1. 8) Cor1 Acts18:11,18.

**Barnabas.** 1) Jer 4:36. 2) Acts9:27. 4) AnS Acts11:22. Tar Acts11:25. AnS Acts11:26. Jer Acts11:30; Gal2:1. AnS Acts12:25. 5) Cyp Acts13:4. Gal Acts13:14. AnS Acts14:26. 6) Jer Acts15:4. AnS Acts15:30. 7) Cyp Acts15:39 Gal Acts15:39i. 8) Gal Acts15:39i.

**Titus.** 3) AnS Gal2:1i. 4) AnS Gal2:1. Jer Gal2:1. 5) AnS Acts12:25i.

**Mark.** 3) Jer Acts12:12. 4) AnS Acts12:25. 5) Cyp Acts13:5. Jer Acts13:13. 6) AnS Acts15:39. 7) Cyp Acts15:39. Jer Col4:10. He didn't go to Colossae with Barnabas.



MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL THROUGH CORINTH (2)								
Paul's	Prep				Mission			
Acts	6:8-12:24				12:25-19:20			
Place	Tarsus				Galatia	Corinth		
Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
City: Years:	Jer ?	Dm 3	Tar 14	AnS ?	>	AnS ?	>	Cor 1.5+
Silas				Jer		AnS	Gal Tro Phi Ths Ber Ath --- --- Ths1 Cor1 Ths2 Cor1	Cor1
Timothy						Gal	Gal Tro Phi Ths Ber Ath Ths Ath Ths1 Cor1 Ths2 Cor1	Cor1
Luke						Tro	Tro Phi	Phi
Prisca Aquila						Rm Cor1		Cor1
Erastus								Cor1
Column	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**Silas.** 4) Jer Acts15:30. 6) AnS Acts15:30. 7) Gal Acts16:1. Tro Acts16:8. Phi Acts16:12. Ths Acts17:1. Ber Acts17:10. Ath 1Ths3:1-2. 1Ths1:1 Ths1 1Ths1:1. Acts18:5. Cor1 Acts18:5. Ths2 2Ths1:1. Cor1 2Cor1:19. 8) Cor1 Acts18:11,18i. 9) Eph Acts18:19i. Jer Acts18:22i.

**Timothy.** 6) Gal Acts16:1. 7) Gal Acts16:1. Tro Acts16:8. Phi Acts16:12. Ths Acts17:1i. Ber Acts17:10. Ath 1Ths3:1-2. Ths 1Ths3:1-2. Ath 1Ths3:6;1:1. Ths1 1Ths1:1. Acts18:5. Cor1 Acts18:5. Ths 2Ths1:1. Cor1 2Cor1:19. 8) Cor1 Acts18:11,18i. 9) Eph Acts18:19i. Jer Acts18:22i. AnS Acts18:22i.

**Luke.** 6) Tro Acts16:8. 7) Tro Acts16:8. Phi Acts16:12.

**Prisca & Aquila.** 6) Rm Acts18:2 Cor1 Acts18:2.

**Erastus.** 8) Cor1 Rm16:23.

MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL FROM EPHESUS ON (1)										
Paul's	Mission (cont.)				Passion					
Acts	12:25-19:20 (cont.)				19:21-28:31					
Place	Ephesus				Caesarea				Rome	
Column	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
City:	>	Eph	>	Eph	>	Cor3	>	Cae	>	Rm
Years:		2+		?		.25		2+		2+
Epistles		ns1 1Cor	1Tm Ti ns2	Phi	2Cor	Rm		Eph Col Phm		2Tm Heb
Paul	Eph Jer AnS Gal Eph	Eph	Phi Ths Cor2 Cre Alb	Eph Imp	Mac Cor3	Cor3	Phi Tro Jer	Cae Imp	Rm	Rm Imp
Barna- bus		Cor1		Col						
Titus		Eph	Phi Ths Cor2 Cre Alb	Cor 2	Mac Cor3	Cor3		Cor3 Alb		Alb
Mark		Bab		Bab		Jer		Cae		Eph Rm
Column	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

**Paul.** 9) Eph Acts18:19. Jer Acts18:22. AnS Acts18:22. Gal Acts18:23. Eph Acts19:1. 10) Eph Acts19:10. 11) Phi Phi1:26;2:24; 1Cor16:5. Ths 1Cor16:5. Cor 1Cor16:3-8; 2Cor2:1;12:14;13:1. Cre Ti1:5. Alb Rm15:19; Ti3:12. 12) Imp Acts20:25; Phi1:19,24-26;2:24. 2Cor11:23; Rm16:7. 13) Mac Acts20:1-2. 14) Cor3 Acts20:2-3. 15) Phi Acts20:3,6. Tro Acts20:6. Jer Acts21:17. 16) Cae Acts23:33. Imp Acts21:33;23:33;24:27. 17) Rm 27:1-2,6; Acts28:16. 18) Imp Acts28:16,30.

**Barnabas.** 10) Cor1 1Cor9:6. 12) Col Col4:10.

**Titus.** 11) Phi Phi1:26i;2:24i; 1Cor16:5i. Ths 1Cor16:5i. Cor2 1Cor16:3-8i; 2Cor2:1i;12:14i;13:1i. Cre Ti1:5. Alb Rm15:19i; Ti3:12. 12) Cor2 2Cor7:8; 2Cor2:13;12:18. 13) Mac 2Cor7:6. Cor3 2Cor8:6,16-24. 16) Alb 2Tim4:10.

**Mark.** 10) Bab 1Pet5:13. 14) Jer 12:12;25. 16) Cae Col4:10; Phm1:24; 2Tim4:11. 18) Eph 2Tim4:11. Rm 2Tim4:11i.

MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL FROM EPHESUS ON (2)										
Paul's	Mission (cont.)				Passion					
Acts	12:25-19:20 (cont.)				19:21-28:31					
Place	Ephesus				Caesarea				Rome	
Column	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
City:	>	Eph	>	Eph	>	Cor	>	Cae	>	Rm
Years:		2+		?		.25		2+		2+
Silas	Eph Jer	Bab		Bab						
Timothy	Eph Jer AnS Gal Eph	Eph	Eph	Phi Eph	Mac Cor3	Cor3	Phi Tro Jer	Cae Eph		Eph Rm
Luke		Phi		Phi		Phi	Phi Tro Jer	Cae Imp	Rm	Rm Ity
Prisca Aquila	Eph	Eph		Rm		Rm		Eph		Eph
Erastus		Eph		Eph	Mac Cor3	Cor3	Cor3	Cor3		Cor3
Column	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

**Silas.** 9) Eph Acts18:19i. Jer Acts18:22i. 10) Bab 1Pet5:12.

**Timothy.** 9) Eph Acts18:19i. Jer Acts18:22i. AnS Acts18:22i. Gal Acts18:23i. Eph 19:1i. 11) Eph 1Tim1:3. 12) Phi Phi2:19. Eph Phi2:19. 13) Mac Acts19:22. Cor 2Cor8:18,22. 14) Cor3 Rm16:21. 15) Phi 20:3-4,6. Tro 20:6. Jer Acts21:17. 16) Cae Col1:1; Phi1:1. Eph Phm1:12. 18) Rm 2Tim4:21; Heb13:23.

**Luke.** 15) Phi Acts20:6. Tro Acts20:6. Jer Acts21:17. 16) Cae Acts27:1. Imp Heb10:33-34. 17) Rm Acts27:1-2,6;28:16. 18) Rm 2Tim4:11. Ity Heb13:23-24.

**Prisca & Aquila.** 9) Eph Acts18:19. 12) Rm Rm16:3. 16) Eph 2Tim4:19.

**Erastus.** 12) Eph Acts19:22. 13) Mac Acts19:22. 14) Cor3 Acts16:23. 15) Cor3 2Tim4:20.

MAJOR COWORKERS OF PAUL FROM EPHESUS ON (3)										
Paul's	Mission (cont.)				Passion					
Acts	12:25-19:20 (cont.)				19:21-28:31					
Place	Ephesus				Caesarea				Rome	
Column	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
City: Years:	>	Eph 2+	>	Eph ?	>	Cor3 .25	>	Cae 2+	>	Rm 2+
<b>Apollos</b>	Eph Cor1	Cor1 Eph	Cor2 Cre							
<b>Tychicus</b>		Eph	Phi Ths Cor2 Cre Alb	Eph		Eph	Tro Jer	Cae Col Eph		Eph
<b>Trophim.</b>		Eph		Eph		Eph	Tro Jer	Cae	Mil	Eph
<b>Aristarch.</b>		Eph		Eph	Mac Cor3	Cor3	Phi Tro Jer	Cae Imp	Th s	Ths
<b>Epaphras</b>		Col		Col Eph		Col		Cae Imp		Col
<b>Epaphrod.</b>		Phi		Eph Phi		Phi				
<b>Onesipho.</b>								Eph		Rm
<b>Demas</b>						Ths		Cae Ths		Ths
<b>Column</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>

**Apollos.** 9) Eph Acts18:24. Cor1 Acts18:27; 1Cor3:5-6. 10) Eph 1Cor16:12. 11) Cor2 1Cor16:12. Cre Ti3:13.

**Tychicus.** 11) Phi Phi1:26i;2:24i; 1Cor16:5i. Ths 1Cor16:5i. Cor2 1Cor16:3-8i; 2Cor2:1i;12:14i;13:1i. Cre Ti1:5i. Alb Rm15:19i; Ti3:12. 12) Eph Acts20:4-6. 15) Tro Acts20:6. Jer Acts21:17. 16) Cae Eph6:21; Col4:7. Col Col4:7. Eph Eph6:21; 2Tim4:12.

**Trophimus.** 12) Eph Acts20:4-6. 15) Tro Acts20:6. Jer Acts21:17,29. 16) Cae 2Tim4:20. 17) Mil 2Tim4:20. 18) Eph Acts21:29.

**Aristarchus.** 12) Eph Acts19:29. Imp Col4:10. 13) Mac Acts19:29;20:1-2,4. Cor3 Acts20:2-4. 15) Phi 20:3-4,6. Tro 20:6. Jer 21:17. 16) Cae Phm1:24; Col4:10; 27:2. 17) Ths Acts19:29;20:4;27:2.

**Epaphras.** 10) Col Col1:7;4:12. 12) Eph Phm1:23. Imp Phm1:23. 16) Cae Col4:12; Phm1:23. 18) Col Col4:12.

**Epaphroditus.** 10) Phi Phi2:25;4:18. 12) Eph Phi2:25;4:18. Phi Phi2:25.

**Onesiphorus.** 16) Eph 2Tim1:16;4:19. 18) Rm 2Tim1:16;4:19.

**Demas.** 14) Ths 2Tim4:10 16) Cae Col4:14; Phm1:24. Ths 2Tim4:10. 18) Ths 2Tim4:10.

### **Acts 25a. Paul's Defence Before Governor Festus**

Paul was imprisoned two years in Caesarea under Governor Felix, and Felix didn't release him before he was replaced by Governor Festus.

Acts 24:27. After two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room; and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound [even though he knew Paul was innocent].

Within days after Festus took office, the Jewish leaders requested another trial for Paul. Luke doesn't say much about Paul's defense during this trial. The Jews repeated their accusations without providing eye witnesses, and Paul repeated his defense by denying the accusations.

Acts 25:8. Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all.

The significance of this trial lies in the appeal to Caesar that Paul had to make to avoid being ambushed by the Jews if he agreed to a trial in Jerusalem.

Acts 25:9-11. Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, "Will you go up [Jerusalem is always 'up'] to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. ... I appeal to Caesar."

Festus actually seemed to be a much better administrator than Felix was. Felix had put off making a decision about Paul and about the gospel.

Acts 24:22. When Felix heard these things, ... he deferred them, and said, "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the utmost of your matter."

Acts 24:24-25. [Felix] sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Messiah. And as he reasoned of righteousness, [etc.], ... Felix trembled, and answered, "Go your way for this time. When I have a convenient season, I will call for you."

In contrast, Festus did everything in a pretty timely manner, and was forthright in his words. But he was inexperienced in working in Judaea, and didn't perceive the Jews planned to ambush Paul, so Paul had to appeal his case to Rome.

### **Acts 25b-26. Paul's Defense to King Agrippa**

Soon afterwards, King Agrippa came to visit Festus in his new office, and Festus held an informal trial, with great pageantry, for King Agrippa and his younger sister, Bernice, to hear Paul.

Acts 25:23. When Agrippa came, and Bernice, with great pomp, and had entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment, Paul was brought in.

Things in this world frequently look just the opposite as they actually are. Paul is the one that will shine as the stars forever in the kingdom, while most kings, governors, captains, and powerful men will not even see the kingdom.

After her husband died, Bernice ('Pherenika' in Greek, and 'Veronica' in Latin) lived with her brother Agrippa. There were rumors of incest between them, so Bernice married another husband, but soon returned to live with her brother again. She became the mistress of Titus, the general that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. She went to

live with him in Rome in 75 AD, but it caused a public scandal, and he sent her away. After Titus became emperor in 79 AD, Bernice tried unsuccessfully to return to him in Rome. And yet these people sit in judgment on Paul.

Longenecker. The sight of Agrippa's royal robes, Bernice's finery, and the military and civil dignitaries decked out in their official attire doubtless overwhelmed those unaccustomed to such displays, which, of course, was the effect the whole affair was calculated to produce. After the procession, Paul the prisoner was brought in. But though the situation was contrived to assert the importance of Roman officialdom and the inferiority of anyone who stood before it, Luke's divinely inspired insight penetrated the trappings and saw that the situation was really reversed.<sup>119</sup>

These trials show that, regardless of how much it looks like the brethren might be able to find impartial judgment from world rulers, because of the rulers' apparent concern for law, at the end of the day, Paul is still left in prison, and the brethren can't rely on governments for protection.

Longenecker. For Luke, the most important of Paul's five defenses was his defense before Herod Agrippa II. It is the longest and most carefully constructed of the five, which in and of itself should give notice as to something of its importance in Luke's eyes. Perhaps Luke, through the courtesy of an officer of the guard, was in the audience chamber [since every section where Luke is an eyewitness is relatively longer].<sup>120</sup>

Bock. Paul begins with a compliment to Agrippa for his familiarity with Jewish practice. This captatio benevolentiae is common in rhetorical settings (see 24:2-3). The rest of the speech proceeds according to typical rhetorical form: exordium (vv. 2-3), narratio (vv. 4-18), confirmatio (vv. 19-20), refutatio (v. 21), and peroratio (vv. 22-23; Winter 1993: 329-31). These

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<sup>119</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 12982-5.

<sup>120</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 12909-11.

elements are the prologue, narration, confirmation, refutation, and concluding appeal.<sup>121</sup>

Paul had to give a long speech, because they wouldn't want all those important people to get all dressed up, and travel to an oration that only lasted five minutes. Festus introduces Paul by honestly saying he has been trying to figure out what charges he should write when he sends him to Caesar.

Acts 25:19-27. When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation of such things as I supposed, but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Of whom I have no certain thing to write to my lord [the Roman emperor]. Wherefore I have brought him forth ... before you, O King Agrippa, so that after examination, I might have something to write. For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not to signify the crimes laid against him.

Paul accommodated Festus, by telling them what he was really being accused of. There is no longer any mention of the fully disproved accusation that he had brought a Gentile into the temple, or had tried to defile it in any other way.

Acts 26:2, 5-7, 20-21. I shall answer for myself this day before you touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews, ... which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee [past tense, because now he didn't always live strictly but fellowshiped with Gentiles]. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God to our fathers, to which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought an incredible thing with you all, that God should raise the dead? ... I ... showed ... to the Gentiles, that they should ... turn to God. ... For these causes the

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<sup>121</sup> Bock, Acts, Kindle 17373-8.



Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

Paul says the Jewish religion is still “our religion.” The promise was made to “our” fathers. “Our” twelve tribes, even unsaved and unjustified, earnestly serve God day and night, and hope for the same hope as he. Of course, their service is physical, and isn’t accepted as spiritual service, since there hasn’t been a national salvation yet. But before he was saved, Paul, a Pharisee, also used to “delight in the law of God” (Rom. 7:22), even though “the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be to death” (Rom. 7:10).

Paul said the hope of the promise of eternal life is the real reason he’s on trial, not because of rabble rousing, or sedition, or desecrating the temple.

Longenecker. Since Festus had already said that Paul had not committed a capital crime (cf. 25:25), Paul chose to defend himself only against the charge that he had transgressed against Judaism. ... It was not in spite of his Jewish heritage, Paul insisted, but because of it that he believed and proclaimed what he did, ... drawing together his Pharisaic background and his Christian commitment, arguing that the Jewish hope and the Christian message are inseparably related.<sup>122</sup>

Acts 26:10-11. I truly thought within myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ... Many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

As mentioned regarding Acts 22:19, the brethren continued participating in the Jewish synagogues, which is why Paul persecuted them there. And he didn’t imprison and beat “Christians,” because there were no such things,

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<sup>122</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 13007-9.

unless we mean 'Messianics,' but rather he imprisoned and beat "saints" (Acts 22:19), which refers to all the brethren as 'sanctified,' 'set apart,' 'holy' ones (not the heretical Catholic concept of exceptionally holy religious people).

Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea while Nero was Empower. Nero started off looking ok, but after a few years, his cruelty became evident.

Bruce. Whatever Nero's personal character might be, the first five years of his principate (A.D. 54–59), when the imperial administration was carried on under the influence of his tutor Seneca, the Stoic philosopher, and Afranius Burrus, prefect of the praetorian guard, were looked back to as a miniature golden age. There was little in A.D. 59 that gave warning of the events of A.D. 64 and 65.<sup>123</sup>

The Roman Historian Tacitus, *Annals*, 68 AD+. To stop the rumor [that he had set Rome on fire], he [Emperor Nero] falsely charged with guilt, and punished with the most fearful tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were [generally] hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius. ... Accordingly first those were arrested who confessed they were Christians; next on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning the city, as of "hating the human race." In their very deaths they were made the subjects of sport: for they were covered with the hides of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when the day waned, burned to serve for the evening lights. Nero offered his own garden musicians for the spectacle.

Whether or not Nero had started the fire to avoid needing permission from the Senate for his own building projects, he immediately started building a palace called the Domus Aurea, Golden House, that may have covered a

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<sup>123</sup> Bruce, Acts, 454.

third of Rome. It included a lake, pastures with flocks, 300 rooms; decorated with white marble, fountains, frescos, gold flakes, and semiprecious gems; and a dining room with a domed ceiling that rotated (via slave labor) while dropping rose petals and perfume on the diners. After Nero's death, the Domus Aurea was filled in with earth, and more practical buildings were built on top. When someone fell into it through a hole in the late 1400's, the rediscovered frescos helped shape Renaissance art.

Before 64 AD, the brethren were persecuted by unbelieving Jews, and by Gentiles who had been affected financially, like the owners of the fortune-telling girl in Philippi, and the idol makers in Ephesus. But beginning in 64 AD, Rome began persecuting 'Christians.' The Jews had persecuted the brethren because they considered them heretic Jews. The Romans persecuted the Congregation of God because they didn't consider them Jews. The Jews had an exemption from sacrificing to the Roman emperor as a god, but Rome didn't include the brethren in their exemption.

Just as Paul had used force to get the brethren to blaspheme Jesus, "I punished them ... and compelled them to blaspheme" (Rom. 26:11), so did the Romans. The following is some correspondence from Pliny the Younger, governor of Pontus and Bithynia just north of Ephesus, around 111 AD, to Trajan, the emperor of Rome at that time.

Pliny to Trajan, Epistulae X.96. I have never participated in trials of Christians. I therefore do not know [1] what offenses it is the practice to punish or investigate. ... And I have been not a little hesitant as to [2] whether there should be any distinction ... between the very young and the more mature; [3] whether pardon is to be granted for repentance, or, if a man has once been a Christian, it does him no good to have ceased to be one; [4] whether the name [Christian] itself, even without offenses, or only the offenses associated with the name are to be punished.

Meanwhile, ... I have observed the following procedure: I interrogated these as to whether they were Christians; those who confessed I interrogated a second and a third time, threatening them with punishment; those who persisted I ordered executed. For I had no doubt that, whatever the nature of their creed, stubbornness ... surely deserve[d] to be punished.

Soon accusations spread, as usually happens, because of the proceedings going on, and ... an anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were ... Christians, when they invoked the gods in words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ - none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do - these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they [had been] Christians, ... but had ceased to be. ... They all worshipped your image and the statues of the gods, and cursed Christ.

They asserted, however, that [the only wrong they had done was to] meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves, ... not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, [etc., and then] ... to partake of ... ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition.

I therefore postponed the investigation and hastened to consult you, ... especially because of the number involved. For many persons of every age, every rank, and also of both sexes are and will be endangered. For the contagion of this superstition has spread not only to the cities but also to the villages and farms. But [now

that we have begun to] check and cure it, ... from everywhere [purchasers of] sacrificial animals are coming, for which until now very few purchasers could be found. Hence it is easy to imagine what a multitude of people can be reformed if an opportunity for repentance is afforded.

Trajan's Response to Pliny, Epistulae X.97. You observed proper procedure, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those who had been denounced to you as Christians. For it is not possible to lay down any general rule to serve as a kind of fixed standard. They are not to be sought out; if they are denounced and proved guilty, they are to be punished, with this reservation, that whoever denies that he is a Christian and really proves it - that is, by worshiping our gods - even though he was under suspicion in the past, shall obtain pardon through repentance. But anonymously posted accusations ought to have no place in any prosecution.

Roman government persecution of the brethren didn't end until 313 AD. As for Paul, his opposition to Jesus was ended by a Bat Kol [daughter, or reflection, of a divine voice], a voice from heaven.

Longenecker. Lest he be misunderstood to be proclaiming only a Galilean prophet whom he had formerly opposed, he points out to his hearers what would have been obvious to any Jew, namely, that correction by a voice from heaven meant opposition to God himself.<sup>124</sup>

Acts 26:12-14. Thus, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven, beyond the brightness of the sun. ... And when we had all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking to me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

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<sup>124</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 13038.

In the Talmud, the Rabbis didn't accept a Bat Kol in deciding issues of practice under the Law.

Talmud, Bava Metzia 59b. This is known as the oven of akhnai, a snake. ... If a man made an oven out of separate coils [of clay], ... then put sand between each of the coils - such an oven, R. [Rabbi] Eliezer declared, is not susceptible to defilement, while the sages declared it susceptible. ... A divine voice cried out, "Why do you dispute with R. Eliezer, with whom the Halakhah [lawful practice] always agrees?" R. Joshua stood up and protested: ... "We pay no attention to a divine voice because long ago at Mount Sinai You wrote in your Torah, ... 'After the majority must one incline' (Ex. 23:2)." [But per Rashi, "The wording of the text does not fit [this interpretation.]] [Sometime later,] R. Nathan met [the prophet] Elijah [in heaven] and asked him, "What did the Holy One do at that moment?" Elijah: "He laughed [with joy], saying, 'My children have defeated Me, My children have defeated Me!'"

Paul's commission to be Jesus' apostle was by a Bat Kol, from God's Messiah in heaven, "Yehovah said to my Lord [Messiah], "Sit at my right hand [in heaven], until I make your enemies your footstool." But Paul's revelation that Jewish believers aren't, "under the law" (Rom. 6:15), because they died and rose in Messiah, "having abolished in his flesh ... the law of commandments" (Eph. 2:15), was by prophetic revelation, which Judaism counts as higher authority than a Bat Kol.

Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim 13:6 (2). The Talmud is also on record that even when ... instructions are issued by means of a Bat Kol, a heavenly echo, this is without halachic significance when it involves permanent changes of Torah law. Prophecy is a higher authority than a [Bat Kol] and all the laws of the Torah have been communicated by the father of all prophets, by Moses.

But Moses prophesied a prophet like himself would come.

Deut. 18:15. The Lord your God will raise up to you a Prophet ... like me.

And not merely like, but even greater than, Moses. So he has authority over the Law.

Heb. 3:3. [Jesus] was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who has built the house [and who gave the law,] has more honor than the house.

Then Paul described his appointed mission as Jesus' representative to the Gentiles.

Acts 26:15-18. And I said, "Who are you, Lord? And he said, "I am Jesus whom you persecute. ... I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness, ... delivering you from the [Jewish] people, and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Jesus commissioned Paul to complete his mission as the Servant of Yehovah described in Isaiah. Jesus, through Paul, brought light to the Gentiles at the ends of the earth, the islands of the Aegean sea (1200-6000 islands, 166-227 of which are inhabited). The Aegean was where east met west, Europe met Asia, Rome and Greece met Babylon and Persia. The Greeks had heavily colonized Asia on the west coast of the Aegean, though local Asia Minor and Persian influences continued. Rome provided the administration of the empire, but Greece provided the language and culture.

Gager. "The vanquished have given their laws to the victors," Seneca, On Superstition. ... The saying ... expressed Roman anxiety over the pervasive Greek influence in every aspect of Roman life - art, architecture, mythology, philosophy, and more. Rome had defeated Greece on the battlefield but had been swamped by Greek culture at home. Horace, Epistles, 2.1.156: "Captive Greece held captive her uncouth

conqueror and brought the arts to the rustic Latin lands.”<sup>125</sup>

Note the parallels between Acts 26:15-18 above, and Isaiah 42:1-7 following.

Is. 42:1-7. Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my elect, in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit on him; he will bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. ... He will not fail nor be discouraged, until he has set judgment in the earth; and the islands [the Aegean, especially Corinth and Ephesus] will wait for his law. ... I the Lord ... will hold your hand, and will protect you [from the Jews and Gentiles], and give you for a covenant of the [Jewish] people, for a light of the Gentiles.

It turned out that Paul's hand was the one that was held.

Longenecker. The commission itself (v. 18) echoes that of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 42:6b-7: “I ... will make you ... a light for the Gentiles.” ... Indeed, Paul's mission was to be a prophetic one that perpetuated the commission originally given to God's Righteous Servant, Jesus Christ.<sup>126</sup>

Acts 26:22-23. Having therefore obtained help of God [“I will hold your hand,” Is. 42:6], I continue to this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say would happen, that Messiah would suffer, and that he would be the first that would rise from the dead, and would show light to the [Jewish] people, and to the Gentiles. [‘People’ in the Bible usually means the ‘Jewish people.’]

Marshall. Since the Old Testament nowhere speaks of a suffering Messiah (even the term ‘Messiah’ does not occur as a title in the Old Testament [that's because it's translated as ‘anointed’ in English]) we should probably think primarily of the teaching about the suffering of God's Servant (Isa. 53), and also of other

<sup>125</sup> Gager, Early Christianity, 109, 2853.

<sup>126</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 13054.



passages in the prophets and the Psalms which may have been taken as typological or prophetic of the sufferings of the Messiah (Jer. 11:19; Dan. 9:26; Zech. 13:7; Pss. 22, 69); this would give us material from three of the four books of the 'latter prophets' (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Book of the Twelve; omitting Ezekiel) and also from the Psalms.<sup>127</sup>

We can add to Marshall's list, references like the one whose heel will be wounded by Satan (Gen. 3:15), the lamb God provided Abraham in place of Isaac (Gen. 22:8), the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:6, 18) and all sacrifices for sin, the serpent lifted up in the wilderness (Num. 21:9), etc., and all scriptures related to "Messiah, Son of Joseph." Rabbinic Law says there will be two Messiahs.

Moshiach 101, Appendix 2, Chabad. Jewish tradition speaks of two redeemers, ... Mashiach ben David [Messiah, Son of David] and Mashiach ben Yossef [Messiah, Son of Joseph].

The rabbis believe Messiah Son of Joseph will wage war, die, and be resurrected by Messiah, Son of David, who will then reign. They say passages about Messiah's suffering (like Psalm 22, Psalm 69, Zechariah 12, and Isaiah 53 before Rashi reinterpreted it to mean Israel in 1100 AD) refer to Messiah, Son of Joseph.

Yeshua revealed there is only one Messiah, but with two comings. First, he came to provide individual, spiritual salvation by suffering as the Passover lamb. Later, he will return to provide national, physical salvation by reigning as king.

Talmud (Sanhedrin 97b-98a). When the Jewish people repent, they will be redeemed. ... If they merit redemption through repentance and good deeds, I will hasten the coming of the Messiah. If they do not, ... the coming of the Messiah will be in its designated time. ... If they will be worthy [by repentance], he will come with the clouds of heaven [Dan. 7:13]; and if not, he will come upon a donkey [Zech. 9:9].

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<sup>127</sup> Marshall, Acts, 99.

So the Jewish Rabbis understood two different timings for the coming of Messiah were possible. They didn't understand that both comings would occur - first "on a donkey" when Israel didn't repent; and second, in the future, "with the clouds of heaven," after Israel repents.

As Paul talked about risking his life to go to the Gentiles with the message of Jesus' resurrection in obedience to hearing the voice from heaven ...

Acts 26:24. As he thus spoke for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you're beside yourself! Much learning has made you crazy."

Longenecker. No sensible Roman could believe in the resurrection of a dead person. Even if he did privately accept such a strange view, he would not allow it to interfere with his practical living or bring him into danger of death. Paul, Festus concluded, was so learned in his Jewish traditions that he had become utterly impractical. Such talk was the height of insanity.<sup>128</sup>

Paul then boldly put King Agrippa on the spot.

Acts 26:25-28. "I'm not crazy, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knows of these things, before whom also I speak freely. ... King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Almost you persuade me to be a Christian." ... And ... the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them.

Longenecker. "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" The adjective 'oligos' (GK 3900) often has reference to quantity and here could mean ... "with such a brief argument." But it is also used with the preposition 'en' ("in"), as it is here, to denote duration (cf. BDAG, 703). And this is how it should be translated here (so NIV, "in such a short time").<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 13085.

<sup>129</sup> Longenecker, Acts, Kindle 13099-13102.

**Ch 14. Acts 27:1-28:31. Roman  
Imprisonment**



*14. Paul Shipwrecked (1630). Laurent de La Hyre (1606-1656)*

Shipwracke escap't no sooner come to land  
But straight another danger is at hand;  
Him men a murderer count, a wondrous thing  
To bite him whom ye serpent would not sting.

14. Of Paul's Danger. Thomas Fuller (1608–1661)



*Mission: Rome. Epistles: 13) 2 Tim. 14) Hebrews*

## **Acts 27. Sea Voyage and Shipwreck**

Chapter 27 describes Paul's sea voyage to Rome, including his shipwreck, in accurate, nautical detail, like Luke had also described the trip to Jerusalem in Acts 21:6-22:8.

Chapter 28 describes the completion of Jesus' mission to the diaspora Jews through Paul. Acts ends with Paul continuing to preach the good news of the future Messianic Kingdom, and the good news of salvation in Jesus, which is the dual message the Congregation is supposed to continue preaching until Messiah returns.

During Paul's trial before Festus, he appealed his case to Caesar, meaning the current emperor, possibly Nero, who ruled from 54 AD until 68 AD, two years before the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. A centurion from Judaea transported Paul to Rome by ship. He never got to visit the tri-city area of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, or stay at Philemon's house.

Trophimus, Aristarchus, and possibly Mark, accompanied Paul and Luke on an Adramyttium ship going towards Troas on the first part of the journey, but

didn't transfer with them at Myra to the Alexandrian ship going to Rome. Trophimus was sick, so he, possibly accompanied by Mark, stayed on the first ship until he got to Miletus near his hometown of Ephesus. Aristarchus probably stayed on the first ship to return home to Thessalonica. Luke, on the other hand, changed ships with Paul at Myra, and continued on with him to Rome.

Acts 21:29. The Jews which were of Asia [Eph+], ... had seen before with [Paul] in the city [of Jerusalem], Trophimus, an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.

Acts 27:2. When it was determined that we [in Caesarea] should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion, ... and entering into a ship of Adramyttium [a town near Troas], we launched, intending to sail by the coasts of Asia [Eph+]; one Aristarchus ... of Thessalonica, being with us. ... And ... we came to Myra [near Ephesus], ... and there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria [of Egypt] sailing into Italy, and he put us [Paul and Luke] therein. And when we [Paul and Luke] came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but Paul was allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

2 Tim. 4:20. Trophimus have I left at Miletus [near Myra and Ephesus] sick. [Paul didn't say, "I left Trophimus sick at Myra, because although Paul said goodbye to him at Myra, Trophimus didn't get off the ship he was on until Miletus.]

Paul could give advice about sailing because he had done so much of it.

2 Cor. 11:25. Three times I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the ocean.

Acts 27:9-11, 21. Paul admonished them, ... "Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives." Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things

which were spoken by Paul. ... [Later,] Paul ... said, “Sirs, you should have listened to me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.”

It’s not only that Paul had a lot of experience sailing, but Luke could also advise him, since he had a keen interest in the sea. In Acts, he listed winds, currents, places of safety and danger for ships, emergency procedures during storms, and mentioned each city’s seaport the first time they used it, even when nothing happened at them.

SEAPORTS	
Seaport	For
Seleucia	Antioch Syria
Attalia	Perga
Neapolis	Philippi
Cenchrea	Corinth

The kinds of details God caused Luke to provide allows us to test the infallibility of scripture, and proves Luke’s trustworthy, eyewitness authorship in the first century. The extra level of detail in the “we” portions of the book shows the author was actually present as implied during those portions. Several have taken in hand to retrace Paul’s voyages in Acts; from Smith who wrote a book in 1884, to Stutzman who wrote a book in 1973.<sup>130</sup>

Smith. No sailor would have written in a style so little like that of a sailor; no man not a sailor could have written a narrative of a sea voyage so consistent in all its parts, unless from actual observation.<sup>131</sup>

Sir William Ramsay (1851 - 1939), was a scholar educated in the Tübingen school of thought, which doubted the reliability of the New Testament. He began doing archeology in Asia Minor when he came to realize Acts was the best source of authentic history for first century Asia Minor.

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<sup>130</sup> Stutzman, Sailing Acts.  
<sup>131</sup> Smith, Voyage and Shipwreck, liv.

Ramsay. [In order to do my archeological work,] among other old books that described journeys in Asia Minor the Acts of the Apostles had to be read anew. I began to do so without expecting any information of value regarding the condition of Asia Minor at the time when Paul was living. I had read a good deal of modern criticism about the book, and dutifully accepted the current opinion that it was written during the second half of the second century by an author who wished to influence the minds of people in his own time by [an] imaginative description of the early Church. ... I began then to study the Acts in search of geographical and antiquarian evidence, hardly expecting to find any, but convinced that, if there were any, it would bear on the condition of Asia Minor in the time when the writer lived [2nd century]. The first thing that made me begin to doubt the judgment which I had formed, or rather, had accepted from others, about the late origin of "the Acts of the Apostles" was a discovery regarding the geographical statement in [Acts 14:5]: "They fled (from Iconium) to the cities of Lycaonia and the surrounding region." ... This piece of information is purely a matter of geography: it has no bearing on religion and on the Church questions of the second century. It is technical, narrow, and in a sense external to the narrative, which as one might think would run equally well although this detail were absent.<sup>132</sup>

As it turned out from further archeological work, although Iconium was in the political region of Lycaonia in the second century, Acts was correct that Iconium wasn't in Lycaonia in the first century. Acts also turned out to be right about the languages spoken in those cities.

Ramsay. The Apostles heard people shout their appeal to the gods in the Lycaonian tongue [Acts 14:11]: this impressed Paul, because he had heard a different language spoken familiarly in home life at Iconium. There they spoke Phrygian: in Lystra they spoke Lycaonian. The contrast struck him, and afterwards in telling the story to the author, he almost unconsciously introduced that slight detail. ... It is, from one point of

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<sup>132</sup> Ramsay, Trustworthiness, 488-511 Kindle.



view, a matter of indifference whether those Lystrans called out in the Lycaonian language, or in the Greek, or in the Phrygian. The important matter is that they uttered this meaning, "The gods have manifested themselves to us in the form of human beings," and that they applied the words to Paul and Barnabas. To us, reading the words in Greek or in English, they are just as effective as ... a Lycaonian version, ... but to Paul it was not so. He had been used to hear the Iconian speech, and the new language struck his ear and remained in his memory. This small detail remains as a sign and proof that the ear of Paul plays a part in the narrative. We listen with him, and hear the shout in Lycaonian, and are struck with the strangeness of the sound.<sup>133</sup>

Ramsay's conclusion from his life of studying the archeology of Asia Minor is ...

Ramsay. You may press the words of Luke in a degree beyond any other historian's, and they stand the keenest scrutiny and the hardest treatment.<sup>134</sup>

Wilson. [Luke] knew that Lystra and Derbe and certain neighboring territories comprised a special region, as is made clear by his reference in Acts 14:6. This forgotten geographic fact is now known to have been correct only between 37 and 72 AD. ... Luke knows that the native speech at Lystra is Lycaonian. ... Luke [correctly] uses the titles of various officials [throughout his book]. He talks about the Proconsul of Cyprus, ... the Politarchs of Thessalonica, ... "the chief man" [which is] the proper title of an official on the Island of Malta, ... the Magistrates of Philippi.<sup>135</sup>

Luke gives many names by which to date his writing.

Janeway. Lucius Junius Gallio, Annas, Caiaphas, Ananias [the high priest], Gamaliel, Sergius Paulus. ... The emperor Claudius (A.D. 41-54) is well known for his edict expelling the Jews from Rome. ... Chapters

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<sup>133</sup> Ramsay, *Trustworthiness*, 549-559 Kindle.

<sup>134</sup> Ramsay, *Trustworthiness*, 1083 Kindle.

<sup>135</sup> Wilson, *Doctor Who Wrote History*, 35.



23–25 of Acts name several rulers along with their wives before whom Paul was tried. Hanson [in *The Acts*, p. 8] notes a “very remarkable piece of synchronization on the part of the author” taking place. Paul encountered the high priest Ananias prior to appearing before the procurator Felix. Felix was married to Drusilla. ... Festus succeeded him, ... [and] gave a hearing to Paul before Agrippa II, whose sister Bernice was living with him at the time. Given such a quiltwork of persons and events, it would have taken a considerable amount of research for a later historian to piece together.<sup>136</sup>

### **Acts 28:1-6. Circumstances**

The Word. Mt. 14:29-30. When Peter had come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he ... [was] beginning to sink.

Not Wisdom. Acts 28:4-6. When the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said, ... “No doubt this man is a murderer.” ... But after they ... saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Circumstances provide the parameters of the problem, and the background of the decision. Circumstances don’t provide any information from God to provide direction that can be ‘divined’ from them.

Robinson. I’m reminded of the Rorschach Test, the psychological test featuring the big inkblots. ... One person may see a beautiful butterfly. Another sees, in the same blots, demons coming to claim his soul. ... The way we interpret events in our lives often reveals more about our innermost hearts than our outward circumstances. Circumstances don’t provide us with the guidance we need to make good decisions. ... Paul and his physician friend, Luke, were shipwrecked. ... Paul gathered some sticks. As he put his bundle on the fire, a viper sank its fangs into the flesh of his hand.

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<sup>136</sup> Janeway, *Historically Reliable?*, 52.

When the people of Malta saw what happened, they interpreted the circumstance in light of God's providence: "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live" (Acts 28:4). But Paul shook off the viper into the fire, and its poison apparently had no effect. When the people saw this new set of circumstances, they completely reversed themselves. Acts tells us, "They changed their minds and said he was a god" (28:6). In both cases, these people were doing their very best to read the circumstances. And in both cases, they were wrong!<sup>137</sup>

### **Acts 28:17-31. The Completion of the Goal**

The prerequisite to setting up the Messianic Kingdom is Israel's organized national repentance.

Mt. 3:2; 4:17. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Repentance isn't part of justification by faith.

John's gospel was "written so that you can believe [have faith], ... and so that believing [having faith], you can have [eternal] life [via justification]" (Jn. 20:31). And the word repent doesn't appear even once in John's gospel.

Paul wrote a complete treatise on justification by faith in Romans 3-4, and the word "repent" doesn't appear even once in those chapters. John and Paul would have been very remiss to have written about justification by faith and to have omitted any mention of repentance if it was part what needs to be done to be justified.

Repentance was the message that both John the Baptist and Jesus announced only up until Israel rejected Jesus in Matthew 11-12. The word repent isn't mentioned again in Matthew after that (Mt. 3:1-2; 4:17; Mk. 6:12; Mt. 11:20-21, 41).

Individual repentance wouldn't have brought the Messianic Kingdom. Jesus rebuked cities, not individuals, for not repenting (Mt. 11:20-21, 41).

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<sup>137</sup> Robinson, Decision Making, Locations 924-936.

The popular belief that Israel rejected Jesus at his first coming because he offered a spiritual kingdom, while they were expecting a physical kingdom, is not biblical. Jesus offered a physical kingdom, just like they were expecting.

The same kingdom that is called the ‘kingdom of heaven’ in Matthew, is called the ‘kingdom of God’ in the other gospels, so the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are synonymous.

Mt. 4:12-23. Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee. ... From that time, Jesus began to preach, and to say, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” ... preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

Mk. 1:14-15. Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe the gospel [of the kingdom].”

The phrases ‘kingdom of heaven’ and ‘kingdom of God’ both come from Daniel 2:44. King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of an image made of gold, silver, brass, and iron; which represented the successive kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome; followed by a ten-king period which is still future to us.

Dan. 2:44. In the days of these [ten] kings will the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which will never be destroyed. ... It will ... consume all these [previous] kingdoms, and it will stand for ever.

According to Daniel 2:44, the full name for this kingdom is “the kingdom of the God of heaven.” So the name can be shortened to “the kingdom of God,” or “the kingdom of heaven,” or just “the kingdom,” as in “Thy kingdom come” (Mt. 6:10).

It will be a physical Kingdom on earth, as described in all the Old Testament prophecies (Is. 11:6; 65:25); and just like the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman kingdoms of Daniel 2 were physical; only it will also be spiritual, because God will rule it through the Messiah.

The Bible clearly tells us the real reason Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah at his first coming was because he rejected their supposed 'oral law,' and not because he offered a kingdom different from what they were expecting. For example, the Jewish so-called 'oral law,' recorded later in the Talmud, forbid healing on the sabbath.

Talmud, Tractate Shabbath. You must not ... set a broken bone [on the Sabbath]. If one's hand or foot is dislocated, he must not agitate it ... in cold water, but may bathe it in the usual way, and if it heals, it heals.

Maimonides, (Rambam) MT, Kings 11:4. The Messiah ... must ... follow both the written and the oral Torah.

But though the made-up, Rabbinic oral law forbid healing on the sabbath, the Law of Moses didn't; so Jesus healed on the sabbath.

Mt. 12:9-14. [Jesus] went into their synagogue, and, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" that they might accuse him. And he said to them, ... "It is lawful." ... Then he said to the man, "Stretch forth your hand." And he stretched it forth, and it was restored whole, like as the other. Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

Even though that generation of Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah; when any future generation of Israel repents, Jesus will return and set up the Messianic Kingdom.

Mt. 23:39. You will not see me again, until you will say, "Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord [and then you'll see me again]."

Peter began giving Israel a second chance to repent at Pentecost.

Acts 2:38. Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Messiah for the remission of sins.

Acts 3:19-20. Repent, ... that your sins may be blotted out, ... and [God] will send Jesus Messiah, which before was preached to you.

Someday, Israel will repent, with an organized, national repentance, like the one Assyria's capital city of Nineveh had.

Jesus Said to His Generation of Israel. Mt. 12:41. The men of Nineveh will rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

Organized City-Wide Repentance of Nineveh in the Past. Jon. 3:5-8. The people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came to the king of Nineveh, ... and he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing. Let them not feed, nor drink water; but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God. Yes, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands."

Organized Nation-Wide Repentance of Israel in the Future. Zech. 12:9-13:1. It shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the [Gentile] nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon ... the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they will look on me whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son. ... The land [of Israel] will mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day, there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

Paul preached to the Jews of the diaspora first in every city he went to; and it's no accident the book of Acts, and all divine history until the Day of the Lord, ends after he preaches to the diaspora Jews of Rome, and they reject the gospel. The mission of the book of Acts was finished when Paul preached the Kingdom and Jesus to the diaspora Jews of Rome, and pronounced Isaiah's judgment on them.

Acts 28:17-29. Paul called the chief of the Jews together. ... He expounded and testified the kingdom of God. ... They departed after Paul had spoken, ... "Well spoke the Holy Spirit by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, ... 'Hearing you will hear, and will not understand.'"

There's no divine history apart from Israel. This current time of the Congregation on earth is concerned mostly with eternal, unchangeable things, as described in the Epistles; whereas the things of Israel are mostly physical and changeable. Divine history will recommence again when Elijah returns (Mal. 4:5), and the Day of the Lord begins, as described in the book of Revelation.

Luke ends the book of Acts by telling us what the Congregation should be doing until Messiah returns: preach and teach, both the good news of present spiritual salvation in Jesus (justification and sanctification), and the good news of future physical salvation in the Messianic Kingdom (glorification) when Jesus returns.

Acts 28:23. [Paul] expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus. ... Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah.

Philip had preached the same things.

Acts 8:12. They believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Messiah.

Reformed theologians, and others, greatly abuse Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek," by

misinterpreting it to mean, God no longer recognizes any distinction between ethnic Jews and ethnic Gentiles, either in or outside the Congregation. But from the beginning of Acts to the last three verses, which is the end of divinely recorded Congregation history, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles is divinely maintained.

Acts 28:29. When [Paul] had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves, ... And Paul ... [was] preaching the kingdom of God.

Ramsay thought the purpose of Acts was to provide a defense of Paul and the Congregation to help reduce persecution from the Roman Empire. But since the book ended without an acquittal and release of Paul, Ramsay thinks Luke didn't get to finish his writing.

Ramsay. With the legal constructiveness and obedience to precedent that characterized the Romans, this case [of Paul's] tried before the supreme court must have been regarded as a test case and a binding precedent. ... But, further, it is obvious that the importance of the trial for Luke is intelligible only if Paul was acquitted. ... The issue of the trial was a formal decision by the supreme court of the Empire that it was permissible to preach Christianity: the trial, therefore, was really a charter of religious liberty, and therein lies its immense importance. It was, indeed, overturned by later decisions of the supreme court [which resulted in several hundred years of persecution]; but its existence was a highly important fact for the Christians. ... It is obviously absurd to relate [the things leading up to the trial] at great length, and wholly omit the final result. ... It therefore follows that a sequel was contemplated by [Luke] the author. ... [Acts] was the work of one who had been trained by Paul to look forward to Christianity becoming the religion of the Empire and of the world. [Yuck! Only false 'Christianity' became the religion of the Empire and the world.]<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ramsay, Paul, 4146-4157 Kindle.

Allen rejects speculations like Ramsay's, and says Luke was satisfied to complete his history up to the time of his writing, and his purpose involved Jewish/Gentile issues.

Allen. A crucial question for the dating of Acts is the way Luke closes the book. There are really only three alternatives: ... (1) Paul's trial was described in another book, a view [similar to Ramsay's] with no evidence to support it; (2) it was so well known that it did not need telling; or (3) it had not yet taken place. The third view is to my mind the most likely explanation. Even if the trial had already taken place, would Luke not have mentioned Paul's death (c. AD 66–67) if it had occurred? None of the crucial events that occurred after AD 63 are mentioned in Acts. Absent are the burning of Rome in AD 64, the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Furthermore, Acts seems to suggest that Rome's attitude toward Christianity was as yet undecided. This was certainly not the case after AD 64 when the Roman government became openly hostile [not permissive of preaching per Ramsay] to Christianity. ... Finally, I believe Luke left us with a linguistic signature that informs us he did not end the book of Acts abruptly at all; the ending is exactly how Luke planned it. A comparison of the prologue (Acts 1:1–4) to the last paragraph in Acts 28:30–31 reveals a tripartite lexical chiasm: Acts 1:1–5 [1) Jesus ... 2) teaching ... 3) the Kingdom of God]. Acts 28:30–31 [3) The Kingdom of God ... 2) teaching ... 1) Jesus]. The evidence of a designed ending further bolsters the view that Acts closes as it does because Luke had simply brought the history of the church up to date. The Gospel of Luke begins and ends with a sandwich chiasm (inclusio) as well.<sup>139</sup>

Allen. Morgenthauer demonstrated ... the twin themes of Jewish rejection and Gentile acceptance permeating [Luke's] two-volume work. ... Luke does not attempt to answer either the Jewish or the Gentile question alone, but rather both at the same time. ... God's great salvation plan, begun in the Old Testament, is now

<sup>139</sup> Allen, Lukan Hebrews, 6493-6520 Kindle.



consummated in Christ and His church. Christianity is the fulfillment of the Old Testament hope of Israel. Bock ... [said Luke's] two volumes are an explanation of the origins of the new community now known as the church - an exercise in ... "sociological legitimization." ... Mattill ... argued that Luke's purpose in Acts was to defend Paul against the charges of Jewish Christians. ... Jervell argued that the main purpose of Acts was to solve the problem of the relationship of Christians to the Jewish law. ... Houlden argued that Luke's purpose was motivated by the resentment of Jewish Christians toward the growing number of Gentile Christians in the church. ... Luke is writing to Jewish Christians, and not to a purely non-Christian Jewish audience or a purely Gentile audience. ... Issues of continuity or discontinuity ... in Luke's writing ... are twin foci that emphasize continuity more than discontinuity. ... Luke-Acts is both pro-Jewish and pro-Gentile. ... O'Toole ... argued [Luke's theme is] "that God who brought salvation to his people in the Old Testament continues to do this. ... Juel ... [recognized] the need of Luke's readers to cope with their separation from the Jewish community. ... But was it clarification [these Jewish Christians] needed, or motivation to continue as the people of God (in continuity with the Old Testament) in spite of Jewish opposition? ... Maddox concluded ... Luke wrote "to assure the Christians of his day that their faith in Jesus is no aberration, but the authentic goal towards which God's ancient dealings with Israel were driving." ... Luke wrote to motivate his readers to follow Jesus with unwavering loyalty. Is this not the tenor of Hebrews as well? ... Bock has acknowledged ... "The emphasis on themes such as perseverance seems to suggest an audience that needs to endure with the community in light of Jewish rejection. ... He concluded that Luke's purpose is not so much evangelistic "as it is an invitation to embrace and persevere ... recognizing that God has designed both Jew and Gentile to be a part of the new community." ... Van Unnik ... concluded ... Heb. 2:3-4 ... may fittingly be used as a heading of Luke's second volume [Acts].<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Allen, Lukan Hebrews, Kindle 3352-3435

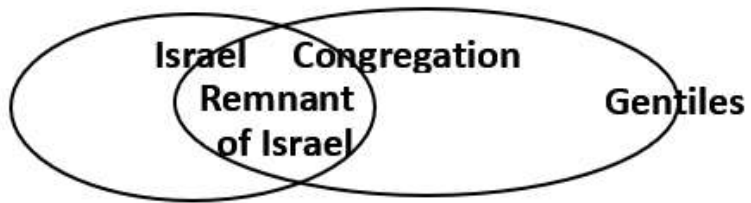
Heb. 2:3-4. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will?

So Luke had to end Acts exactly where he did. If he had gone on to talk about the result of Paul's trial, we might think Acts was a defense of the Congregation to Roman rulers. If he had gone on to talk about Paul's death, we might think Acts was about Luke's hero, Paul, rather than about Jesus' representative, Paul. If he had gone on to talk about the spread of the gospel to Spain, the flight of the Jerusalem Congregation to Pella in Transjordan in obedience to Jesus' words of Luke 21:20-21, the 70 AD destruction, the death of Peter, and the ministry and death of John in the area of Ephesus, we might think Acts was a history of the early years of the Congregation instead of the history of Jesus' mission to the Aegean. But since Luke ended Acts exactly where he did, we know it's the history of Jesus' accomplishment of the highest purpose of God by bringing both Jews and Gentiles together in himself, united to form one new man, yet remaining distinct from each other.

As a result, both Reformed Theology and mandatory Torah-observance are refuted. Reformed Theology is refuted for thinking the Congregation of the New Testament is the same as and the replacing successor to Israel of the Old Testament, and that there is thus no divine distinction between ethnic Jews and Gentiles today, and therefore we are under portions of the Law. And mandatory Torah-observance groups are refuted for thinking Gentile believers are merely added on to Israel of the Old Testament, versus the creation of a new man (entity), and therefore we are under the whole Law.

The Congregation neither replaces Israel, nor is identical with, nor a subpart of Israel. The Congregation is a new entity consisting of 1) the remnant of Israel (which someday will comprise all Israel because of an increase in

the remnant and a decrease in the number of the many), and 2) the Gentiles who turned to the God of Israel. The Law isn't binding for either Jews or Gentiles, because all believers died and rose again in Messiah. But Jewish brethren should be encouraged to maintain their Jewishness, and follow a Jewish way of life to the extent they want to, and their Jewishness should be appreciated, and enjoyed, fostered, and thus participated in to some extent by the Gentile brethren.



*Israel, The Congregation, Dual Citizenship Of The Remnant*

### **Epistle of 2 Timothy**

Written at Acts 28:30 from Rome.

Acts 28:30. Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house [in Rome], and received all that came in to him.

2 Tim. 1:8, 16-17. Don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. ... The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my [imprisonment], but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

2 Tim. 4:6-7, 21. I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. ... Eubulus greets you. And Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia [Latin names].

Timothy is near Troas, Mark, Priscilla and Aquilla, and Onesiphorus' family, so probably in Ephesus where Paul

had last sent him with Tychicus to deliver the epistles of Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians.

2 Tim. 1:15, 17-18. You [already] know that all they which are in Asia [Eph+] are turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. When [Onesiphorus] was in Rome, he sought me out ... and found me, ... and in how many things he ministered to me at Ephesus, you know very well.

2 Tim. 4:11-19. Demas ... is departed to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Albania. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you. And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus [with you from Caesarea, as you know]. ... The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when you come, bring with you. ... Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil. ... Of whom you beware also. Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth [as you know], but Trophimus I have left at Miletus sick.

2 Timothy is Paul's last epistle, except for helping Luke with Hebrews. He wrote it during his imprisonment in Rome, shortly before his execution. By the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy, he definitely expected to be executed, rather than released.

2 Tim. 2:8-11. Jesus Messiah of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. ... It is a faithful saying, "For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."

2 Tim. 4:6-7, 10-12, 16-17, 20-21. I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. ... At my first answer [in court] no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, ... and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. ... Do your diligence to come before winter. Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia [Roman names] [greet you].

Onesiphorus went from Ephesus to Rome to minister to Paul in prison, but had apparently died in Rome. His

ministry was mentioned in the past tense, and only his family was greeted.

By the way, this is one of the places Roman Catholicism gets the idea of purgatory, since Paul ‘prays’ that Onesiphorus, now dead, would receive grace at ‘judgment day.’ But Paul only expresses a wish for Onesiphorus here in this statement. It’s not like Paul ‘prayed’ for him during times of prayer. Maybe despite Onesiphorus’ sacrificial help to Paul, Paul wasn’t sure if he was a believer. If he was a believer, he will be well-rewarded for his good works when rewards are given out to believers (1 Cor. 3:8-15). If he wasn’t a believer, his good works will reduce his punishment at the Great White Throne judgment of the works of the unsaved (Rev. 20:11-14).

2 Tim. 1:16-18. The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me; the Lord grant to him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he ministered to me at Ephesus, you know very well.

Why didn’t any of the 27 people Paul and Timothy had sent greetings to in Romans 16, send any greetings from Rome to Timothy in 2 Timothy chapter 4?

People Paul and Timothy Sent Greetings to in Rome in Rom. 16. Amplias, Andronicus, Apelles, Aquila, Aristobulus, Asyncritus, Epaphroditus, Hermas, Hermes, Herodion, Julia, Junia, Mary, Narcissus, Nereus, Olympas, Patrobas, Persis, Phebe, Philologus, Phlegon, Priscilla, Rufus, Stachys, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Urbane.

People in Rome Who Sent Greetings to Timothy in Ephesus in 2 Tim. 4. Claudia, Eubulus, Linus, Pudens.

The only people in Rome Paul had greeted in Romans 16 that Timothy personally knew had already left Rome by the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy. Phebe had performed her business there (Rom. 16:2) and returned to Corinth. Epaphroditus had probably returned to Corinth (Rom. 16:5).

Priscilla and Aquilla were with or near Timothy, probably in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19).

The others in Rome that Paul had greeted in Romans 16 (like Amplias, Andronicus, Apelles, Aristobulus, Asyncritus, Hermas, Hermes, Herodion, Julia, Junia, Mary, Narcissus, Nereus, Olympas, Patrobas, Persis, Philologus, Phlegon, Rufus, Stachys, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Urbane), didn't send their greetings to Timothy in 2 Timothy, because Timothy had never been to Rome, and thus had never met them. The four people who sent their greetings to Timothy in 2 Timothy were Romans Timothy had met outside of Rome, like at Philippi or Ephesus, who were in Rome when Paul wrote 2 Timothy.

This also confirms that Philippians, which we know was written before 2 Timothy since Paul was still expecting to be released from prison, wasn't written from "Paul and Timothy" (Phil. 1:1) in Rome, but earlier, like when Paul was imprisoned in Asia [Eph+].

Phil. 1:1; 2:19-26. Paul and Timothy ... to all the saints ... which are at Philippi. ... I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly to you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Messiah's. But you know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he has served with me in the gospel. Therefore I hope to send him presently, as soon as I see how it will go with me.

In Paul's last letter, he asked Timothy to come to Rome and bring Mark with him.

2 Tim. 4:9-11, 21. Be diligent to come shortly to me. ... Take Mark and bring him with you. ... Be diligent to come before winter.

Apparently, Timothy did come, even though his weakness (1 Cor. 16:10, 2 Tim. 1:7-8), like Mark's (Mk. 14:51-52; Acts 13:13), was fear. And he was imprisoned, but released.

Heb. 13:23. Know that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come more quickly, I will see you.

And apparently Timothy did bring Mark with him to Rome, since Mark's gospel is believed to have been addressed to Romans. It's a condensed, practical gospel, emphasizing quick action and obedience that appealed to Roman minds, and it mentions the father of Rufus, whom the Roman brethren knew (Mk. 15:21; Rom. 16:13).

## **Epistle of Hebrews**

Written after Acts 28:30-31 from Italy.

Acts 28:30-31. Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, ... preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Messiah, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Heb. 13:24. They of Italy salute you.

Written by Luke, with Paul as a corroborator, during Paul's two-year imprisonment in Rome, and completed about the time Paul was executed.

We know Paul didn't write Hebrews because he began all his epistles with the word "Paul." For example ...

2 Ths. 1:1. Paul, Silas, and Timothy, to the Congregation of the Thessalonians.

This was important because he wrote the salutation of all his epistles in his own handwriting to protect against forgeries.

2 Ths. 3:17. The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write.

But the Gospel of Luke, the Book of Acts, and the Epistle to the Hebrews were all written 1) anonymously, 2) with long flowing introductions, and 3) in the highest quality Greek in the New Testament, by the highly educated physician, Luke.

Col. 4:14. Luke, the beloved physician.

Also, Paul always said, “Timothy, our brother” (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Ths. 3:2; Phil. 1:1), whereas the writer of Hebrews says, “our brother, Timothy” (Heb. 13:23).

Finally, the author of Hebrews was expecting to see the people he wrote to soon, “Pray for us, ... that I may be restored to you the sooner” (Heb. 13:18-19), whereas Paul knew he would not be released, “the time of my departure [death] is at hand” (2 Tim. 4:8).

Luke probably took many notes from, and had many discussions with, Paul about the role of the Law in the age of the gospel, during Paul’s Caesarean and Roman imprisonments. Just as Acts is Luke’s record of Paul as Jesus’ surrogate in his mission to Aegean Gentiles and diaspora Jews, so also Hebrews is Luke’s record of Paul’s doctrine of the Law’s completion in Messiah. The topic of Jewish and Gentile believers’ relationship to the Law makes a perfect conclusion to Luke’s trilogy: Luke, Acts, and Hebrews. David Allen makes a good case for Luke as the author of Hebrews in *Lukan Authorship of Hebrews*.<sup>141</sup>

Written to Philippi.

Luke was returning to the people he addressed in Hebrews.

Heb. 13:18-19. Pray for us, ... that I may be restored to you the sooner.

Luke is only recorded as living at three places in Acts.

PLACES LUKE LIVED		
City	Years	Chronological References
Philippi	6+	Acts 18:11, 18; 19:10; 20:3. Titus 1:5; 3:12. Etc.
Caesarea	2+	Acts 24:27
Rome	2	Acts 28:30

The people Hebrews was written to had already suffered persecution, but not yet unto blood, like the brethren in Jerusalem and Judaea had.

<sup>141</sup> Allen, *Lukan Authorship of Hebrews*.



Jerusalem Suffered Bloodshed. Acts 7:59. They stoned Stephen, calling on God, and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

Judaea Suffered Bloodshed. Acts 26:10-12. Many of the saints I shut up in prison, ... and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme. And ... I persecuted them even to strange cities. ... I went to Damascus [Syria] with authority and commission from the chief priests.

The Recipients of Hebrews Hadn't Yet Suffered Bloodshed. Heb. 10:32-34; 12:4. Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after you were enlightened, you endured a great fight of afflictions; partly while you were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly while you became companions of them that were so used, ... and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing ... that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. ... You have not yet resisted unto blood.

They had also helped Luke when he was imprisoned.

Heb. 10:34. You had compassion of me in my bonds.

Luke may have been imprisoned for a while sometime during his 6+ years at Philippi, like Paul and Silas had been for one night.

Acts 16:23. They cast them into prison.

Or Luke may have been imprisoned at Caesarea for a while, like Aristarchus (Col. 4:10) and Epaphras (Phm. 1:23). (Alternatively, Aristarchus and Epaphras may have been imprisoned earlier in Ephesus, and still have been called fellow prisoners in Colossians and Philemon, like Andronicus and Junia were called fellow prisoners even though neither they nor Paul were imprisoned when he wrote Rom. 16:7, “Salute Andronicus and Junia, ... my fellow-prisoners.” )

We know Hebrews was written to Philippi, rather than to Caesarea, because Luke said Timothy would likely overtake him in his travels to the recipients of the epistle.

Timothy and Mark came to join Paul and Luke in Rome, and Timothy was imprisoned there awhile.

2 Tim. 4:11, 21. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you. ... Do your diligence to come before winter.

Heb. 13:23. Know that our brother Timothy is set at liberty.

After Paul's execution, Luke and Mark started on the 7 week walk from Rome to Philippi; first via the 360 mile Appian Way that went from Rome to the Adriatic Sea, and then 380 miles on the Via Egnatia from the Adriatic Sea to Philippi.<sup>142</sup> On the way, they received news that Timothy had been released, because couriers travelled faster by horse. Luke sent a copy of the epistle of Hebrews on ahead to Philippi with a courier to let them know that he, Mark, and Timothy were coming. Luke told the Philippians that Timothy, being younger, might very well catch up with he and Mark before they reached Philippi, in which case, the three would walk the rest of the way together, and see the Philippians at the same time.

Heb. 13:18-19, 23. Pray for us [Luke and Mark], ... that I may be restored to you more swiftly [τάχιον, tachion, that they would have a speedy journey]. ... Know that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he travels faster [τάχιον, tachion], I will see you [together with him].

Jn. 20:3-4. They ran both together, and the other disciple ran ahead faster [τάχιον, tachion] than Peter, and came first to the sepulcher.

Mark had been a young man when Jesus was arrested in Mark 14, but was old by the time he left Rome with Luke.

Mk. 14:50-53. They all forsook him and fled. And there followed him a certain young man [Mark, the author],

<sup>142</sup> Epaphroditus, Wenstrom, 3.

having a linen cloth cast about his naked body. And the young men laid hold on him, and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. And they led Jesus away to the high priest.

And Luke was never called young. But Timothy could travel faster, because he was still young when Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Albania following his second visit to Corinth in Acts 19:20.

1 Tim. 4:12. Let no man despise your youth, but be an example of the believers.



## Ch 15. Applying the Word with Wisdom



*15. Paul Writing (1618+). Valentin de Boulogne (1591-1632)*

A chosen vessel of His will,  
He fought the fight of faith;  
And gained the crown of righteousness  
Obedient unto death.

Thus, Lord of grace, to all Thy will  
Obedient may we be;  
And follow meekly in his steps,  
Ev'n as he followed Thee.

15. Paul's Calling. Henry Alford (1810–1871)

### ***Choosing Between Job Offers***

The Word. 1 Tim. 5:8. )If any provide not for his own [relatives], and especially for those of his own house,

he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.

Eph. 6:2. Honor your father and mother.

Heb. 10:25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.

And Wisdom. I will take the job that 1) provides enough money for me to support my family, 2) allows me the most contact with my parents and relatives, and 3) allows me to labor together in a Congregation.

Everything can be decided by the Word and Wisdom. God tells us in the Bible what his will is for you.

1 Ths. 5:16-18. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is the will of God in Messiah Jesus concerning you.

But how should we apply the word of God to decisions that aren't directly mentioned in the Bible, like whether to accept a job offer in Alaska, for example? We need to use logic and wisdom based on the word of God.

The Bible says, "If any provide not for his own, ... he ... is worse than an unbeliever," 1 Tim. 5:8. How would my changing jobs and moving to Alaska affect my ability to support my family and relatives? Money isn't the main goal for believers. "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts," 1 Tim. 6:9. But, we do need to earn enough to feed our families.

The Bible says, "Honor your father and mother," Eph. 6:2. How would moving to Alaska affect the welfare of my parents and friends?

The Bible says, "We are laborers together with God," 1 Cor. 3:9. How would moving to Alaska affect me and my family's ability to worship and labor together with a local Congregation?

An ounce of weight in any of those criteria, or other direct teachings from the Bible, outweighs a thousand pounds of inward impressions, because we are not to make decisions according to feelings, though feelings can

indicate we should reconfirm our understandings of the scriptures and the wisdom we're basing our decision on.

Some things in life are moral, and some things are immoral, but most things are amoral, or neutral. Jobs, in themselves, are amoral. God doesn't care whether you take a job in Alaska, or stay at the one you're at. God cares about how, whatever job you take, allows you to obey, and influence others to obey, his direct commands, like "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks" (1 Ths. 5:16-17).

## ***Frameworks for Discerning God's Will***

Dave Swavely says we should ask three questions in order to make decisions.

Swavely. What does the Bible say about it? ... What is the wisest choice? ... What do I want to do?<sup>143</sup>

As far as the wisest option, ...

Swavely. [The wisest option is the one that's] the most expedient or profitable spiritually, ... [that] contribute[s] to ... your spiritual life [and] the spiritual lives of others.<sup>144</sup>

Decisions should not be based on inner impressions, as if they were direct revelation from God.

Swavely. If you declare a need for both [scripture and new revelation], you have implied the insufficiency of [scripture]. ... You should not in any way be seeking new specific or personal revelation from God. ... An interesting phenomenon occurs, "non-charismatics" end up acting just like those who believe in continuing revelation. ... Feelings, impressions, circumstances, counsel, desires, and prayer [should not be] given authority in the decision-making process. ... They are not "road signs on the highway of life."<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Swavely, Decisions, 141.

<sup>144</sup> Swavely, Decisions, 151.

<sup>145</sup> Swavely, Decisions, 30-31, 61, 63, 80.

Waltke provides five steps for determining God's will.

Waltke. God's Program of Guidance: 1) Read Your Bible, 2) Develop a Heart for God, 3) Seek Wise Counsel, 4) Look for God's Providence [he means watch for opportunities and make flexible plans], 5) Does This Make Sense? ... God gave each of us a brain, and He expects us to put it to good use.<sup>146</sup>

MacArthur provides a non-impression-based model for determining God's will.

MacArthur. God's will is that you be saved, Spirit-filled, sanctified, submissive, and suffering. ... You say, "MacArthur, you were going to tell me what school I should go to. You were going to tell me God's will, specifically!" Okay, let me give you the final principle, but hold on to your seat! You may want to jump up and shout! If you are doing all five of the basic things, ... do whatever you want! ... People say to me, "Why did you go into your present ministry?" ... I always answer, "Because I wanted to."

I had a friend come to me and say, "John, I don't know where the Lord wants me to serve." I said to him, "Marty, if you had your choice of any service in the world, what would you want?" He said, "Oh, I have such a burden for my people Israel. I speak French fluently, and Paris is just loaded with Jewish people who don't know Jesus." ... I checked him on the five spiritual principles and said, "Marty, have you done all these things?" He replied, "Yes, I honestly believe [so]." I said, "Marty, good-bye, have a nice trip." ... He raised all of his support, and today he is serving Christ - in Canada! ... He is in the city of Montreal, working with French-speaking Jews.<sup>147</sup>

Tozer. In the majority of decisions touching our earthly lives God expresses no choice, but leaves everything to our own preference. Some Christians walk under a cloud of uncertainty, worrying about which profession they should enter, which car they should drive, which

<sup>146</sup> Waltke, The Will of God, Locations 12-13.

<sup>147</sup> MacArthur, God's Will, Locations 465-507.



school they should attend, where they should live and a dozen or score of other such matters, when their Lord has set them free to follow their own personal bent, guided only by their love for Him and for their fellow men. On the surface it appears more spiritual to seek God's leading than just to go ahead and do the obvious thing. But it is not. If God gave you a watch would you honor Him more by asking Him for the time of day or by consulting the watch? If God gave a sailor a compass would the sailor please God more by kneeling in a frenzy of prayer to persuade God to show him which way to go or by steering according to the compass? Except for those things that are specifically commanded or forbidden, it is God's will that we be free to exercise our own intelligent choice. The shepherd will lead the sheep but he does not wish to decide which tuft of grass the sheep shall nibble each moment of the day.<sup>148</sup>

We no longer have new revelation today, like when Paul was supernaturally directed to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]. But even during the time of the apostles, supernatural guidance was only for the historical accomplishment of the apostolic mission, and never for personal things like what house to buy, or who to marry.

Robinson. God guided New Testament believers in personal decisions only when such decisions related to the ministry of the gospel. As far as we know, Peter didn't get any special guidance from God when he wanted to buy a house or a horse. Nor do we hear of divine guidance when it came to decisions concerning marriage. In the New Testament, God's special revelation and guidance always had to do with ministry and the moving of God in the world.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Tozer, *Set of the Sail*, Locations 800-809.

<sup>149</sup> Robinson, *Decision Making*, Locations 1226-1229.

## ***Career Choices***

Sproul says, “What do you do,” meaning what is your occupation, is one of the main questions we ask people when we meet them.<sup>150</sup> He says God is introduced in Genesis 1 as a working God, and he created man to be a working creature, and assigned him to keep the garden, and labor even before the fall.<sup>151</sup> We spend so much of our lives preparing for a career and working, and it affects our lives so much that “vocational counseling is a major part of pastoral counseling in America, second only to marital counseling.”<sup>152</sup>

Sproul says we should usually try to fill a need in an occupational area we have aptitudes and talents for, that we are also motivated about and want to pursue, so long as we don’t violate God’s will as revealed in his commandments.<sup>153</sup> He also admonishes us to order our priorities and examine potential consequences. When Abraham and his nephew Lot had to separate because of the shortage of available pasture land, Lot chose Sodom as his portion.

Sproul. [Lot] didn’t ask himself, “Where will my family go to school? Where will my family go to church?” The city he chose was Sodom - a great place to raise cows. The short-term consequences were fine, but long-term living in Sodom turned out to be a disaster in many ways. How will our job decisions be conducive to fulfilling our other responsibilities? The person who chooses a vocation purely on the basis of money, location [like a warm climate], or status is virtually guaranteeing his later frustration. Much of the confusion we often experience in the job arena would be dispelled by asking ourselves ... “What would I like to be doing ten years from now?”<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Sproul, *God’s Will*, 59.

<sup>151</sup> Sproul, *God’s Will*, 60.

<sup>152</sup> Sproul, *God’s Will*, 64.

<sup>153</sup> Sproul, *God’s Will*, 67.

<sup>154</sup> Sproul, *God’s Will*, 80-81.

## ***Marriage Choices***

Another of life's biggest choices is, should I marry, and if so, whom should I marry? In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul said it's better not to marry if you want to serve God without distraction and are strong enough to avoid fornication; but he also said it's good to marry if you want to, and that marriage is not optional if you need to marry to avoid fornication.

As for deciding whom to marry, Sproul said it might help to make a list of the ideal qualities you're looking for and then reduce the list to the most important priorities. "Compatibility with work and with play, attitudes toward parenting, and certain skills and physical characteristics could be included," while realizing no one will ever fit the list perfectly.<sup>155</sup>

He also advised council from others who can see prospects without rose-colored glasses, a role matchmakers used to fill. For example, "a man with a profound need to be mothered and a woman with a profound need to mother, can be attracted to each other in a mutually destructive way."<sup>156</sup> He said, "I am convinced that if biblical precepts are applied consistently, virtually any two people in the world can build a happy marriage."<sup>157</sup> Of course, that doesn't mean it will be equally easy with any prospective spouse.

As far as when to get married, "a man shall leave his father and mother and [hold fast to] his wife" (Gen. 2:24) indicates "the concept of being able to establish a new family unit. Here, economic realities often govern the preparedness for marriage."<sup>158</sup> To find one's spouse, Sproul mentioned the need to be involved in activities that will bring them into contact with other single believers.<sup>159</sup> I would add online dating sites to be a great way to search for people based on their words and character

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<sup>155</sup> Sproul, *God's Will*, 96.

<sup>156</sup> Sproul, *God's Will*, 98.

<sup>157</sup> Sproul, *God's Will*, 98.

<sup>158</sup> Sproul, *God's Will*, 100.

<sup>159</sup> Sproul, *God's Will*, 94.

descriptions, rather than just appearance by ‘swiping’ left or right, with care being taken to avoid misrepresentations and the internet’s unique potential dangers.

The Bible provides men a list of what to look for in a prospective spouse in Proverbs 31. The ideal woman described there is virtuous, faithful, diligent, financially shrewd, strong, kind, artistic, sociable, godly, and more. The woman who best fulfils all those characteristics is the best woman for every man in the world, though only one will be able to marry her.

Solomon summarizes, ...

Prov. 31:30-31. Favor [charm, attraction, whether the other person likes me] is deceitful, and beauty is empty; but a woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates [society]

The Bible says less about who to marry, than about how to treat your spouse, whoever you marry.

Eph. 5:22-25. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Messiah is the head of the Congregation. ... Husbands, love your wives, even as Messiah also loved the Congregation, and gave himself for it.

But that also tells you what to look for in a spouse. Look for a spouse who will do their job, so it will be easier for you to do your job. A woman should look for man who will unselfishly love her; a kind, loving, wise man, who will be committed to her, because being greatly loved will make it easier for her to submit to him, even during times when he makes poor decisions. A man should look for a woman who will submit to him, despite his shortcomings, out of her submission to Messiah, because that will make it easier for him to sacrificially love her, taking responsibility for her welfare, and being gracious.

You will have to continue doing your part unconditionally, whether your spouse continues to do their part or not. But while you’re still free to choose,

choose someone who won't make it more difficult for you to do your part. Their character is the most important indication of how they will behave long term, and you can learn more about their character by how they treat their family, and the waitress, than by how they treat someone they're trying to woo.

I think 2 Corinthians 6:14-15, "Don't be unequally yoked together with unbelievers," primarily forbids ecumenicism, religious affiliation, and co-labor with unbelievers; rather than marriage to an unbeliever. "A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24), indicates spouses become "one flesh," not "one spirit." As I learned from studying old Puritan sermons for a history paper, marriage concerns the things of this life, one flesh not one spirit, which is why we don't remain married after the resurrection (Mt. 22:30).

So it's not a sin to marry an unbeliever. But life will be more difficult for a believer if they marry an unbeliever, so there would have to be a good reason for it, like if the woman is pregnant, as one example. But a believer must never divorce a spouse just because they're an unbeliever. "If any brother has a wife that doesn't believe, ... don't divorce her," 1 Cor. 7:12.

Also, I think any man who is willing to commit to a woman, and will be a loving leader, can find a good wife; but there is a great shortage of men capable of being good husbands, because of the self-centeredness of modern culture. Men have the more critical role, "love your wives, even as Messiah also loved the Congregation, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25), so their failure will affect the marriage more than any failures of the wife.

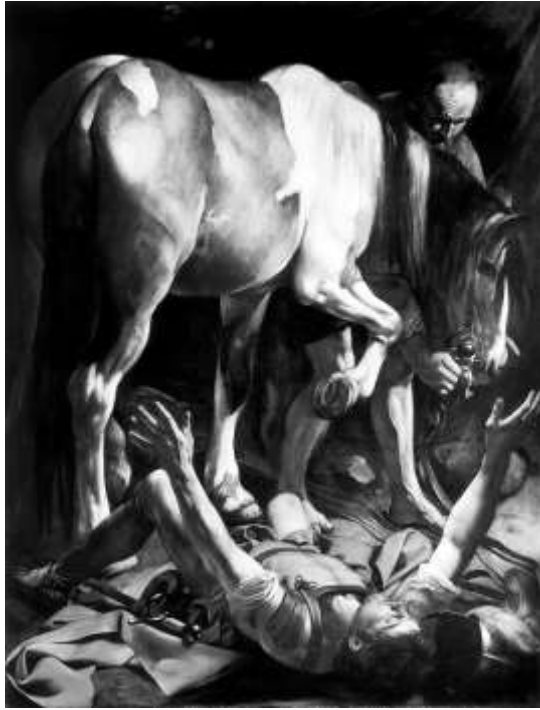
Wives are at greater risk from physical, verbal, and psychological abusive from critical, ungracious husbands; than husbands are at risk from character flaws, like laziness or overemphasis on fashion, a wife may have. Women generally are naturally more conscientious and inclined to adjust to their husbands, but for a wife to try to change her husband is a recipe for disaster. "Wives, be in

subjection to your own husbands, so that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won, while they behold your chaste behavior [not speech],” 1 Pet. 3:1.

The man is the one that must hold the marriage together, and if he lets go, the relationship will not survive. “A man shall ... cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Wives will usually stay in the marriage, and follow the man, as long as he leads in love, and holds onto the relationship. Few women would leave a man who would climb mountains and swim oceans for her. Men desire women; women desire to be desired.

In any case, applying the Word with Wisdom is the biblical method of making decisions in this, as in all areas; not by following supposed signs or inward impressions as if they were guidance.

## Ch 16. Conclusion



*16. Paul's Calling (1601). Caravaggio (1571-1610)*

Ah! Wherefore persecute ye me?  
'Tis hard, ye so in love should be  
    With your own endless woe.  
Know, though at God's right hand I live,  
I feel each wound ye reckless give  
    To the least saint below.

As to Thy last Apostle's heart  
Thy lightning glance did then impart  
    Zeal's never-dying fire,  
So teach us on Thy shrine to lay  
Our hearts, and let them day by day  
    Intenser blaze and higher.

16. Paul's Calling. John Keble (1792–1866)

The Book of Acts shows the Apostles and the early brethren made their decisions based on the Word and Wisdom, not on inward impressions.

The Word included both previous revelation, like the Old Testament, things Jesus had said, and New Testament revelation each person might have had access to, like an epistle from Paul; and also, rarely, direct revelation for the immediate situation, but it was genuine! Merely supposed direct revelation doesn't count as the Word.

When Bible teachers keep telling the brethren they ought to be having direct revelation, and performing miracles, like we read about in the Bible, then it's not unexpected that such pressures will cause over-sensitive people with a great desire to obey God to mistake their own inward impressions for direct revelation, even though they actually fall far short of the truly miraculous, as found in the Bible.

As shown in the table below, direct revelation was extremely rare, even for the apostle Paul, when he was serving God at the forefront of the mission to bring the gospel from Judea to the uttermost parts of the earth, the story of Acts 9-28. Instead of receiving direct revelation, almost all Paul's decisions in those 20 chapters can be explained by 17 wise principles. He didn't even have to 'pray about it' before making them, because in most cases the next step was obvious, although I'm sure he prayed about everything that worried him.



PAUL'S 17 MISSION STRATEGIES

1. Go!
2. Work with Others
3. Start At Home
4. To the Jew First
5. On-the-Job Training
6. New Territory
7. Contiguous Territory
8. Focus On Cities
9. Flee Persecution
10. Preach!
11. Defense Before Offense
12. Plant Congregations
13. Keep in Touch
14. Baptize!
15. Meet With the Brethren
16. Teach!
17. Make Wise Flexible Plans

Of Paul's 94 decisions listed below from Acts 9-20, only 7 were based on direct revelation, none of which were by inward impressions or voices for the daily decisions of life. One involved seeing the resurrected, physical, glorified Jesus; two involved seeing Jesus in a vision; one involved genuine prophecy from a genuine prophet; one involved being filled with the Spirit; and one involved both prophecy from a prophet and seeing a vision, and one involved the Spirit directly causing him to make a certain decision.

Direct Revelation 1) Paul's Calling. Seeing the Resurrected Jesus. Paul saw the physical, glorified Jesus who told him to go to Ananias in Damascus. Paul needed this direct revelation to appoint him as Jesus' representative to bring the gospel to the Aegean. Do you honestly have daily experiences like the following?

Acts 9:6, 10. As I ... came near to Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me, and I fell to the ground. ... And the Lord said to me, "Arise, and go into Damascus; and

there it will be told you of all the things which are appointed for you to do.”

1 Cor. 15:8. Last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Direct Revelation 2) Paul's Training. Seeing Jesus in a Vision. Jesus preserved Paul's life, by sending him to his hometown of Tarsus for training and growth until he was ready to begin his mission.

Acts 9:29-30. The [Hellenistic Jews] ... went about to slay him, which when the brethren knew, they ... sent him away to Tarsus.

Acts 22:17-18. While I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him saying to me, “Make haste, and get quickly out of Jerusalem, for they won't receive your testimony concerning me.

Direct Revelation 3) Paul's Start. Genuine Prophecy from a Genuine Prophet. Paul and Barnabas were sent to Cyprus by the genuine prophecy of a genuine prophet. Paul needed this direct revelation to begin the historical mission of bringing the gospel to the Aegean for Jesus, because the unresolved question of how Gentiles fit into the Jewish Congregation, prevented him from starting.

Acts 13:1-4. There were in the Congregation that was at Antioch certain prophets. ... As they ... fasted, the Holy Spirit said [by contextual implication via one of the aforementioned prophets], “Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereto I have called them.” ... And when they had ... laid their hands on them, ... they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, ... sailed to Cyprus.

Direct Revelation 4) Paul's Assumption of Leadership. Being Filled with the Spirit. Paul temporarily blinded a sorcerer when filled with the Spirit. He needed this filling so he could overcome a sorcerer's opposition to the gospel, and so he could begin leading the team to fulfill the one-time mission of bringing the gospel to the Aegean for Jesus.

Acts 13:9-14. Then Saul, ... called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, ... said, ... “You will be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.” ... Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, ... they came to Antioch [Galatia], ... and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day.

Direct Revelation 5) Corinth Before Ephesus. Prophecy and a Vision. The Spirit forbid Paul to go to Ephesus, probably through a prophecy, perhaps by Silas, who was a prophet (Acts 13:1; 15:32). Only a few believers in the early Congregation were prophets (1 Cor. 12\29; Eph. 2:20). And Paul saw a vision of a Macedonian asking for help. Jesus knew it would be better for Paul to go to Corinth before Ephesus, in violation of the normal wise principle of going into Contiguous Territory.

Perhaps Ephesus was too dangerous at that time. And the ministry there would be more effective with the help of Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2, 18-19), Sosthenes (Acts 18:17; 1 Cor. 1:1 written from Ephesus), Erastus (Rom. 16:23; Acts 19:22), and others Paul met in Corinth. And perhaps Paul needed more experience, like at Corinth, before tackling his greatest challenge and crowning achievement, the evangelization of the region of Ephesus. Paul needed this direct revelation to avoid premature persecution, and to speed the completion of his historical mission to bring the gospel to the Aegean for Jesus.

Acts 16:6-9. When they ... were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia [Eph+], ... they ... came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night, ... a man ... saying, “Come over to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and help us.

Direct Revelation 6) Focus on Corinth and Ephesus. Seeing Jesus in a Vision Again. Jesus appeared to Paul in a vision telling him to focus on Corinth, even if there's persecution. Paul needed this direct revelation to get him to change his usual method of establishing Congregations in an area, and then moving on to new unevangelized territory.

Acts 18:9-11. Then the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Be not afraid, ... for ... no man will set on you to hurt you, for I have many people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Direct Revelation 7) Close the Aegean Ministry and Go Up to Jerusalem. I capitalize “Spirit” in the following verse, unlike most versions, which imply Paul purposed in his own spirit.

Acts 19:21. After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] and Achaia [Cor+], to go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

Paul made his decision purely on the logical application of sound principles because of his love for men and desire to serve God. He recognized the Congregations in Corinth and Ephesus were mature, the principle of Defense before Offense had been satisfied, and so it was time to apply the principles of New and Contiguous Territory. That was the only basis of his decision, not any kind of guidance. But at the same time, Paul also recognized that God was making sure he made that decision as he did, for the accomplishment of God’s purpose, specifically, in this case, for Paul to begin his passion, like Jesus began his passion, by going up to Jerusalem.

Paul also received three cases of direct revelation to help and encourage him through his passion (Acts 19:21-28:31) in the one-time, historical mission of his filling up the sufferings of Messiah as his special representative.

1) Paul went bound in the Spirit towards Jerusalem and the certainty of suffering and imprisonment.

Acts 20:22-24. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will befall me there, except that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But none of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course

with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

2) Paul was reassured he would reach Rome and testify there.

Acts 23:11. The following night the Lord stood by him, and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified of me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also at Rome.”

3) Paul was reassured he and his shipmates would survive.

Acts 27:21-31. Paul ... said, ... “There will be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, ... saying, ‘Fear not, Paul. You must be brought before Caesar, and, lo, God has given you all them that sail with you.’ ... However, we must be cast on a certain island.” ... And as the sailors were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, ... Paul said to the centurion, ... “Unless these remain in the ship, you can’t be saved.”

Two places in Acts the Spirit guided by ‘saying’ something to someone, the way the Spirit sometimes spoke to prophets, but these prophets also did other miraculous things, in ways very unlike the popular concept of all believers receiving daily guidance by an inner voice.

1) The Spirit Spoke to Philip to Evangelize the Ethiopian Official. But Philip was one of the first seven deacons, who was also filled with the Spirit, did many miracles, was visited by an angel, ran with supernatural speed like Elijah, and experienced Star Trek style teleportation.

Acts 8:6-7. The people ... [were] hearing and seeing the miracles which [Philip] did. For unclean spirits, ... came out of many, ... and many ... that were lame, were healed.

1 Kgs. 18:44-46. [Elijah] said, ... “Say to Ahab, ‘Prepare your chariot, and get down so that the rain doesn’t stop

you.” ... And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Acts 8:26-40. And the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, “Arise, and go toward the south to the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ... And, behold, ... a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who ... had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. ... Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go near, and join yourself to this chariot.” And Philip ran there to him, and heard him read the prophet Isaiah. ... And [Philip] baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus.

## 2) The Spirit Spoke to Peter to Open the Door of the Congregation to Gentiles.

Acts 10:19. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men seek you.”

But Peter was a prophet and an apostle, and the purpose of the Spirit speaking to him was to open the door of faith to the Gentiles in a one-time historical event, without which, the whole purpose of Jesus in the book of Acts would have failed. And in the same incident, Cornelius sent three men a days journey to the address given to him by an angel he saw in a vision; and Peter fell into a long trance, saw heaven opened in a vision, heard a divine voice, and was told to go down just as the men who were sent the day before arrived at his door.

Even though he was the special representative of Jesus on the cutting edge of the mission of Acts, the vast majority of Paul’s decisions, and of the other apostles and brethren in Acts, were made without the aid of any direct revelation.

Acts 1:23. They appointed two [not, “were led to appoint” either one, or they wouldn’t have flipped a coin afterwards], Joseph ... and Matthias.

Acts 6:3-5. Brethren, you [not the Spirit] look out from among you seven men of honest report [not “that feel

called”], full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. ... And the saying pleased [not, “was recognized as the Word of the Lord by”] the whole multitude, and they [not the Spirit] chose Stephen, [etc.]

Acts 11:29. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, [not, “as he was led to,”] determined [not, “felt led to”] to send relief to the brethren which dwelt in Judaea.

Acts 12:11-12. When Peter came to himself, ... and when he had [not “prayed about it,” but] thought about the thing, he came to the house of Mary, ... where many were gathered together praying.

Acts 15:2. They [not, “felt led to,” but] appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question [not “prayed that God would tell them the answer”].

Acts 15:22-25. Then [not “it was revealed to,” but] it pleased the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. ... And they wrote letters by them after this manner, ... “It seemed good to us, [not, ‘God led us,’]... to send chosen men to you.”

Acts 15:37-38. Barnabas [not, “was led to,” but] planned to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul [not “had a word from the Lord,” but] thought it not good to take him with them, who departed from them, ... and went not with them to the work. ... So Barnabas [not, “was led to take,” but] took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus; and Paul [not “was led to choose,” but] chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren [who recommended Paul instead of Barnabas not because they felt the Spirit lead them to but because they knew Paul was an apostle of Jesus Messiah through previous revelation].

Acts 20:3. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail to Syria, he [not “felt led to,” but] decided to return through Macedonia.

Acts 20:16. Paul had [not “been led,” but] decided to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia [Eph+]: for he hasted, if it were possible for him [he didn’t know if it would be possible, because he didn’t receive direct revelation from God to make his decisions], to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

Rom. 1:13. Oftentimes I purposed [not “felt like God was leading me,”] to come to you, but was hindered [because his decisions were almost never guided by direct revelation].

1 Cor. 16:3-7. When I come [for my 2nd visit], whomever you’ll approve [not, “whomever God leads you to approve”] by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality to Jerusalem. And [not, “if God directs,”] but if it be appropriate that I go also, they will go with me. ... And it may be [he doesn’t know because God very rarely directed even him, the apostle of Jesus Messiah] that I will abide, yes, and winter with you, so that you may bring me on my journey wherever I go [not ‘wherever God will tell me to go’]. For ... I hope [he didn’t know God’s will for specific decision making] to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

1 Cor. 16:12. As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired [not “God spoke to me for”] him to come to you, ... but his [Apollos] will [God didn’t provide guidance to the brethren for these kinds of decisions] was not at all to come at this time, but he will come [not “when God leads him to,” but] when he will have a convenient time. [There wouldn’t be differences of opinion if God led in these kinds of matters.]

2 Cor. 9:6-7. This I say, “He ... which sows bountifully, will also reap bountifully [so let this logic be the basis of your decision to give].” Every man according as he purposes in his heart [not, “as he is led”], so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity.

2 Cor. 15:23. I call God for a record on my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth [not, “because God led me not to come yet”]. ... I determined this with myself [not, “felt led”], that I would not come again to you in heaviness.



2 Cor. 8:18-19. We have sent with him the brother, ... who was also chosen by the churches [not “chosen by God”] to travel with us.

Titus 3:12. When I shall send Artemas to you, or Tychicus [God hadn’t and wouldn’t ever tell him which one to send], be diligent to come to me to Nicopolis, for I have decided [not “I felt led”] to winter there.

It’s true that “the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord” (Ps. 37:23), regardless of what we decided and why, but that’s totally different from our modern concept of making a decision based on the Spirit’s leading by a still, small voice. As the apostle of Messiah, Paul knew Messiah would cause him to make the right plans to accomplish Jesus’ purposes. But that doesn’t mean Messiah told him what to decide. The very few times Paul needed directed in ways that contradicted his normal principles, God provided direction to accomplish the one-time historical mission of Acts.

2 Cor. 1:15-20. In this confidence [of their obedience] I planned [not “was led”] to come to you before, so that you might have a second benefit, and to pass by you into Macedonia [Phil/Thess+], and to come again out of Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] to you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. When I therefore thus planned, did I use lightness? Or the things that I plan, do I plan according to the flesh, so that with me there should be yes, yes, and no, no? But as God is true, our word toward you was not yes and no. For the Son of God, Jesus Messiah, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silas and Timothy, was not yes and no, but in him was yes. For all the promises of God in him are yes, and in him, amen, to the glory of God by us.

Maybe you think you need to see angels, and visions, and even the resurrected Jesus, to feel worthwhile and important. If that’s the case, it will be difficult for you to consider that even the few cases of supernatural guidance in Acts were not normative for all believers in all times. But for most of us who have simply been misled by popular

teachers, who say we should make decisions moment by moment according to a still, small, inner voice, I hope you can see that's not at all like the rare direct revelation even the apostles and prophets received.

Scripture is our only authority. I hope you've been able to acknowledge the biblical model for decision-making in the book of Acts, and rejoice to be free of arbitrarily trying to figure out what the supposed 'Spirit' is supposedly saying, versus what our own thoughts are, and that you can appreciate how truly exciting it is to make truly spiritual and supernaturally-influenced - meaning, contrary to this evil world - decisions, by applying the Word by Wisdom.

<b>PAUL'S DECISIONS IN ACTS 9 - 28 (1)</b>			
<b>Decision</b>			<b>Basis</b>
1	1	9:8 Called to be Jesus' apostle and went into Damascus to be met by Ananias	1 - DIRECT REVELATION (via resurrected, returned Jesus)
	2	9:20 Preached in the synagogues	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	3	9:25 Fled Damascus	FLEE PERSECUTION
	4	9:26 Went to Jerusalem	WORK WITH OTHERS
	5	9:29 Disputed Hellenized Jews	PREACH THE GOSPEL
2	6	9:30 Fled Jerusalem and went to Tarsus for divine training and spiritual growth and preparation	2 - DIRECT REVELATION (via vision of Jesus) FLEE PERSECUTION
	7	11:26 Went to Antioch Syria to minister	WORK WITH OTHERS
	8	11:30 Delivered the offering to Jerusalem	WORK WITH OTHERS
	9	12:25 Returned to Antioch Syria with Mark	WORK WITH OTHERS
	10	13:4 Started his missionary journeys.	3 - DIRECT REVELATION (via a prophet)
3	11	Went to Cyprus with Barnabas	WORK WITH OTHERS START AT HOME
	12	13:5 Preached in synagogues	TO THE JEW FIRST
	13	13:5 Added Mark to team	ON THE JOB TRAINING
	14	13:11 Neutralized Elymas and took leadership of the mission	4 - DIRECT REVELATION (via filled with the Spirit)
	15	13:13-14 Went to Antioch Galatia	CONTIG. TERRITORY FOCUS ON CITIES
4	16	13:16 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	17	13:51 Went to Iconium	FLEE PERSECUTION FOCUS ON CITIES
	18	14:1 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	19	14:6 Went to Lystra	FLEE PERSECUTION FOCUS ON CITIES
	20	14:7 Preached at Lystra	PREACH THE GOSPEL

<b>PAUL'S DECISIONS IN ACTS 9 - 28 (2)</b>			
<b>Decision</b>			<b>Basis</b>
	21	14:20 Went to Derbe	FLEE PERSECUTION FOCUS ON CITIES
	22	14:21 Preached at Derbe	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	23	14:21 Went to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch Galatia	DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE
	24	14:24 Went to Perga	FOCUS ON CITIES
	25	14:25 Preached at Perga	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	26	15:2 Went to Jerusalem council	WORK WITH OTHERS
	27	15:12 Let Barnabas lead	WORK WITH OTHERS
	28	15:22 Returned to Antioch Syria with Silas	WORK WITH OTHERS
	29	15:36 Started second missionary journey	DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE
	30	15:38 Refused to take Mark	ON THE JOB TRAINING
	31	16:1 Added Timothy to team	ON THE JOB TRAINING
	32	16:3 Had Timothy circumcised	ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN
	33	16:4 Delivered the Jerusalem council decrees	DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE
5	34	16:6-7 Corinth before Ephesus	5 - DIRECT REVELATION (via vision to violate contiguous territory)
	35	16:12 Went to Philippi	FOCUS ON CITIES
	36	16:13 Preached in 'synagogue'	TO THE JEW FIRST
	37	16:15 Stayed at Lydia's house	MEET WITH THE BRETHREN
	38	16:33 Baptized jailer / household	BAPTIZING THEM
	39	16:37 Refused offered release to help the Congregation gain government protection	FLEE PERSECUTION (avoid the need for the other brethren to flee)
	40	16:40 Left Philippi	FLEE PERSECUTION
	41	17:1 Went to Thessalonica	FOCUS ON CITIES
	42	17:2 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	43	17:10 Went to Berea	FLEE PERSECUTION FOCUS ON CITIES

<b>PAUL'S DECISIONS IN ACTS 9 - 28 (3)</b>			
<b>Decision</b>			<b>Basis</b>
	44	17:11 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	45	17:14 Left Berea	FLEE PERSECUTION
	46	17:14 Left Silas and Timothy at Berea	TEACHING THEM
	47	17:15 Went to Athens	FOCUS ON CITIES
	48	17:16 Called to Silas and Timothy	WORK WITH OTHERS
	49	17:17 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	50	17:17 Preached in marketplace	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	51	17:22 Preached in the Areopagus	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	52	18:1 Left Athens	Wasn't very fruitful
	53	18:1 Went to Corinth	FOCUS ON CITIES
	54	18:2 Lived with Aquila / Priscilla	WORK WITH OTHERS
	55	18:4 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
6	56	18:11 Stayed a year and a half	6 - DIRECT REVELATION (vision to extend stay in Corinth)
	57	18:18 Stayed a good while longer	FLEE PERSECUTION (lack of need to)
	58	18:18 Sailed for Syria with Priscilla and Aquila	STAY IN CONTACT WORK WITH OTHERS
	59	18:19 Left Priscilla + Aquila in Eph. to lay ministry groundwork	WORK WITH OTHERS
	60	18:19 Preached in the synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST
	61	18:21 Left for feast at Jerusalem	TO THE JEW FIRST
	62	18:22 Visited the Congregation at Caesarea	TEACHING THEM
	63	18:22 Went to feast in Jerusalem	TO THE JEW FIRST
	64	18:23 Spent time in Antioch Syria	STAY IN CONTACT
	65	18:23 Went over all Galatia etc.	DEFENSE BEFORE OFFENSE
	66	19:1 Went to Ephesus	CONTIG. TERRITORY FOCUS ON CITIES
	67	19:8 Preached in synagogue	TO THE JEW FIRST

PAUL'S DECISIONS IN ACTS 9 - 28 (4)			
Decision		Basis	
	68	19:9 Preached in school of Tyrannus	PREACH THE GOSPEL
7	69	19:21 Decided to close the Aegean ministry and go up to Jer.	7 - DIRECT REVELATION (Spirit-influenced)
	70	19:21 Decided to go Ephesus > Phil/Thess> Corinth > Jer. > Rome	MAKE WISE FLEXIBLE PLANS
	71	19:22 Sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]	WORK WITH OTHERS
	72	20:1 Left Ephesus	FLEE PERSECUTION
	73	20:2 Taught throughout Macedonia [Phil/Thess+]	TEACHING THEM
	74	20:2 Preached in Iconium?	CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY
	75	20:3 Taught in Corinth 3 months	TEACHING THEM
	76	20:3 Changed plans to Ephesus > Macedonia [Phil/Thess+] > Corinth > Philippi/Thessalonica > Jerusalem > Rome	FLEE PERSECUTION MAKE WISE FLEXIBLE PLANS
	77	20:7 Taught at Troas	TEACHING THEM
	78	20:16 Sailed by Ephesus to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost	TO THE JEW FIRST
	79	20:17 Taught at Miletus	TEACHING THEM
		20:22 Going bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
		20:23 Warned of suffering in Jerusalem	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
		20:25 Know that will never return to Ephesus	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
	80	21:4 Stayed at Tyre seven days	MEET WITH THE BRETHREN
		21:4 Disciples said through Spirit Paul shouldn't go to Jerusalem	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
	81	21:7 Stayed with the brethren at Ptolemais one day	MEET WITH THE BRETHREN

PAUL’S DECISIONS IN ACTS 9 - 28 (5)		
Decision		Basis
	82 21:8 Stayed at Philip’s in Caesarea many days	MEET WITH THE BRETHREN
	21:11 Warned of suffering in Jerusalem	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
	83 21:16 Lodged with Mnason in Jerusalem	MEET WITH THE BRETHREN
	84 21:19 Reported to elders in Jerusalem	KEEP IN TOUCH
	85 21:26 Purified himself with four others	TO THE JEW FIRST
	86 21:40 Preached in the temple court	PREACH THE GOSPEL
	21:11 Jesus promised him he would reach Rome	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
	87 23:6 Announced resurrection to divide Sadducees and Pharisees	FLEE PERSECUTION
	88 25:11 Appealed to Caesar	FLEE PERSECUTION
	89 27:10 Warned centurion of shipwreck	Sailing experience (2 Cor. 11:25)
	27:23 Reassured by an angel	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
8	91 27:31 Warned centurion about sailors trying to flee	8 - DIRECT REVELATION (for a specific situation)
	27:34 Encouraged shipmates to eat	NON-GUIDANCE DIRECT REVELATION
	92 28:17, 23 Called for the Jewish rulers and preached to them	TO THE JEW FIRST
	93 28:26 Pronounced judgment on the Jews	TO THE JEW FIRST
	94 28:30 Preached to all who came to him	PREACH THE GOSPEL

The following excerpt is from the SLV, “Spirit-Led Version,” as it might have been written if the apostles had made their decisions the way modern teachers say we should. Doesn’t it sound something like how most Bible

teachers today say we should make our decisions? But does it sound like Acts?

Acts 13 - 16. Spirit-Led Version. Now there were in the Congregation at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, including Barnabas and Saul. Paul felt called to take the gospel to Persia, but Barnabas had a burden for the people of his home island of Cyprus. So they prayed about it until Paul had a peace about going to Cyprus with Barnabas.

When they arrived at Salamis on Cyprus, they prayed, "Lord, do you want us to start a singles ministry here?" Barnabas said, "I distinctly felt I heard God say in my heart, "People in Paphos need God." So they went to Paphos, but a sorcerer named Barjesus convinced the deputy, Sergius Paulus, to expel them from Cyprus.

When they came to the mainland, they asked God, "Please show us if you want us to go to Antioch Galatia or to Ephesus." Paul said, "The Lord just brought to my memory, the passage I was reading in my devotions this morning. Exodus 28:28, 'Bind the breastplate by it's rings to the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, so that it will be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and so that the breastplate can't be loosed from the ephod.' See? Eph-od, Eph-es-us!" At the same time, a vender came by shouting, "Get your silver images of Diana here!" which confirmed in Paul and Barnabas' mind that the Lord had called them to Ephesus where the false goddess Diana was worshipped.

When they got near Ephesus, the bridge had been washed out, so they took that as a closed door regarding Ephesus. Paul told Barnabas he felt impressed to go towards Philippi, but he also felt impressed to go towards Bithynia. At Antioch Syria, in their men's Bible studies, they had been studying Dallas Willard's highly recommended book, *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God*.

Barnabas quizzed Paul according to Willard's subjective criteria. 1) Which impression of the two had a certain steady and calm force? 2) Which inclined your



soul toward compliance? 3) Did either argue, or try to convince you, or bully you? 4) Which one had the feel of the voice of God in it? 5) Did either one have a sweet reasonableness of goodwill? 5) Which one was something the devil would never say?

Paul responded, “Well the impression to go towards Philippi had a sweet reasonableness of goodwill about it, but it felt a bit like bullying. On the other hand, the impression to go towards Bithynia had the feel of the voice of God in it, but it didn’t have a steady, calm force. By that time, they realized they’d forgotten to bring their Roman Citizenship cards with them, so they returned to Antioch Syria.



## Appendix. Brief History of Let Go, Mysticism, & Charismaticism



*a. Paul's Calling (1542–1545). Michelangelo (1475-1564)*

The history of the Let-Go-Let-God movement is the history of both misinterpreting the Bible, and also of seeking something more than the Bible. It's about wanting to get something quick and exciting after justification and before glorification, instead of just diligently laboring on using the new mind to serve and battle.

Rom. 7:6. Now ... we ... serve in newness of spirit.

Rom. 8:3-9. There is therefore now [justification] to them which are in Messiah Jesus. ... God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh [for our justification], so that the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us, who [as a result of justification, will with all certainty, but to different degrees by our own choices] walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit [sanctification]. For

they that are after the flesh [all the unsaved] do mind [think about and love] the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [all who have been justified, think about and love] the things of the Spirit [the Word]. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is hatred against God. ... So then they that are in the flesh [all the unsaved] can't please God. But you [all who have been justified] are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Messiah [only the unsaved], he is none of his.

Biblically, there's no shortcut to sanctification. After we're justified, we learn and labor, using the new mind, and the next event is glorification.

1 Ths. 1:9. You turned to God from idols [past spiritual justification event], to serve the living and true God [present sanctification process], and to wait for his Son from heaven [future physical glorification event].

The greatest hindrance to more complete practical sanctification, is the false doctrine of "let go and let God," as taught by John Wesley (sinless perfectionism), Phoebe Palmer (altar theology), William Boardman (higher life), Hannah Whitall Smith (secret of a happy Christian life), the Keswick Convention (resting faith), Charles Trumbull (victorious life), and many others. As Watchman Nee said:

Nee (1903-1972). From now on I will not do anything, I will not manage anything, and I will not be concerned about anything. From now on I will let go. Brothers and sisters, this is surrendering. This is letting go.

But the Bible says:

Jesus. Mt. 9:38. Pray ... the Lord ... will send forth laborers into his harvest.

Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis. Rom. 16:6, 12. Mary ... bestowed much labor on us. ... Tryphena and Tryphosa ... labor in the Lord. ... Persis ... labored much in the Lord.

The Thessalonians. 1 Ths. 1:3. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope.

Epaphroditus. Phil. 2:25. Epaphroditus, my ... companion in labor, and fellow soldier, ... and he that ministered to my wants.

Clement and Others. Phil. 4:2-4. True yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with my other fellow laborers.

Epaphras. Col. 4:12. Epaphras, ... a servant of Messiah, ... [is] always laboring fervently for you in prayers.

The Ephesians. Rev. 2:2-3. I know your works, and your labor, and your patience, ... and for my name's sake has labored, and has not fainted.

It's true God's grace works in us. But we mustn't therefore draw the conclusion that "from now on I will not do anything. ... I will let go" (Watchman Nee). The biblical response to knowing God gives us a desire and ability to do his will, is to have confidence to work harder.

Phil. 2:12-14. As you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, WORK out your own salvation with fear and trembling, because it's God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. DO all things without murmurings.

The mystic says, if we try to work with God, we will sabotage his efforts.

Guyon. One of the most important things you can do is cease from any self-effort. In this way, God Himself can act alone.

Trumbull. He does it all. We do not dare to help. ... Our efforts can not only never play any part in our victory over the power of sin, but they can and do effectually prevent such victory.

But the Bible says WE are to work, labor, and strive, since HE works in us. The mystics' conclusion is wrong,

that therefore we must not work. The biblical conclusion is that therefore we have confidence to work even harder.

Col. 1:28-29. WE preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Messiah Jesus, whereto I ALSO LABOR, STRIVING according to his working, which works in me mightily.

1 Cor. 3:58. Be... always abounding in the work of the Lord, ... [for] YOUR labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. 16:16. Submit yourselves ... to every one that helps with us and labors.

1 Ths. 5:12-13. Know them which labor among you, ... and ... esteem them very highly in love for THEIR work's sake.

1 Tim. 4:8-10. Bodily exercise profits little, but godliness is profitable to all things, ... therefore, WE both labor and suffer reproach.

Brethren will receive differing amounts of rewards, not for having received differing amounts of grace, because that's not under our control (though pride can hinder, Jam. 4:6), but for what we do with whatever amount of grace we're given.

1 Cor. 3:8-9. Every man shall receive his OWN reward according to his OWN labor, for we are laborers together WITH God.

2 Cor. 5:9-10. WE labor, ... for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to what HE [every person] has done.

Paul received special grace, because as Jesus' representative, God couldn't allow him to fail. Paul couldn't receive a reward for preaching, because he had no choice but to preach. But he could receive a reward for doing it willingly, rather than unwillingly, and by refusing to accept financial support which was rightfully due him from Congregations.

1 Cor. 15:10. I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

1 Cor. 9:16-18. For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid on me [through apostolic grace]. ... For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, [God will still ensure he preaches, because as an apostle] a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me. [How do I get a] reward then? Truly that, when I preach the gospel, I may [do it willingly, and] make the gospel of Messiah without charge.

There will come a time for us to cease from our efforts and enter rest. But not before we die or the Lord returns.

Rev. 14:12-14. Here is the patience of the saints. ... Write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them [for rewards]."

The mystics say you have to use an indirect approach. Have faith to receive sanctification, and then that sanctification will result in your doing effortless work. But this isn't taught in the Bible. The ox doesn't just have faith which results in the corn being treaded out by him. He takes step after step, though muscles ache, and pushes on until all the corn is ground.

1 Tim. 5:17. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who LABOR in the word and doctrine. For the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox that TREADS OUT THE CORN." And, "The laborer is worthy of HIS reward."

Paul knew nothing of effortless work. He felt the fatigue of his labors, just as he felt each lash of the whip.

2 Cor. 11:23. Are they servants of Messiah? ... I am more. In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent.

Paul says we're justified by faith, not works. And justification ensures the certainly of our sanctification

because we're regenerated and receive the indwelling Spirit the moment we're justified. But our efforts determine the amount of our sanctification, "some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Mt. 13:23).

Some mystics say have faith, do nothing, avoid all thinking and reasoning, and you'll receive effortless sanctification.

Molinos. I have given myself to His presence by an act of faith. ... The simpler your remembrance is - without words or thoughts - the ... [more] undistorted relationship with the Lord who abides in you. To lay hold of the silence of thought is to arrive and abide at the center of your being, where Christ dwells. By not ... reasoning, we reach the central place ... where God speaks to our inward man. ... It is in that place that He transforms you into Himself. [Edwards, Secret Place, 21, 67.]

But the biblical method of sanctification is, after justification by faith, to use the Word and reasoning to motivate ourselves to work as hard as we possibly can.

Rom. 6:6-11. Knowing this ..., knowing that ..., reckon you also yourselves ...

Rom. 12:2. Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed, by the renewing of your mind.

Rom. 5:3. We rejoice in tribulations, ... knowing that tribulation produces patience.

2 Cor. 5:11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

Eph. 6:6-8. As the servants of Christ, ... doing service, knowing that whatever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

Heb. 10:34. [You] took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing ... that you have in heaven a better and ... enduring substance.

Eph. 20:20. I ... taught you publicly, and from house to house. ... Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. ... Take heed



therefore ... to all the flock, ... which he has purchased with his own blood. For I know ... that after my departing grievous wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ... Therefore ... remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Jn. 21:6. Simon, do you love me? ... Feed my sheep.

1 Cor. 15:58. Be ... always abounding in the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Others say strive hard to get faith for sanctification, and then you'll receive sanctification that will then let you work effortlessly.

Wesley. Let me gain that second rest; from my works for ever cease (p. 33). We receive it [sanctification rest] by simple faith: But God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, ... in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting. (p. 45).

But Paul says not to put our efforts indirectly into getting faith that will then give us effortless sanctification, but to put our efforts directly into sanctification and service.

2 Tim. 2:3-6. Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Messiah. No man that wars [and we do war] entangles himself with the affairs of this life. ... And if a man also strive for masteries [and we do strive for mastery], yet he is not crowned, unless he strives lawfully. The husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruits.

1 Cor. 9:19-27. I made myself servant to all, ... that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake. ... So run, that you may obtain. And every man that strives for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as

uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beats the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.

We receive the promise of justification by faith, and the promise of glorification by endurance, but after justification, we are to imitate the good works of others by diligent labor.

Heb. 6:8-18. That which bears thorns and briars is rejected, ... whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. ... For God is not unrighteous to forget YOUR WORK AND LABOR of love, ... in that YOU HAVE MINISTERED to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same DILIGENCE to the full assurance of hope to the end, that you BE NOT SLOTHFUL, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, .... after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

The false doctrine of sanctification by faith rather than by works, is in harmony with mysticism, charismaticism, asceticism, meditation and contemplation, devotionism, direct revelation, emotion over reason, esotericism, experience over the Word, hesychasm, higher life, living union, monasticism, non-literal interpretation of scripture, perfect love, pietism, power with God, quietism, second blessing, spirituality which isn't truly spiritual, theosis, theosophy, the victorious life, etc. It is in opposition to the truly spiritual, but boring literal interpretation of the scriptures, the new mind guiding the emotions, etc.

## ***100-1650. Early Movements***

### **135 AD. Montanists**

It's not surprising, that after the charismatic gifts died out, some, like the Montanists around 135 AD, tried to

imitate them. Montanus' 'New Prophecy' proclaimed some towns in Asia Minor as the 'New Jerusalem.' He had two female colleagues, Prisca ... and Maximilla, who likewise claimed direct revelation. "The Three' spoke in ecstatic visions and urged their followers to fast and to pray, so that they might share these revelations."

### **370-1340 AD. Euchites, Free Spirits, Friends of God**

From the 2nd to 12th centuries, a group called the Euchites, believed perfection could be obtained through prayer. In the 13th to 15th centuries, the Brethren of the Free Spirit, believed in perfectionism, antinomianism, oneness with God through annihilation of the soul, and direct revelation through the Holy Spirit. Around 1340, a center of German mysticism called the Friends of God was founded based on the influence of mystic Meister Eckhart.

### **1526-1534. Tyndale's New Testament and the Anglican Church**

Wycliffe translated the Bible into English in 1382. The printing press was invented in 1439. After Luther was condemned by the Catholic Church at the Diet of Worms in 1521, Prince Frederick III protected him from the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor, King Charles V.. William Tyndale's English New Testament, published in 1526, was the first English Bible to be mass produced, and included an epilogue explaining Luther's theology of justification by faith. Luther finished his translation of the Bible into German in 1534. That same year the Anglican Church was established in England. The combination of everyone being able to read the scriptures for themselves (a good thing in itself), and the existence of some safe places from Roman Catholic violent persecution (also a good thing in itself), opened the door for every imaginable kind of biblical interpretation and cult creation.

## **1650. English Dissenters**

When the English Commonwealth was established in 1649, besides Catholics, Anglicans, Anabaptists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Puritans, Quakers, and Unitarians; many other groups arose.

Behmenists. Based on the teachings of German mystic and theosopher Jakob Böhme who claimed divine revelation.

Brownists. The Plymouth Mayflower Pilgrims.

Diggers. Tried to share community farmland like the early brethren shared property in Jerusalem.

Enthusiasts. Originally meant ‘possessed by a god’ and related to direct revelation, ecstasy, and emotion.

Familists. Followers of a Dutch mystic named Hendrik Niclaes, supposedly the only person who knew how to achieve a state of perfection.

Fifth Monarchists. Believed the Kingdom of God would be set up in 1666.

Grindletonians. Antinomians who believed a true brother with the Spirit within him doesn’t sin and is above law. They were influenced by the 14th century mystical treatise *Theologia Germanica*.

Muggletonians. Started by two London tailors who announced they were the last prophets foretold in the book of Revelation.

Philadelphians. Led by the mystic John Pordage, and Jane Leade, who had visions of the Feminine Aspect of God. They believed the Holy Spirit exists in every person’s soul.

Ranters. Antinomians whose central idea was pantheistic, that God is in every creature, and men should hearken to Jesus within them.

Seekers. They held meetings in silence, waiting on direct inspiration and guidance.<sup>160</sup>

It’s not surprising, that as men began to read the Bible for themselves, and had more freedom to talk about it, they tried to reproduce the miraculous manifestations of

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<sup>160</sup> Wikipedia, English Dissenters.

the Spirit, and the direct revelation of the prophets and apostles they read about in the Bible, without regard to scriptural context. Adam ate only vegetables, Noah ate all meats, Moses ate no pork; but they wanted to be Adam, Noah, and Moses.

## ***1650-1685. Let Go and Let God***

### **1650. George Fox (Quaker), The Light Within**

Fox. [The primacy of the Spirit, the light within, over the Bible, the light without:] Now the Lord God opened to me [via direct revelation within] ... that every man was enlightened [within] by the divine Light of Christ, ... and that they that believed in it came out of condemnation [and into] the Light [i.e., a new way of salvation without the gospel]. ... This I saw in the pure openings of the Light without the help of any man; neither did I then know where to find it in the Scriptures; though afterwards, searching the Scriptures, I found it. For I saw, in that Light and Spirit which was before the Scriptures were given forth, ... that all, if they would know God or Christ, or the Scriptures aright, must come to that Spirit by which they that gave [the scriptures] forth were led and taught [meaning we can receive revelation equal to, and often greater than, scripture]. ... Yet I had no slight esteem of the holy Scriptures [which are secondary].<sup>161</sup>

1650, Fox (Quaker), Perfectionism. I was come up in spirit ... into the paradise of God. All things were new. ... I knew nothing but pureness, and innocency, and righteousness; being renewed into the image of God by Christ Jesus, to the state of Adam, which he was in before he fell [sinless perfection that can fall]. ... But I was immediately taken up in spirit to see into another [even higher] or more steadfast state than Adam's innocency, even into a state in Christ Jesus that should never fall [sinless perfection that can't fall]. And the Lord showed me that such as were faithful to Him [if

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<sup>161</sup> Fox, *Autobiography*, Kindle 828-43.

you're already faithful, why do you need to be given sinless perfection?], in the power and light of Christ, should come up into that state in which Adam was before he fell. ... [Let Go] As people come into subjection to the Spirit of God, [Let God] and grow up in the image and power of the Almighty, [Result] they ... come to know the hidden unity in the Eternal Being [union with God].<sup>162</sup> [Regarding some men who came to see him:] I had a sense, before they spoke, that they came to [argue] for sin and imperfection. ... [Prerequisite] If your faith be true, [Result] it will give you victory over sin and the devil. ... But they could not endure to hear of purity, and of victory over sin and the devil. They said they could not believe any could be free from sin on this side of the grave.<sup>163</sup>

### **1678. Barclay (Quaker). Apology for True Christian Divinity**

1678. Barclay. *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*. PROPOSITION VIII. Concerning Perfection. In whom this pure and holy birth is fully brought forth [vs. only partially born-again?], the body of death and sin comes to be crucified and removed, and their hearts united and subjected to the truth; so as not to obey any suggestions or temptations of the evil one, but to be free from actual sinning and transgressing of the law of God, and in that respect perfect (Kindle 6540). ... Though I affirm, that after a man hath arrived at such a state, in which he may be able not to sin, yet he may sin [sinless perfection that can fall]: nevertheless, I will not affirm that a state is not attainable in this life, in which to do righteousness may be so natural to the regenerate soul, that in the stability of that condition he cannot sin (Kindle 6575). ... I have not yet attained it (Kindle 6578-6581).<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid, Kindle 788-799.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, Kindle, 1031-1037.

<sup>164</sup> Barclay, Works, Kindle 6578-6581.

### **1680. Marshall (Puritan). The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification**

1680. Marshall. *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*. Our apprehension of Christ and His perfections in this life is only by faith, ... and this faith is imperfect. ... Therefore, though we receive a perfect Christ by faith, yet the measure and degree of enjoying Him is imperfect (p. 191). ... In the person of Christ ... the old man is perfectly crucified. ... And believers do in their own persons receive and enjoy by faith all these perfect spiritual blessings of Christ, as far as they receive and enjoy Christ Himself dwelling in them, and no farther (p. 195). ... Our way to mortify sinful affections and lusts must be, not by purging them out of the flesh, but by putting off the flesh itself and getting above into Christ by faith, and walking in that new nature that is by Him (p. 199). ... We have need to strive for more faith, that we may receive Christ in greater perfection (p. 184). ... [Let Go] We are not sanctified by any of our own endeavors to work holiness in ourselves, [Let God] but rather by faith in Christ's death and resurrection, even the same whereby we are justified. (p. 259).

### ***1685-1700. Roman Catholic Mystics***

Many Roman Catholic mystics in the years after Fox also called for surrender to Christ.

#### **1685. Madame Guyon**

Despite Guyon's use of some Bible vocabulary, like the other Roman Catholic mystics, I couldn't find any indication she or they ever believed on the Lord for justification. Her use of the word 'faith' doesn't seem to refer to faith in God's word, or justification by faith. She always promoted the inward life. Her version of a salvation experience, like that of George Fox, seems to have been to look at the spark within.

Guyon, Autobiography. I did not hesitate ... to tell him ... my difficulties about prayer. Presently he replied, “It is, madame, because you seek without what you have within. Accustom yourself to seek God in your heart, and you will there find Him.” ... O my Lord, Thou wast in my heart, and demanded only a simple turning of my mind inward, to make me perceive Thy presence. ... It was for want of understanding these words of Thy Gospel, ... “The kingdom of God is within you.” This I now experienced. ... I told this man, that I did not know what he had done to me, that my heart was quite changed, that God was there. He had given me an experience of His presence in my soul; not by thought or any application of mind.<sup>165</sup> ... [Years Later:] In the midst of my miseries, Geneva came into my mind ... which caused me many fears. “What,” said I, “to complete my reprobation, shall I go to such an excess of impiety, as to quit the [Roman Catholic] faith through apostasy? (The inhabitants of Geneva being generally Protestant Calvinists.) Am I then about quitting that church, for which I would give a thousand lives? ... I had such a distrust of myself.<sup>166</sup>

### **1685. Miguel de Molinos**

Also, I can't find any reason to suspect Molinos was ever justified by faith. He taught Quietism vs. Roman Catholicism, not Luther's justification by faith vs. Roman Catholicism.

Bigelow. There is nothing in these doctrines of passivity which had not been taught by many of the most highly esteemed mystical writers of the [Roman Catholic] Church, by St. Bonaventura, St. Theresa, John of the Cross, the Baroness de Chantal, St. Francis de Sales, and others, some of whom indeed had been canonized as saints.<sup>167</sup>

Molinos was thoroughly examined by the inquisition, who confiscated his voluminous private writings and

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<sup>165</sup> Guyon, Autobiography, Kindle 658-670.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., Kindle 1762-1765.

<sup>167</sup> Bigelow, Molinos the Quietist, 9-10.



letters, and they would have charged him with believing in justification by faith alone, if there were any hint of it in him. His non-conformity was of a different kind.

Bigelow. While his disciples became usually more strict in their manner of life, ... they showed a corresponding indifference to the exterior rites of the church; they were seen less frequently at mass, made little account of corporeal austerities, chaplets, and relics, neglected the confessional and pilgrimages, and were growing less lavish in their expenditures for masses for their deceased friends and kindred. ... Quietism or Romanism must go to the wall; ... there was not room in Europe for both.<sup>168</sup>

Molinos taught ...

Molinos. Look at nothing, desire nothing, will nothing, ... endeavour nothing; and then, in everything, thy soul will live reposed with quiet and enjoyment. This, this is the way to get purity of soul, perfect contemplation, and peace internal.<sup>169</sup>

What scripture does he quote for that? One critic at the time wrote a sarcastic Quietist version of the Lord's Prayer. First the genuine ...

Mt. 6:9-13. KJV. [Jesus said,] "After this manner therefore pray: Our Father which is in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

Then the Quietist version ...

Mt. 6:9-13. La Bruyere Quietist Version (1699). Finally, my God, I am too entirely abandoned to Your will to ask You to deliver me from temptations and from evil. - O God, who art no more in Heaven than on Earth or in Hell, who art everywhere, I neither wish nor desire

<sup>168</sup> Bigelow, Molinos the Quietist, 17-18.

<sup>169</sup> Molinos, Spiritual Guide, Kindle 1696-1701.

your name to be sanctified. You know what is suitable for us, and if You wish it to be, it will be without my wishing or desiring it; whether Your Kingdom comes or not is to me indifferent. Neither do I ask that Your will be done on Earth as it is done in Heaven. It will be done in spite of my wishes, and it is for me to be resigned. Give us all our daily bread which is Your grace, or do not give it; I neither desire to have it or to be deprived of it. So if You pardon my crimes as I have pardoned those who have wronged me, so much the better. If, on the other hand, You punish me by damnation, still so much the better, since such is Your will.<sup>170</sup>

### **1699. Francois Fenelon**

Likewise, Fenelon was unregenerate. He had no more knowledge of God and truth, than darkness has of light. Why would any believer try to learn spiritual truth from unbelievers? The Peace of Augsburg of 1555 established the principle “whose realm, his religion” which allowed rulers within the Holy Roman Empire to choose Lutheranism or Catholicism for their country and allowed citizens to emigrate to other regions if they didn’t want to convert to their prince’s religion. Louis XIV of France persecuted the minority Protestant Huguenot population in France and wouldn’t let them emigrate. He claimed he reduced the French Huguenot population from about 800,000 to about 1,000. One of the main men he used to accomplish this was Fenelon.

For some time Fenelon was in charge of the community of “New Catholics” in Paris, which was presented as ‘protecting women and children who wanted to convert’ from their Protestant husbands and fathers, but which actually meant incarcerating and indoctrinating them as a means of coercing both the husbands and their families to convert.

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<sup>170</sup> Dialogues Posthumes du Sieur de la Bruyere sur le Quietisme, 193; quoted in Bigelow, Molinos the Quietist, 9-10.

Archives. January 24, 1686. The king knows that the wife of the man Trouillard, apothecary at Paris, ... is one of the most stubborn Huguenots in existence. And, as her conversion may bring about that of her husband, his majesty desires that you have her arrested and taken to the Nouvelles Catholiques. ...The eldest [Marguerite] Hammonnet is very obstinate. She is only four years old, and yet it is very dangerous to give her the liberty to see those who are not yet converted, or are bad Catholics.<sup>171</sup>

A French book not yet translated into English exposes some of the atrocities of “La Maison des Nouvelles Catholiques” (Emmanuel Orentin Douen, *L’Intolérance de Fénelon*, 1872), though the work has been summarized in English in *The Christian Quarterly* (Volume V, January – October, 1873).<sup>172</sup>

Fenelon was falsely presented in history as the gentlest and sweetest of men. But actually, ...

Fenelon. The badly converted Huguenots are attached to their religion to the most horrible excesses of stubbornness; but as soon as the rigor of punishments appears, all their strength leaves them.<sup>173</sup>

Kauffman. Of Madame Guyon - his former intimate friend, who was, ... confined in the Bastille ... [he] said: “I am willing that she shall die there, that we shall never see her again, and that we shall never hear any one speak of her again.” And elsewhere he says of her: “If it is true that this woman wanted to establish this damnable system [Molinism], she ought to be burned instead of giving her the communion.” ... [Also,] “The Church must be ready to punish, in the most exemplary manner, all disobedience of indocile spirits. ... Nothing would be more cruel than a cowardly compassion which would tolerate the contagion in the whole flock. ... We must employ, says Saint Augustine, a medicinal rigor, a terrible tenderness, and a severe charity. ... He was never weary of lauding the “douceur,” the

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<sup>171</sup> Kauffman, *L’intolérance De Fénelon*.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

“gentleness, and good-will” of Louis XIV toward his Huguenot subjects [who killed most of them off]. ... Fénelon ... as St. Simon, his biographer, says, “insisted on being oracle; on ruling as master, without giving a reason to any body; on reigning directly.”<sup>174</sup>

### **Gene Edwards on Guyon, Molinos, & Fenelon**

In the table below, I address the mysticism of these three as they're enthusiastically promoted by a modern mystic, well-known within the house church movement, Gene Edwards, in his book, *100 Days in the Secret Place*. Would a born-again person try to learn spiritual things from natural men who can't understand spiritual things?

Edwards. Between the writings of Guyon and Fenelon you will find the richest spiritual treasures afforded to you today. ... Since then no voices have arisen to take believers to the heights of spiritual riches, as have they.<sup>175</sup>

Really? Unregenerate unbelievers at enmity with God take believers to the heights of spiritual riches?!? Which spirit's spiritual riches? Who did Guyon meet with when she turned inward, since Jesus wasn't there, since she wasn't justified by faith? Probably the same person born-again believers meet when they turn inward: themselves.

God created man's body, soul, and spirit with great ability to talk to ourselves, and creatively imagine all kinds of things. “Sin not. Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still,” Psalm 4:4. Christ does “dwell in your hearts” (Eph. 3:17), but there's no way to ‘meet him there.’

Emptying one's mind is simply pagan, no-thought, Hindu and Buddhist meditation; and ‘annihilation’ is simply pagan pantheism. They have nothing to do with New Testament teaching. Notice the paucity of scripture references in the writings of Guyon, Molinos, and Fenelon. Their advice comes from their own creative minds, and

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Edwards, *Secret Place*, Kindle 219-226.

their tone is quite different from the Bible. The page numbers are from *100 Days in the Secret Place*.

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - SALVATION AND EDIFICATION	
<u>Guyon</u> . The way to reach <u>the lost</u> is to reach them <u>by the heart</u> [not the words of the gospel]. ...	<u>Rom. 1:16</u> . The gospel of Messiah ... is the power of God to salvation to everyone that believes. <u>Rom. 10:14-17</u> . How shall they hear, without ... them that preach the gospel? ... Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. <u>Acts 18:4</u> . He <u>reasoned</u> in the synagogue every sabbath, and <u>persuaded</u> .
... The <u>new Christian</u> should be led to God. How! By learning to <u>turn within to Jesus Christ</u> and by giving the Lord his whole heart. ... Lead them to a real <u>inner knowledge</u> [vs. scripture knowledge] of Jesus. [37-8]	<u>Rm. 16:25-27</u> . [God] is of power to <u>establish</u> you <u>according to my gospel</u> , and the <u>preaching</u> of Jesus Messiah, ... and by the <u>scriptures</u> of the prophets. <u>1 Ths. 2:9-13</u> . Laboring night and day, ... we <u>preached</u> to you the <u>gospel</u> of God. ... We <u>thank</u> God without ceasing, because, when you <u>received</u> the <u>word</u> of God which you <u>heard</u> of us, you received it not as the <u>word</u> of men, but as ... the <u>word</u> of God, which <u>effectually works</u> also in you that <u>believe</u> .

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - UNION WITH GOD	
<u>Guyon</u> . We come now to the <u>ultimate</u> state of Christian experience. <u>Divine Union</u> . All that comes from your life - even your most exalted prayer - must first be <u>destroyed</u> before union can come about. [39]	<u>Jn. 14:16-20</u> . The Father ... <u>will</u> give you another Comforter [at Pentecost], so that he will abide with you for ever, even the Spirit. ... He dwells <u>with</u> you, and <u>will be in</u> you. ... At that day [Pentecost] you will know that <u>I am in my Father</u> , and <u>you in me</u> , and <u>I in you</u> . <u>1 Jn. 1:3</u> . Truly our <u>union</u> is [already] with the Father and ... Son.

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - BECOMING LIKE JESUS	
<p><u>Molinos</u>. When you come before the Lord, it is <u>not</u> necessary that you <u>think</u> upon the Lord. ... The simpler your remembrance is - <u>without words or thoughts</u> - the better foundation you lay for an <u>undistorted relationship</u> with the Lord who abides in you. [21] ... To lay hold of the <u>silence of thought</u> is to arrive and abide at the center of your being, where <u>Christ dwells</u>.</p>	<p><u>Heb. 8:10</u>. I will put my laws in their <u>mind</u>. <u>1 Tim. 4:13-15</u>. Give attendance to <u>reading</u>, to <u>exhortation</u>, to <u>doctrine</u>. ... Meditate on these things; give yourself <u>wholly to them</u>. <u>1 Pet. 1:13</u>. Gird up the loins of your <u>mind</u>. <u>Col. 3:1</u>. Since you then are risen with Messiah, seek those things which are above, where Messiah sits on the right hand of God. ... Let the <u>word</u> of Messiah dwell in you richly in all <u>wisdom</u>.</p>
<p>By <u>not speaking</u>, <u>desiring</u>, <u>nor reasoning</u>, we reach the central place of the <u>inward walk</u> - that place where God speaks to our <u>inward man</u>. ... It is in that place that He <u>transforms</u> you <u>into Himself</u>. [67]</p>	<p><u>Rom. 12:2-3</u>. Be <u>transformed</u> by the renewing of your <u>mind</u>. ... For I say ... to every man, ... not to <u>think</u> of himself more highly than he ought to <u>think</u>, but to <u>think</u> soberly. <u>Phil. 2:2-8</u>. Be ... of one <u>mind</u>. ... In lowliness of <u>mind</u> let each esteem other better than themselves. ... Let this <u>mind</u> be in you, which was also in Messiah <u>Jesus</u>.</p>

### MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - HOW TO PRAY

Guyon. All the prayers that proceed from your mind, ... all active contemplation on your part is ... just preparation for bringing you to a passive state. [39]

Molinos. There is a view of your Lord in which reason, meditation and thought do not play a large part. In the first kind of prayer, one thinks upon God; in the other, one beholds Him. The second is a purer practice. ... Rational prayer is but a method to bring you to a deeper, more tranquil relationship with your Lord. When you have arrived at this second level of prayer you put an end to all rational discussion; instead, you rest. A simple vision of God. [56-7]

Lu. 11:2. When you pray, say, "Our Father." Mt. 26:44. [Jesus] ... prayed the third time, saying the same words. 1 Ths. 1:2-3. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love. Mt. 26:41. Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. Mk. 13:33. Take heed, watch and pray. Lu. 21:36. Watch therefore, and pray always. Col. 4:2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Col. 4:11-13. Epaphras, ... [is] a servant of Messiah, ... always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect. ... He has a great zeal for you!

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - DO NOTHING OR WORK HARD? (1)	
<u>Guyon.</u> One of the most important things you can do is [Let Go] <u>cease</u> from any <u>self-effort</u> . In this way, [Let God] God Himself can <u>act alone</u> .	<u>Lu. 10:27.</u> Love the Lord your God with all <u>your heart</u> , and with all <u>your soul</u> , and with all <u>your strength</u> , and with all <u>your mind</u> . <u>Rev. 2:2.</u> I know <u>your works</u> , and <u>your labor</u> . <u>Heb. 6:9-10.</u> God is not unrighteous to forget <u>your work</u> and <u>labor</u> of love, ... <u>you</u> have <u>ministered</u> to the saints, and do <u>minister</u> . And we desire that every one of you do show the same <u>diligence</u> . <u>Phil. 2:12-13.</u> <u>Work out</u> your own salvation, ... for it is God which works in you. <u>Jas. 4:7.</u> Resist the devil. ... Cleanse your hands.
God's working within you is ... within the realm of the spirit, and not in the <u>mind</u> . [136-7]	<u>Col. 1:5-6; 3:16.</u> The <u>word</u> of the <u>truth</u> of the <u>gospel</u> , ... brings forth fruit ... in you, since the day you <u>heard</u> of it, and <u>knew</u> the grace of God in <u>truth</u> . ... Let the <u>word</u> of Messiah dwell in you richly in all <u>wisdom</u> .
<u>Molinos.</u> Those who are spiritual <u>externally</u> seek God by <u>reasoning</u> .	<u>Col. 3:10.</u> <u>Put on</u> the new man, which is renewed in <u>knowledge</u> . <u>2 Tim. 3:14-17.</u> <u>Continue</u> in the things which you have <u>learned</u> . ... From a child you have <u>known</u> the holy <u>scriptures</u> , which are able to make you <u>wise</u> to salvation through faith. ... All <u>scripture</u> is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for <u>doctrine</u> , for reproof, for correction, for <u>instruction</u> in righteousness, so that the man of God may be <u>perfect</u> , thoroughly furnished to all good works.
These [external] people <u>endure pain</u> to obtain <u>virtue</u> .	<u>2 Tim. 2:3.</u> <u>Endure hardness</u> , as a good soldier of Jesus Messiah.



<b>MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - DO NOTHING OR WORK HARD? (2)</b>	
They delight in talking about God.	<u>Heb. 10:26.</u> Consider one another to <u>provoke</u> to love and to good works, ... <u>exhorting</u> one another. <u>Titus 3:1-14.</u> Put them in <u>mind</u> to be ... ready to every good work. ... <u>Affirm constantly</u> , that they which have believed in God ... be <u>careful</u> to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. ... <u>Learn</u> to maintain good works. <u>2 Tim. 2:14-16.</u> Put them in <u>remembrance</u> of these things. <u>1 Ths. 4:18.</u> Comfort one another with these <u>words</u> . <u>Heb. 3:13.</u> <u>Exhort</u> one another daily.
They delight in being very fervent in love.	<u>1 Pet. 1:22.</u> <u>Love</u> one another ... <u>fervently</u> . <u>1 Pet. 4:8.</u> Above all things have <u>fervent love</u> among yourselves. <u>Jn. 13:35.</u> By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. <u>1 Cor. 13:13.</u> The greatest of these is love.
The ones who ... walk toward the inner way ... <u>withdraw</u> into the <u>inward</u> parts of their spirits	<u>Phil. 4:1.</u> True <u>yokefellow</u> , <u>help</u> those ... which <u>labored</u> with me in the gospel, ... and with other my <u>fellow laborers</u> .
and there <u>relinquish everything</u> about themselves. And not only <u>things</u> , but <u>themselves</u> ! [68-9] Only the believer who knows how to be <u>detached</u> attains to being <u>lost</u> in God. ... Some people ... do not attain to an experiential knowledge of Divine encounter ... because they do not give themselves totally to God with a perfect <u>divesting</u> of interest in themselves. [122-3]	<u>Phil. 2:3-5.</u> Look not every man on his <u>own things</u> , but ... <u>also</u> on the <u>things of others</u> . Let this <u>mind</u> be in you, which was also in Messiah Jesus. <u>1 Tim. 4:13-16.</u> Meditate on these <u>things</u> . Give yourself wholly to them, that your profiting may appear to all. Take heed to <u>yourself</u> , and to the <u>doctrine</u> ; continue in them. <u>Col. 3:17, 23.</u> <u>Do</u> all ... <u>heartily</u> as to the Lord. <u>Titus 2:14.</u> A peculiar people, <u>zealous</u> of good <u>works</u> . <u>1 Cor. 15:10.</u> [Paul] <u>labored</u> more abundantly than they all.

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - OVERCOMING SIN (1)	
<p><u>Guyon.</u> The only way to <u>conquer</u> your five senses is by <u>turning</u> your soul completely <u>inward</u> to your spirit. ... When your soul is turned within, it actually becomes ... farther and farther separated from the <u>self</u> [where's the self if not within?]. ... The outer man becomes very <u>weak</u>. (Some may even be prone to faintings.) ... Your <u>main concern</u> lies in dwelling continually upon the God who is <u>within</u> you. ... The Christian who has faithfully [Let Go] <u>abandoned</u> himself to the Lord will soon discover that ... [Let God] your Lord will <u>put to death</u> all that remains to be put to death in your life. ... Everyone is capable of <u>turning within</u> and <u>abandoning</u> himself wholly to God. [79-80]</p>	<p><u>1 Cor. 16:13.</u> <u>Watch</u>, <u>stand</u> fast in the faith, quit you like men, <u>be strong</u>. <u>Eph. 6:11-18.</u> <u>Be strong</u>. ... <u>Put on</u> the whole <u>armor</u> of God, ... that you may be able to <u>withstand</u> in the evil day, and having done all, to <u>stand</u>. <u>Stand</u> therefore, having your <u>loins girded</u> about with truth [scripture]. ... <u>Praying</u> always. <u>Rom. 13:12-13.</u> Let <u>us ... cast off</u> the works of darkness, and <u>let us put on</u> the armor of light. <u>Eph. 4:22-23.</u> <u>Put off</u> concerning the former behavior the old man, ... according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your <u>mind</u>. <u>Col. 3:2-16.</u> <u>Put off</u> the old man with his deeds, and ... <u>put on</u> the new man, which is renewed in <u>knowledge</u>. ... <u>Put on</u> ... bowels of mercies. ... <u>Put on</u> love. ... Let the <u>word</u> of Messiah dwell in you richly in all <u>wisdom</u>.</p>
<p><u>Fenelon.</u> [Let Go] <u>Surrender</u> yourself to God and learn to [Let God] live by Him rather than out of your <u>own strength</u>. ... Cling to God, <u>within</u> you, and there you will find deep and true fellowship [actually you're clinging to yourself]. [105-6]</p>	

**MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - OVERCOMING SIN (2)**

<p><u>Molinos</u>. Come by <u>faith</u>. ... Those who seek the Lord <u>externally</u> have to always <u>do</u> something ... outward mortification, <u>efforts</u> at destroying certain weaknesses, <u>battles</u> with desires, or the acquiring of spiritual <u>knowledge</u>.</p>	<p><u>1 Cor. 9:24-27</u>. <u>Run</u>, that you may obtain. And every man that <u>strives</u> for the mastery is <u>temperate</u> in all things. ... So <u>fight</u> I, not as one that beats the air, but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. <u>Rom. 6:11</u>. <u>Reckon</u> [which requires thinking]... yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God.</p>
<p>The inward way is a <u>centering</u> of the whole being in a loving manner in the Divine presence. ... It is by Him that virtue is established; ... that <u>desires are eradicated</u>; ... imperfections are destroyed.</p>	<p><u>Heb. 12:1-4</u>. Let <u>us lay aside</u> every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let <u>us run</u> with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, ... who for the joy that was set before him <u>endured</u> the cross, ... for <u>consider</u> him that <u>endured</u>, ... lest you be wearied and faint in your <u>minds</u>. You have not yet <u>resisted</u> unto blood, <u>striving</u> against sin.</p>
<p>He lives in spirit <u>without</u> those great <u>efforts of struggling</u>. He finds himself free. [68-9]</p>	<p><u>1 Tim. 6:12</u>. <u>Fight</u> the good <u>fight</u> of faith. <u>2 Tim. 4:7</u>. I have <u>fought</u> a good <u>fight</u>, I have finished my course.</p>

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - ANNIHILATION OR INTENTIONAL THINKING?	
<u>Guyon</u> . You must <u>cease to exist</u> in self so that the Spirit of the Eternal Word may exist in you. By the giving up of your own life, you make way for His. ... You must <u>surrender</u> your whole being to Jesus Christ. ... The <u>annihilation of self</u> is the true prayer of worship! ... To be “in spirit,” the <u>soul is annihilated</u> . [89-90]	<u>Eph. 3:14-16</u> . I bow my knees to the Father, ... that he would grant <u>you ... to be strengthened</u> with might by his Spirit in the inner man. <u>Phil. 1:27</u> . <u>Stand fast</u> in <u>one spirit</u> , with <u>one mind striving</u> together for the faith of the gospel. <u>Col. 3:16-23</u> . Let the <u>word</u> of Messiah dwell <u>in you</u> richly in all <u>wisdom</u> ; <u>teaching</u> and <u>admonishing</u> one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, <u>singing</u> with grace <u>in your hearts</u> to the Lord.
<u>Guyon</u> . <u>Feel</u> the Lord gradually <u>taking possession</u> of your whole being.	<u>2 Ths. 2:15</u> . Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions.

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - BE DETACHED OR INVOLVED?	
<u>Molinos</u> . The men or women who would attain to that deeper walk with their Lord must <u>abandon</u> and be detached from these four things: Creatures [like teachers,	<u>2 Tim. 2:2</u> . The things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same <u>commit</u> to faithful men, who will be able to <u>teach others</u> also.
friends,	<u>Phil. 4:1</u> . My <u>brethren</u> dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. <u>1 Ths. 3:7-9</u> . Now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God.
and family], Temporal things,	<u>1 Tim. 5:8</u> . If any provide not for <u>his own</u> , and especially for those of <u>his own house</u> , he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.
The very gifts of the Holy Spirit, Self. [122-3]	<u>1 Tim. 4:14</u> . Neglect not the <u>gift</u> that is in you.

MYSTICISM VS THE WORD - UNSEEN REALMS OR THE WORD?	
<u>Molinos</u> . Men who seek after God by ... acquiring information about the <u>Scriptures</u> are really nothing more than scholars. They do not know the <u>unseen realms</u> , nor do they realize that <u>hidden</u> things of God are found only within the spirit, ... <u>that place</u> where God keeps His throne and communicates Himself to the one who comes and joins Him in <u>that place</u> . Unbelievably, there are even some who <u>condemn</u> such a concept. [121-2]	<u>Col. 3:16-23</u> . Let the <u>word</u> of Messiah dwell in you richly in all <u>wisdom</u> ; <u>teaching</u> and <u>admonishing</u> one another, ... <u>singing</u> with grace <u>in your hearts</u> to the Lord. <u>2 Tim. 2:14-16</u> . <u>Study</u> to show yourself approved to God, a <u>workman</u> that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the <u>word</u> of truth. <u>Phil. 4:8</u> . Whatever things are true, ... honest, ... just, ... pure, ... lovely, [etc.] ... <u>think</u> on these things.

The following is a summary of various “Let Go and Let God” movements that followed the years of George Fox and the Roman Catholic mystics.

***1766-1858. The Sinless Perfection Movement***

**1734-1748. The First Great Awakening**

John Wesley in Britain, and Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield in America, were the main figures in the First Great Awakening. Some physical phenomena like bodily fits were experienced by people during these revivals. However, then most people considered such physical phenomena to be the neutral result, in emotionally susceptible people, of the Holy Spirit’s work on people’s rational thinking; whereas now most people think the Holy Spirit is actually directly causing those inherently valueless, bodily phenomena, like tongues and fits.

1740. Jonathan Edwards. It is easily accounted for ... by the laws of the union between soul and body, how a

... true and proper sense of things, should have such effects on the body. ... The misery of hell is doubtless so dreadful, and eternity so vast, that if a person should have a clear apprehension of that misery as it is, it would be more that his feeble frame could bear. ... Some would have it, that [some ministers] speak of these things as certain evidences of a work of the Spirit of God on the hearts of their hearers, or that they esteem these bodily effects themselves to be the work of God, as though the Spirit of God took hold of and agitated the bodies of men; and some are charged with making these things essential, and supposing that persons cannot be converted without them; whereas I never yet could see the person that held either of these things. But for speaking of such effects as probable tokens of God's presence, and arguments of the success of preaching [reaching the minds of men and thereby affecting the emotions], ... I think they are so indeed.<sup>176</sup>

Tracy. Towards the close of the Great Awakening of 1740, these "manifestations" began to assume the character of an epidemic; though by no means so clearly as in the "Kentucky [1801 Cane Ridge] revival." John [Wesley] received and valued them as proofs of the divine presence, and they increased under his labors. Charles [Wesley] discouraged them. ... Whitefield was incredulous; and when at last some, who had been John Wesley's hearers, fell down under Whitefield's preaching [in Pennsylvania and New Jersey in 1740], Wesley thanked God for it, thinking that Whitefield would then be convinced, ... [but Whitfield] ascribed them to diabolic influence. "Satan now begins to throw many into fits." ... They never ascribed these bodily agitations to divine influence directly, as was slanderously reported; but to those convictions, hopes, and fears, which divine influence had imparted, and which produced the same effects as equally violent feelings concerning worldly things [like the death of a family member] might have done. ... But after all, the lenity with which these "manifestations" were treated ... was too great, and the ignorant took occasion to consider them as parts of the revival, – of

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<sup>176</sup> Edwards, Thoughts Concerning the Present Revival, 1493-2413.

that process by which their souls were to be saved. A more decided discouragement of them would have saved a vast amount of evil.<sup>177</sup>

One reason Edwards couldn't be very enthusiastic about discouraging bodily effects at revival meetings, is that not only he himself could hardly move sometimes from thinking about some aspect of God's glory, but also

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Tracy. In 1723, when he was about twenty years of age, he wrote on a blank leaf of some book: "They say there is a young lady in --, who is beloved of that Great Being. ... She hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on him. ... Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. ... She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly. ... She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have someone invisible always conversing with her." This young lady was Sarah Pierrepont, and about four years after this was written, she became his wife. Mrs. Edwards continued to enjoy, after her marriage, those occasional visits of the "Great Being." ... Of their "very great effects on the body," Edwards mentions, "nature often sinking under the weight of divine discoveries, the strength of the body being taken away, so as to deprive of all ability to stand or speak; sometimes the hands clenched, and the flesh cold, but the senses still remaining."<sup>178</sup>

### **1766. Wesley. Plain Account of Christian Perfection**

Naselli. John Wesley (1703–1791) is the father of views that chronologically separate the time a person becomes a Christian from the time sanctification begins. ... When Wesleyan perfectionism blended with American revivalism, the holiness movement emerged. ... Methodist perfectionism emphasized the crisis of

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<sup>177</sup> Tracy, Great Awakening, 249-252.

<sup>178</sup> Tracy, Great Awakening, 252-254.

Christian perfection. ... The person most responsible for that was Phoebe Palmer (1807–1874). Her “altar theology” promised “a shorter way” to holiness. ... When you entirely consecrate yourself [on the altar], you are instantly and entirely sanctified, ... which she argued results in power for serving God.

Warfield. Writes Olin A. Curtis, “Wesley had almost the same epochal relation to the doctrinal emphasis upon holiness that Luther had to the doctrinal emphasis upon justification by faith.” ... As wave after wave of the “holiness movement” has broken over us during the past century, each has brought, no doubt, something distinctive of itself. But a common fundamental character ... has been communicated to them by the Wesleyan doctrine. ... In all of them alike justification and sanctification are divided from one another as two separate gifts of God. In all of them alike sanctification is represented as obtained, just like justification, by ... a new and separate act of faith, exercised for this specific purpose.<sup>179</sup>

Whaling. A substantial part of John Wesley’s spiritual foundation was in mystical literature. “[John and Charles Wesley] had grown up in an atmosphere steeped in the great spiritual classics cherished by their parents. ... At Oxford, they had graduated to other spiritual classics [like those of] Jeremy Taylor, ... William Law, ... Kempis and other Roman Catholic mystics. ... In 1730, with others in ‘The Holy Club’ [at Oxford University], they were exploring the fountain-head of Eastern-Orthodox spirituality - e.g., Clement of Alexandria, Macarius, the Cappadocians, Ephrem Syrus and others.”<sup>180</sup> In 1738, Wesley was counseled by Moravian, Peter Bohler; and on May 24, 1738, had his Aldersgate justification experience. Soon afterwards, he travelled to Herrnhut, Germany, to visit a Moravian community that had experienced a ‘Second Pentecost’ eleven years earlier. During his time at Herrnhut, “Wesley noted in his journal that he had encountered many living proofs of those who had been saved ‘from

<sup>179</sup> Warfield, *Perfectionism*, Kindle 6912–21.

<sup>180</sup> Whaling, John and Charles Wesley, xiv.



inward as well as outward sin.”<sup>181</sup> “[Wesley’s] two heroes were Ephraim Syrus and Macarius the Egyptian, ... [and also] Gregory of Nyssa through Macarius.”<sup>182</sup> Of Macarius and Ephraim Syrus, he said in 1749, “I exceedingly reverence them as well as their writings.”<sup>183</sup> “The fifty volumes of his Christian Library of 1750-1756 contained no works by Luther and Calvin but they did include the works of five French and three Spanish Roman Catholic mystics, namely, Pascal, Brother Lawrence, Fenelon, Mme Guyon, Mme Bourignon, John of Avila, Lopez, and Molinos.”<sup>184</sup>

1766, John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*. [Victory] There is such a thing as perfection. ... It is ‘perfect love.’ ... Cleansed from all filthiness, ... to perfect holiness, ... a full deliverance from [the] carnal mind (p. 50). [Second Blessing] It is not so early as justification (p. 50). [Instantaneous] I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant. But I believe a gradual work ... preceding (p. 50). [Let Go] The absolute necessity ... to be all-devoted to God, to give him all my soul, my body, and my substance (p. 5). [Seek] Q. How are we to wait for this change? A. Not in careless indifference, or indolent inactivity; but in vigorous, universal obedience, in a zealous keeping of all the commandments, in watchfulness and painfulness, in denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; as well as in earnest prayer and fasting, ... [This is also the way] of keeping it when it is attained. ... We receive it by simple faith: But God does not, will not, give that faith, unless we seek it with all diligence, ... [which is] why so few have received the blessing. ... Prayer especially is wanting (p. 45). [Let God] Let me gain that second rest; from my works for ever cease (p. 33).

John Fletcher, a contemporary of Wesley, a theologian and interpreter of his teachings, identified the baptism of

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<sup>181</sup> Collins, John Wesley.

<sup>182</sup> Whaling, John and Charles Wesley, 12.

<sup>183</sup> Wesley, Letter to Middleton.

<sup>184</sup> Whaling, John and Charles Wesley, 10.

the Spirit with Wesley's post-justification, second-blessing, sanctification crisis experience.

### **1771. Fletcher. Last Check to Antinomianism**

1771. Fletcher. *Last Check to Antinomianism*. Should you ask, how many baptisms, or effusions of the sanctifying Spirit are necessary to cleanse a believer from all sin, and to kindle his soul into perfect love; ... if one powerful baptism of the Spirit “seal you unto the day of redemption, and cleanse you from all [moral] filthiness,” so much the better. If two or more be necessary, the Lord can repeat them. ... And if one outpouring of the Spirit, one bright manifestation of the sanctifying truth, so empties us of self, as to fill us with the mind of Christ, and with pure love, we are undoubtedly Christians in the full sense of the word.<sup>185</sup>

### **1775. Methodism in Virginia**

Synan. The earliest stronghold for [Wesley's] Methodism in colonial America was in ... Virginia ... The Reverend Devereaux Jarratt, ... an Anglican, ... cooperated fully with the Methodist ... societies within his parish. ... Jarratt wrote, describing ... services of 1775, holiness religion was much in evidence. Many were “panting and groaning for pardon” while others were “entreating God, with strong cries and tears to save them from the remains of inbred sin, to sanctify them throughout.” ... Numbers of them testified to having been sanctified, “instantaneously, and by simple faith.” ... Jarratt observed ... that as the emotional element abated “the work of conviction and conversion abated too.” ... This revivalistic outbreak was one of the first instances of a Pentecostal-like religious revival in the nation, and was a direct antecedent of the frontier Kentucky revivals of 1800. ... Methodist perfectionism in America was “a swing toward warmth, feeling, experience, and morality” and away from the mechanical, permissive, de-ethicalized,

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<sup>185</sup> Fletcher, *Last Check to Antinomianism*, Section 19.

and formal worship of the times. ... [It was a] “heart religion,” as Wesley termed it.<sup>186</sup>

### **1801. The Cane Ridge Camp Meeting**

The great Cane Ridge camp meeting in Kentucky in 1801 was an early American Pentecostal type revival started by the enthusiastic preaching of John McGee. This revival is where the American ‘camp meeting’ was born. It was preceded by three summers of Methodist circuit riders leading many into the sinless perfection experience.

Synan. Their “godly hysteria” included such phenomena as falling, jerking, barking like dogs, falling into trances, the “holy laugh,” and “such wild dances as David performed before the Ark of the Lord.” ... Peter Cartwright reported that in one service he saw five hundred jerking at once. The unconverted were as subject to the “jerks” as were the saints. ... After “praying through” some would crawl on all fours and bark like dogs, thus “treeing the devil.” Others would fall into trances for hours, awakening to claim salvation or sanctification. In some services entire congregations would be seized by the “holy laugh.” [A] most amazing phenomenon was the “singing exersize” whereby the saints ... “would sing most melodiously, not from the mouth or nose, but entirely in the breast.” ... In the revival that hit the University of Georgia in 1800-1801, students visited nearby campgrounds and were themselves smitten with the “jerks” or slain in the spirit ... or they shouted and talked in unknown tongues.<sup>187</sup>

### **1800-1850. The Second Great Awakening**

Wikipedia. Western New York, was dubbed the ‘burned-over district,’ because of its recurring waves of revival in the early 1800’s. “Like the First Great Awakening a half century earlier, the Second reflected Romanticism characterized by enthusiasm, emotion, and an appeal to the super-natural. ... It rejected the ...

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<sup>186</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 129-44.

<sup>187</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 159-77.

rationalism [of the] the Enlightenment.”<sup>188</sup> Western New York was frontier country at this time, opened for development by the creation of the Erie Canal. The original Puritan settlers in America had feared that the frontier wilderness would allow men to escape the oversight of civilization and invent all kinds of doctrines, and their fears were realized. Many new cults and movements began at this time and place, often from supposed new divine revelations. Joseph Smith founded the Mormons, Ann Lee the Shakers, William Miller the Millerites from which came the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah Witnesses. The Fox Sisters table-rapping fraud gave impetus to the Spiritualism movement. Washington Gladden started the Social Gospel movement. Elizabeth Cady Stanton helped organize the Seneca Falls Convention which was the first women’s rights convention.<sup>189</sup>

## **1820. Charles Finney**

Warfield. Here was this young man, but two years a minister, but four a Christian, ... suddenly leading an assault upon the churches. “Force was his factor, and ‘breaking down’ his process.” And in exercising this force he did not shrink from denunciations which bordered on the defamatory. ... Parishes were invaded without invitation, churches divided, opposing ministers “broken down,” or even driven from their pulpits, the people everywhere set and kept on edge. Finney was under no illusions as to the nature of this excitement or as to its dangers. ... It served him in other words as a means of “advance publicity.” “It seems sometimes to be indispensable,” he says, “that a high degree of excitement should prevail for a time, to arrest public and individual attention, and to draw people off from other pursuits to attend to the concerns of their souls.”... Joseph Ives Foot, writing in 1838, is constrained to say: “During ten years, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, were annually reported to be converted on all hands; but now it is admitted, that his

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<sup>188</sup> Wikipedia, Second Great Awakening.

<sup>189</sup> Wikipedia, Burned-Over District.t

(Finney's) real converts are comparatively few. It is declared, even by himself, that 'the great body of them are a disgrace to religion.' ... In propagating these revivals everything was bent to the production of the excited state of feeling that was aimed at, and all ordinary Christian duties were in abeyance, ... the whole charitable work of the churches fell away, and even the Sabbath Schools were neglected.<sup>190</sup>

Synan. The man most responsible for reinstituting and refining the revival was ... Finney, ... raised in [the burned-over district of] western part of New York. ... During the 1820's he led revivals of spectacular proportions, using what he termed the "new measures" of evangelization.<sup>191</sup>

Naselli. Two significant parts of the holiness movement were Methodist perfectionism and Oberlin perfectionism. ... Its two main proponents were Charles Finney (1792–1875) and Asa Mahan (1799–1889). [Oberlins] taught that Christian perfection begins with a crisis of Spirit-baptism.

### **1823. The Mormons**

Synan. Even the Mormon Church experienced much the same motor phenomena that characterized the early Methodists and later Pentecostals. Shouting, jerking, and dancing were common in their services, and Brigham Young not only spoke in unknown tongues, but interpreted his own messages. ... Mormon choirs were even known to sing songs in unknown tongues in unison.<sup>192</sup>

### **1832. The Catholic Apostolic Church**

Joseph Frey was a Jewish man who accepted Yeshua as Messiah in 1795, and helped found the "London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews (LSPCAJ) in 1809. His Jewish background helped him promote a literal

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<sup>190</sup> Warfield, Perfectionism, Kindle 217-250.

<sup>191</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 181-92.

<sup>192</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 181-92.

interpretation of the scriptures including the premillennial return of Messiah.<sup>193</sup> An Anglican priest, James Stewart was an active supporter of the LSPCAJ. In 1820, he published and distributed more than half a million copies of a pamphlet in Great Britain, the United States, and Europe, urging ‘Christians’ to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the only hope before the Lord’s return. “The Scriptures predict a day when the Holy Spirit shall be given in a very abundant manner; and that this blessing will be preceded by earnest prayer. ... Oh! for the fatness of the latter rain.”<sup>194</sup> In 1830, in supposed answer to the prayer movement; prophecy, speaking in tongues, and miraculous healing broke out among protestants in Port Glasgow, Scotland, and among Roman Catholics in Karlshuld, Bavaria.

Edward Irving was a Church of Scotland minister who preached that Jesus was returning soon. He helped create and lead the Catholic Apostolic Church in 1832 which included restored apostles and prophets, miracles, and spiritual gifts. Irving considered tongues as the standing sign of the “baptism with the Holy Ghost,” and the “root and stem” from which all other gifts flow.

There were seven congregations, six of which were led by an apostle, also called angels. Six more persons were designated as apostles in 1835 after Irving’s death, to bring the total to twelve. Henry Drummond, a member of parliament, was an apostle, and Thomas Carlyle attended. The apostles declared the apostolate had been restored for setting all Christianity in order to be ready for the Second Coming, and they called on all clergy and secular authorities to submit to their self-appointment as apostles.

Three ranks of ministry were recognized: bishop, priest, and deacon. Each rank had different vestments. The ministries of Apostle (or Elder), Prophet, Evangelist, and Pastor (or Teacher) determined the border colors of their vestments. There were combinations of rank and border. There were angel-prophets, angel-evangelists,

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<sup>193</sup> Frey, Narrative.

<sup>194</sup> Stewart, Memoir.

priest-prophets, priest-elders, deacon-pastors, deacon-prophets, and so on. The last apostle died in 1901.<sup>195</sup>

### **1832. Spiritual Wives**

Dixon. In the year 1832, ... a great revival of religion ... took place. ... By a sudden prompting from within, so far as men could see, a number of orderly and reputable persons began to ask each other ... how it stood with them in the great account. ... At first the old and steady preachers welcomed this change of mind; their pews being ... filled. ... A service once a-week was but as a drop of water on the lips of men and women panting for a living brook. ... An evening meeting was called for prayer; then a morning meeting; afterwards an hour was snatched from the busy noon. ... School-rooms, dancing-halls, even theatres, ... became a church. ... Camps were formed for prayer. ... Hundreds of wandering and unauthorized preachers, male and female, took the field against Satan, and ... the regular clergy came to be esteemed as dumb and faithless. ... Miss Lucina Umphreville ... held that the females must not think of love; that the men must not woo them; that the church must not celebrate the marriage rite; and that those who had already passed beneath the yoke must live as though they had not. ... Male and female were to be brother and sister only. ... Erasmus Stone, a revival preacher at Salina, ... had seen a vision of the night. A mighty host of men and women filled the sky. ... They began to ... fly hither and thither. ... Every... soul [trying] to find its natural [brother/sister] mate [regardless of who they might already be married to].<sup>196</sup>

### **1846. John Humphrey Noyes**

John Humphrey Noyes was a product of Finney's revivals in Putney, New York, in 1831. Noyes eventually created a commune at Putney in 1846 in which all wives were shared. When the townspeople drove them out, they

<sup>195</sup> Wikipedia, Catholic Apostolic Church.

<sup>196</sup> Dixon, *Spiritual Wives* Vol. 2, 1-16.

moved to Oneida, NY. Lawsuits from that town eventually caused them to abandon their shared marriage practice. Noyes fled to Canada, and what was left of the commune became the Oneida silverware company.

1846. Warfield. On John Humphrey Noyes. The “saints” had advanced beyond the legalities of the worldly order ... [to] the freedom of the resurrection life. ... The idea of spiritual wives did not go far enough to satisfy the demands of [Noye’s] antinomianism. ... He writes, “[Christ] said, that in the good time coming there will be no marriage at all” - meaning not that celibacy will rule, but “promiscuity.” ... All communism is wrecked on the family, and he perceived ... that he must be rid of the family if he was to have communism. ... His book called “Bible Communism,” published in 1848, was nothing more than an elaborate plea for the practice of ... community not only in goods but also in women. ... It was in May, 1846, so Noyes tells us, that “entire communism” was put into practice. ... From this time every man in the association ... looked on every woman in it as his wife, and every woman looked on every man as her husband. ... Noyes called it “free love.”<sup>197</sup>

## ***1843. The Higher Life Movement Splits Off***

Whenever there’s a split over doctrine, it not only results in a dilution of numbers, but also in a concentration of extremism within the two parties. Boardman didn’t like the term ‘sinless perfection’ which was sometimes doctrinally opposed because of the terminology, so he preferred the term ‘full salvation.’

## **1843. Phoebe Palmer. The Way of Holiness**

Palmer’s altar crisis theology ...

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<sup>197</sup> Warfield, Perfectionism, Kindle 3000-388.



1843. Phoebe Palmer. *The Way of Holiness*. [Sinless Perfection] Provision has thus been made for the restoration of man ... [to] regain that which was lost in Adam - even the image of God re-enstamped upon the soul (Kindle 21273-21275). [Let Go] By the determination to consecrate all upon the altar of sacrifice to God, ... to be wholly the Lord's for time and eternity," and then acting in conformity with this decision, actually laying all upon the altar, ... under the most solemn obligation [Let God] to believe that the sacrifice became the Lord's property; and by virtue of the altar upon which the offering was laid, became "holy" and "acceptable" (Kindle 21286-21290). ... Scripturally assured that it was needful ... to place himself believingly upon "the altar that sanctifieth the gift" (Kindle 21330-21331).

### **1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life***

Boardman just changed the terminology.

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*.<sup>198</sup> This one word, perfectionism, has kept and is now keeping thousands from examining into the matter at all. It is high time this stumbling stone was gathered out of the way ... of [those] who are deterred by it from gaining the heights, and deeper depths. (p. 29) ... Many ... fear heresy. ... So much has been written about "perfection" and "sanctification" [being] in conflict with the Bible. (p. 6) ... Scores upon scores ... have given themselves wholly to Jesus, and taken Jesus wholly to themselves, and so found the abiding sunshine, and ... full salvation, but who yet make no profession of perfection. (p. 17) ... Cases [of it] have generally received the convenient name, "second conversion:" but in the standards, as in the Westminster Church Confession, it is called, "The full assurance of grace and salvation," and elsewhere, "The full assurance of faith," while in hymns it is often named, "Full salvation." (p. 25)

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<sup>198</sup> Boardman, *Higher Christian Life*.

The Bible teaches men can only be justified by faith, and then work as part of sanctification. But Boardman recommends we let go and let God to receive 'sanctification by faith.' However, the only place 'sanctified by faith' is found, it indicates all believers are 'sanctified,' meaning 'set apart,' the moment we're justified. "I send you ... to open their eyes, ... so that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by [justifying] faith that is in me," Acts 26:17-18. Boardman even believed the second blessing experience is required in order to go to heaven, though 'millions' of born-again believers through the ages have known nothing about it. The Bible does say all who have been justified are being sanctified, but it doesn't say they're sanctified by a crisis experience after justification.

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*. After having found acceptance in Jesus by faith, we think to go on to perfection by strugglings and resolves. ... Lutherans, Wesleyans, and Oberlinians ... all agree ... [in] the experience ... of sanctification by faith. (p. 23-4) ... All [who come] to a sense of sins forgiven ... in the blood of Jesus [justification], ... sooner or later [come] hungering and thirsting for true holiness, ... and after varied strugglings [find] in Christ the end of the law for sanctification. (p. 18)... It is necessary for all to come to the point of trusting in the Lord for purity of heart [sanctification] to be prepared for heaven. ... None but the pure in heart shall see God in peace. ... It is a point that must be gained, or heaven must be lost. Millions have lived life-long in ignorance of it. ... All those professors of religion, ... if really converted, then the way of sanctification by faith in Jesus will be made plain in the evening of their earthly course [just before they die they'll be given a sanctification crisis experience]. (p. 97-9)

It doesn't take a lot of discernment to recognize a man's message as false, when says followers of the doctrine he's promoting are in a higher position than others in the Congregation. Boardman's message

denigrates the fullness that Jesus provides all believers the moment they're justified.

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*. Exactly what is attained in this [sanctification] experience? Christ. ... Christ is received by the soul as the potter to mold it. ... A new and higher level has been reached ... and from the new starting point the race becomes swifter and yet easier. (p. 26-7) ... The new starting point of a higher progress, [is] just as distinctly marked as conversion itself. ... A deeper, stronger vital union with the True Vine. ... A higher and happier progress. (p. 88-90) ... The apostles [were successful] in winning men to the higher experience - the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (p. 93)

Jesus is 'an ever present Savior' and 'a friend which sticketh closer than a brother' to all who have been justified. Jesus is with every believer, every day, contrary to what Boardman says.

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*. They of the one class have a Saviour in Jesus it is true - but he is a Saviour afar off - up in heaven, as they think of him, and not with them now here upon earth. While they of the other class have Jesus ever with them - a very present help in every time of need - a friend which sticketh closer than a brother. ... Jesus has been with me every day now. (p. 140)

Boardman is wrong that some believers have more union with Messiah than other believers. The manifestation of the union varies, but no brother has more or less union.

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*. There is such an experimental union with Jesus as has for convenience been named second conversion. (p. 60) ... The life hidden with Christ in God. (p. 144) ... O for that living union with Jesus! ... There will be gathered at our house tomorrow evening, the parlors full of those ... recently come out into the fulness of faith, ... this abiding vital union of Christians with Christ. (p. 145) ... Abiding in Jesus we shall be watchful and prayerful,

diligent and faithful, secure from the adversary and cheerful as the lark. ... He in whom Christ dwells by faith [meaning only higher-life believers] ... will grow in grace; for he has a living union with Him. (p. 149-150)

Boardman believed 'revivals' are due to second blessing experiences, whereas they are probably due more to emotional preaching and crowd psychology. He believed God was making such teaching more prominent now, versus the past thousands of years, to bring in the Millennial Kingdom. He even thought atheists were becoming fewer and fewer [?!].

1858. Boardman. *The Higher Christian Life*. [Mahan and Finny] began then to preach the full gospel. (p. 29) ... The secret spring touched by the Lord a hundred years ago to throw open the doors for ... tens of thousands ... [to the] experience of full salvation [was] in the leaders, ... [like] Edwards, the Wesleys, and Whitefield. (p. 146-7) ... Why has the fact not had greater prominence in the past? (p. 101) ... As years roll on the natural sciences unfold and lead even skeptical minds to abandon atheism. ... What now the timely truth? ... The millennial type of Christian character and life. ... [God] is now erecting the temple, ... story above story, in preparation for the millennium. (p. 104-5) ... We need, therefore, to turn attention increasingly to the higher form of Christian experience. (p. 108-9)

1872. Naselli. On the Higher Life Movement. After [Mahan] moved to England in 1872, he helped lead the higher life movement, which immediately preceded the first Keswick Convention in 1875. ... The higher life movement began in 1858 when William Boardman's popular book *The Higher Christian Life* was released, and it dissolved in 1875 when its leaders removed Robert Pearsall Smith from public ministry. ... [Boardman] began and led the higher life movement for over a decade until a husband-wife team - Robert and Hannah Smith - overshadowed him in the early 1870s, ... most enduringly through Hannah's writing ... *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, [which] is

essentially two steps: 1.”entire surrender” or “entire abandonment” (i.e., “let go”) 2.”absolute faith” (i.e., “let God”). ... Hannah’s intense feminism and independence, Robert’s manic-depressive nature, and ... persistence in unrepentant adultery all contributed to a very unhappy marriage. ... Robert apostatized and became an agnostic. ... Hannah apostatized, ... rejoined the Quakers in 1886, and embraced universalism and religious pluralism [multiple ways to be saved].

### **1875. Smith. The Christians Secret to a Happy Life**

Hannah and her husband both came from a long line of Quakers, and as stated above, both eventually apostatized, which means they never knew God in the first place.

1 Jn. 2:19. They went out from us, but they were not [ever] of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Like the mystics before her, Smith taught ‘sanctification by faith,’ is achieved by letting go and letting God.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*.<sup>199</sup> According to our faith it shall be unto us. Then we trusted Him for our justification, and it became ours; now we must trust Him for our sanctification, and it shall become ours also. ... Then He lifted us out of the pit, now He is to seat us in heavenly places with Himself [Eph. 1:3 and 2:6 says we’re already there]. ... Theologically and judicially I know that every believer has everything the minute he is converted. But experimentally nothing is his until by faith he claims it. ... To enter into this blessed interior life of rest and triumph, you have two steps to take: first, [Let Go:] entire abandonment; and second, [Let God:] absolute faith. ... These two steps ... will certainly bring you ...

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<sup>199</sup> Smith, Christian’s Secret.

into the green pastures and still waters of this higher Christian life.

Ceasing from all efforts is supposedly an essential 'secret,' meaning it's not in the Bible, at least not the way Smith teaches it.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life.* When you have got hold of this secret, ... all the Scriptural commands - to yield yourself to God, to present yourself a living sacrifice to Him, to abide in Christ, to walk in the light, to die to self - become possible to you (p. 46) [this selection of commands versus the multitude about working shows Smith's lopsided view of scripture]. You need make no efforts to grow; but let your efforts instead be all concentrated on this, that you abide in the Vine. (p. 63). ... The essential thing is to get within you the growing life [she means you don't already have it by regeneration], and then you cannot help but grow. (p. 65). ... It is a fact that the most effectual workers I know are those who do not feel the least care or anxiety about their work, ... asking Him to guide them moment by moment in reference to it (p. 72).

Unlike Paul ...

2 Cor. 11:27-8. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which comes on me daily, the care of all the Congregations.

Like the mystics before her, Smith didn't believe God is able to accomplish his purposes unless we 'let him.' There is actually more fruitfulness, for those who don't rely on Smith's false method of surrender for sanctification, than for those who do.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life.* God says, "Yield yourselves up unto Me, as those that are alive from the dead, and I will work in you to will and to do of my good pleasure [the scriptures don't make Rom. 6:13 a prerequisite to Phil. 2:13 as Smith does]." ... [He] will ... work in you ... [Hebrews 13:21],

but ... if you begin to question your surrender, ... He cannot work. [What version of the Bible is this? What about the promise “being confident of this very thing, that he which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Messiah” (Phil. 1:6)?] But while you trust, He works ... to change you into the image of Christ, from glory to glory, by His mighty Spirit. (pp. 33-34).

Biblically, we receive a new master, a new husband, a new mind, and the indwelling Holy Spirit at the time of our justification. This causes every born-again believer, without fail, to love serving God, whether or not they do Smith’s false surrender ritual.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. [After you perform Christian service do you rebound] like an India-rubber ball back into your real interests and pleasures the moment your work [is] over? [If so, it’s actually because you’ve never been regenerated by justification by faith.] ... The soul ... that enters fully into the blessed life of faith ... finds itself really wanting to do the things God wants it to do. (p. 69). ... The new covenant ... shall be a law written within. [So non-higher-life Christians are not under the New Covenant in Jesus’ blood?] ... Put your will over completely into the hands of your Lord. ... Say, “Yes, Lord, yes!”

Charismatic type direct revelation from God by inner impressions is an essential part of Smith’s higher life, as with all mystics.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. You have not learned yet to know the voice of the Good Shepherd, and are therefore in great doubt and perplexity as to what really is His will. ... If I have an impression, therefore, I must see if it is in accordance with Scripture, and whether it commends itself to my own higher judgment [i.e. common sense], and also whether, as we Quakers say, the “way opens” for its carrying out. (p. 78). ... Just as the Holy Spirit may tell us, by impressions, what is the will of God concerning us, so also will ... spiritual enemies tell us, by

impressions, what is their will concerning us. (p. 78) ... This direct communication of God's will to us ... seems to me to be the grandest of privileges. ... That God should love me enough to care about the details of my life is perfectly wonderful. ... The way in which the Holy Spirit, therefore, usually works in His direct guidance is to impress upon the mind a wish or desire to do or leave undone certain certain things. The soul when engaged, perhaps, in prayer, feels a sudden suggestion made to its inmost consciousness. At the moment when the Spirit speaks, it is always easy to obey; if the soul hesitates and begins to reason, it becomes more and more difficult continually. As a general rule, the first convictions are the right ones in a fully surrendered heart; for God ... will cause His voice to be heard before any other voices [what verse is this?]. Such convictions, therefore, should never be met by reasoning. ... God's children are amazingly skeptical here [thank God for those who are!]. ... 'God, who at sundry times and in manners many, Spake to the fathers and is speaking still' [she misquotes the end which says past tense 'has ... spoken to us by his Son,' Heb. 1:2]. (p. 81-83)

Though Smith begins by saying we should focus only on trusting, and do nothing except let God do everything; she then contradicts herself and says if we don't follow, obey, and act on the Spirit's leading, it will break the higher life relationship. Smith (and others) count performing actions in obedience to the commands of the Bible (the light without) to be self-striving; but count performing the same actions in obedience to inner impressions and feelings, supposedly from the Spirit (the light within), to be doing nothing, but he Bible doesn't say that.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. Any root of bitterness cherished towards another, any self-seeking and harsh judgments indulged in, any slackness in obeying the voice of the Lord, any doubtful habits or surroundings, ... will effectually cripple and paralyze our spiritual life [sounds pretty iffy at maintaining it at best]. (p. 98). ... As pilgrims and strangers we must abstain from fleshly lusts that war



against the soul [sounds like work]. As good soldiers of Jesus Christ, we must disentangle ourselves from the affairs of this life ... that we may please Him who hath chosen us to be soldiers. We must abstain from all appearance of evil. We must be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another. ... Into all these things we shall undoubtedly be led by the blessed Spirit of God, if we give ourselves up to His guidance, ... faithful[ly] following ... the Lord in a consecrated soul. ... Be perfectly pliable in His wise hands, go where He entices you, turn away from all from which He makes you shrink, obey Him perfectly [sounds like just as much work as working is]; and He will lead you out swiftly and easily ... into the realization and conscious experience of the most blessed union with the Lord, ... baptizing ... with the Holy Ghost. (pp. 109-113)

Like all mystics, Smith considers herself, and those who follow her advice, to be on a higher plane than all other born-again believers.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. If the majority of the Church were to be named over again, the only fitting and descriptive name that could be given them would be that of Doubters [she doesn't like God calling believers that like in Acts 5:14 and 1 Tim. 4:12]. ... They have got rid, it may be, of the old doubts that once tormented them, as to whether their sins are really forgiven, ... but they have not got rid of doubting. They have simply shifted the habit to a higher platform. (p. 103). ... [She describes one] who had been living for several months in the enjoyment of full salvation. ... [and one] who had been living in the land of promise about two weeks, and who had had a very bright and victorious experience. ... [Versus those who] have never entered into the life of full trust. ... [Sin, if confessed] will not take you out of the land of rest. ... This life of full salvation. (p. 96-97)

Like the other mystics, much of Smith's doctrine is based on a misinterpretation of Romans 5-8.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. It is thus that we have "access by faith" into ... grace ...

[Romans 5:2] ... to stand [Rom. 5:2 actually says we had access into justification and grace for sanctification at the same past faith event]. (32) ... Enroll your name in this army today (p. 75). ... We are predestined to be “conformed to the image” [Romans 8:29] of God’s Son [if we’re predestined, won’t it come to pass even without Smith’s steps?]. This means, of course, not a likeness of bodily presence, but a likeness of character [actually, it does mean a bodily likeness via future bodily resurrection and glorification]. (p. 114).

Like Boardman, Smith didn’t understand that union with God in Messiah is something all the justified partake of in a way that really affects their lives. Smith didn’t understand that from the time of Pentecost on, all believers receive the life-changing, indwelling Holy Spirit the moment they’re justified.

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. You know the mind of your Lord about many things, in which, as yet, they [the non-higher life Christians] are walking in darkness. ... Is it a cause for regret that your soul is brought into such near and intimate relations with your Master, that He is able to tell you things which those who are further off may not know? (p. 116) ... Will you think it hard that He reveals to you more of His mind than He does to others (p. 118). In a thousand ways He makes this offer of oneness with Himself [which we already have per John 17:21, 23] to every believer. But all do not say “Yes,” to Him. (p. 119). ... This soul-union ... is realized as an actual experience by many of God’s dear children. ... It is true of all, ... but the eyes of many are too dim and their hearts too unbelieving. ... The usual course of Christian experience is pictured in the history of the disciples. (p. 122). They knew Christ only “after the flesh,” as outside of them, ... but not yet their Life. Then came Pentecost, and these disciples came to know Him ... as one with them in actual union. ... Henceforth He was to them [and actually to every born-again believer since then even without Smith’s methods] Christ within, working in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. ... They were made one with Him. ... Unless we are Christ-like

in our thoughts and our ways, we are not one with Him. (p. 124). ... Thy Lord will not force it on thee ... The steps are but three. First, be convinced that the Scriptures teach this glorious indwelling of thy God [the scriptures teach it takes place at justification and regeneration]; then surrender thy whole being to Him to be possessed by Him; and finally believe that He has taken possession, and is dwelling in thee. Begin to reckon thyself dead, and to reckon Christ as thy only life. Maintain this attitude of soul unwaveringly [good luck]. (pp. 128-129)

Smith's book is an amalgamation of things she read from other mystics, Quakers, previous higher life proponents, etc. The allegorical admonitions she gives in some chapters, contradict the pictures she presents in others, but then the first six words of her book are "This is not a theological book."

1875. Smith. *The Christians Secret to a Happy Life*. Fenelon says somewhere ... (p. 43). ... All the old mystic writers tell us that our progress is ... by a simple, peaceful turning to God. (p. 100). ... There comes ... a region of mountain heights of uninterrupted union and communion with God, of superhuman detachment from everything earthly, of infinite contentment with the Divine will, and of marvelous transformation into the image of Christ. (p. 134). ... [For] a soul that has been raised to a throne in this inward kingdom, no sin or temptation can overcome, no sorrow can crush, no discouragement can hinder. (p. 139). ... But perhaps thou wilt say, "How can I enter into this kingdom, if I am not already in?" (p. 144). Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven [isn't this a justification verse?]. ... Let everything go, then, that belongs to the natural; all your own notions, and plans, and ways, and thoughts; and accept in their stead God's plans, and ways, and thoughts. Do this faithfully and do it persistently [good luck], and you shall come at last to sit on His throne, and to reign with Him in an interior kingdom. ... There is no other way. (p. 145). ... We pray daily, "Thy

kingdom come.” [Matthew 6:10] Do we know what we are praying for? [Does she?] (p. 147).

1875-1913. Naselli on Keswick, Victorious Life, America's Keswick, Trumbull. In 1874, Evan Hopkins preached on John 4:46–50 at a meeting led by Robert Pearsall Smith. Hopkins distinguished between the nobleman's “seeking faith” and “resting faith.” Hearing this, Harford-Battersby had his crisis moment when his “seeking faith” became a “resting faith” [actually the nobleman had no saving faith at all until what Hopkins called ‘resting faith’]. Harford-Battersby and Robert Wilson decided to hold a similar meeting in their hometown of Keswick, a small town in northwest England. They asked Robert Pearsall Smith to chair their meeting, but Smith fell from ministry just a few days before the first Keswick Convention began in 1875. Keswick has hosted the week-long Keswick Convention each July since 1875, ... [teaching] a crisis in which to enter “the rest of faith.”

The victorious life movement was the American version of the Keswick movement. ... It began in 1913 and promoted higher life theology for decades. It's three primary leaders were Griffith Thomas, Charles Trumbull, and Robert McQuilkin. ... “No crisis before Wednesday” was a common saying at the early Keswick Conventions because the first two days (Monday and Tuesday) laid the groundwork for the crisis of consecration. ... “What are the conditions of this Victorious Life? Only two, and they are very simple. Surrender and faith. ‘Let go, and let God.’”<sup>200</sup>

Trumbull was the publisher of The Sunday School Times in Philadelphia.<sup>201</sup> Like the others, Trumbull taught the higher state is entered by letting go and letting God. He says it's obtained by praising, not asking; but sometimes he contradicts himself and says it's obtained by asking. But like Smith, he wasn't overly concerned with having a consistent theology. “I saw that Christ was my life. Christ was my victory. I wasn't bothering about the theological

<sup>200</sup> Naselli, *No Quick Fix*, Kindle 157 696-700.

<sup>201</sup> Trumbull, *Victorious Life*.

questions.” (Kindle 537-538)

### **1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life***

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. Jesus, you know, makes two offers to everyone. He offers to set us free from the penalty of our sin. And He offers to set us free from the power of our sin. Both these offers are made on exactly the same terms: we can accept them only by letting Him do it all [without quoting scriptural support]. ... Many Christians mistakenly think ... they must have some part in overcoming the power of their sin; that their efforts, their will, their determination, strengthened and helped by the power of Christ, is the way to victory. (Kindle 31-35) ... The secret of victory is not praying, but praising; not asking, but thanking. (Kindle 664). A life that wins; ... the life of Jesus Christ; ... may be our life for the asking [isn't this a prayer?]. (Kindle 195)

Like the others, Trumbull limits what the Bible says about all who have been justified, to the select group that believe their way into the state of victorious life.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. It was Christ's wish and purpose that every follower of His should be a wellspring of living, gushing water of life all the time to others. ... “He that believeth on me... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water [this verse actually says it's true of all who are justified by faith, not just that Jesus wishes it were so, also Jn. 4:14].” ... Some have a little of the water of life, bringing it up in small bucketfuls and at intervals, like the irrigating water wheel of India, with a good deal of creaking and grinding; while from the lives of others it flows all the time in a life-bringing, abundant stream. ... The blessings that Christ gives us in the Victorious Life - in the ninefold “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22, 23), for example - are so wonderful. [Other justified Christians don't have the fruit of the Spirit or don't have ‘wonderful’ fruit of the Spirit?} (Kindle 792-4). ... [Life-that-wins means] a revolutionized, fundamentally changed life, within and without. If any

man be in Christ, you know, there is a new creation [he rebuts his own teaching by quoting this verse]. (Kindle 200-1)

Like the others, Trumbull taught that God needs our permission to be able to accomplish his purposes for those who have been justified. Actually, God will accomplish his goal of a holy walk in every brother. We can only affect the degree of practical holiness. “The testing of your faith [without fail] produces endurance; but let endurance have her complete work, that you may be complete and entire, lacking nothing,” Jas. 1:3-4.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. A life that wins; ... the life of Jesus Christ; ... may be our life for the asking, if we let Him - in absolute, unconditional surrender of ourselves to Him. ... Jesus Christ ... does not want us to work for Him [unlike Paul, ‘a servant of Jesus Messiah,’ Rom. 1:1]. He wants us to let Him do His work through us [he wants to serve himself?]. ... An utterly new kind of service will be ours now, as we let Christ serve others through us, using us.

Like the others, Trumbull says we must not do anything.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. If you have to work for your victory, it is not the real thing. (Kindle Locations 255-256). Have you rest in all your work as a clergyman, and in your parish troubles?” (Kindle 645-646)

Unlike Paul ...

2 Cor. 11:28. NIV: Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. ASV: Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. CEV: Besides everything else, each day I am burdened down, worrying about all the churches. VOICE: As if these external trials weren’t enough, there is the daily stress I feel and anxiety I carry for all the churches under my care.

Besides, it doesn’t really sound like Trumbull’s

‘victorious life’ is experientially any better than every believer’s life.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. Victory is entered upon by a single act of faith, as is salvation. But suppose the believer, having experienced the miracle of victory over sin through trusting his Lord’s sufficiency, comes, somehow, to doubt that sufficiency? At once his victory is broken; and he fails. ... The peril just here is, ... that we shall think we never had the blessing we thought we had. (Kindle 690-8). ... We always have our sinful nature, which can sin and will sin any moment that we fail to trust Christ for His victory in us. (Kindle 720-2). ... The Victorious Victorious Life is not the untempted life, but it is the most tempted life that anyone can live. ... One never knows the full meaning of temptation until he has dared to trust Christ for full victory. Then come the temptations as never before: desperate, diabolical, hellish, subtle, refined, gross, spiritual, fleshly - the whole gamut of all the deception and the down pull that the world, the flesh, and the Devil can bring to the soul of a child of God. (Kindle 683-7). The Christian who knows Christ as victory can let slip some word criticizing a fellow Christian who is not in the secret [lol]. ... The instant one speaks ... or thinks in his inmost heart thus of another, his victory is gone; he has sinned. (Kindle 801-4). There is something about the life of spiritual power and victory that, when broken into in the slightest way by unbelief, seems to expose one most terribly to sins of gross immorality and degradation. (Kindle 873-4). May God keep us from ever daring to go to sleep with unconfessed sin ... and in conscious loss of the victory. (Kindle 884-885).

Like the others, Trumbull requires victorious life people to spend their lives trying to hear and follow direct revelation from God.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. The believer has found great blessing in listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, and in instant obedience to His leadings; and when Satan speaks, giving leadings in direction that of themselves



are entirely right [but not for this person at this time], the unsuspecting believer follows those leadings, no blessing results, and then follow anxiety, confusion, perhaps doubt and fog. God prompts us, for example, to speak to this or that one about Jesus as Saviour. ... God's leadings may be so blessed and so unmistakable that, as we testify to others about them, we speak of how "God said this to me," or "God led me to do that." ... Is it not better ... to say, "I believe God would have me do this"? Let us recognize that we may be mistaken. (Kindle 726-792). ... All this is not imaginary [are you sure?]. (Kindle 815-8). ... The history of the so-called "higher life" experience among Christians through the ... centuries, ... had gone onto the rocks [he got that right] ... supposing that they had, by Christ and the Holy Spirit within them, all that they needed, and could therefore safely pay little attention to the Bible. (Kindle 845-8).

What his victorious life people are actually after, like higher life people, is their own greatness and spiritual pleasure, because of their own pride, self-centeredness, and spiritual immaturity.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. We used to think that the more we studied the Bible, the more victorious we should be. We used to think that the more time we spent in prayer, the more victory we could have. (Kindle 834-6). Our early experiences in the life of victory are likely to be so different from anything we have known before, so out of the ordinary in supernatural demonstration of God's grace and power, that ... we mistakenly suppose we must continually be having thrilling, unexpected, supernatural evidences of God's power. (Kindle 769-72). The new blessings of victory when one first trusts Christ for it are so new, so unexpected, so overwhelming and more than satisfying. (Kindle 891-2).

Like the other Let-Goers, much of Trumbull's wrong doctrine comes from a misinterpretation of Romans 5-8.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. In Romans 5:10 we read: "For if, when we were enemies



... we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more ... we shall be saved by his life.” ... We were saved by His death. Now ... if we but believe [the Bible doesn’t add this condition for Rom. 5:10], we shall be kept safe (from the power of sin) in His life. ... That is the whole message of Romans 6. (Kindle 501-5).

Like the others, Trumbull thinks it’s an astonishing tragedy that brethren can understand justification by an act of faith, but not sanctification by an act of faith. It really shouldn’t seem so astonishing, since the Bible teaches one, but not the other.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. A young woman student [at Moody Bible Institute] came to me [and said,] “I can’t seem to get the faith for victory.” “Are you saved?” I asked her. “Oh, yes,” she said. “What makes you think you are saved?” “Why,” she said, “I know I am; John 3:16 settles that.” ... “Well, then,” I answered, “you have all the faith you need, and you are using it. For it’s the faith that you are already using ... for your salvation that is the only faith you need for victory.” (Kindle 547-576). ... The tragedy of it, is that the Christian people of our land have not been taught the truth in this matter. (Kindle 263). ... The Christian who is wholly trusting the Lord for victory .... may be in close contact with Christians who are older, much farther along in many ways, yet not living in the victory-secret [if it’s a secret, why is he surprised most Christians don’t know it?]. (Kindle 798-800)

But like the others, Trumbull doesn’t really mean we are to do nothing except trust. He, like the rest, means something else, though they don’t clarify exactly what they do mean.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. Those who have found the joy and blessing of the deep things of God are often careless in keeping appointments with their fellow men, careless about answering letters, careless about money matters. ... The Christian who is trusting Christ for full victory dishonors Christ if he does not establish, and maintain a reputation for being utterly dependable. (Kindle 849-52). ... Let us be very

careful, too, about social courtesies. ... Christians rejoicing in Christ as Victory sometimes need to “learn first to shew piety at home. (Kindle 912-35). There is no such thing as a gradual gift. And victory is a gift. ... God wants us to grow after we have entered into victory [So why not grow before and instead?]. (Kindle 292)

What Trumbull really means by do nothing, is do nothing unpleasant; only do it if it feels good. God does make every brother a new creature and changes his desires through the indwelling Holy Spirit the moment he becomes a brother by becoming justified, not as the result of entering a higher state of victorious life.

1923. Charles Trumbull, *The Victorious Life*. Victory is not ... concealing your wrong feelings. ... For purely selfish reasons [a businessman sometimes] does not let the other know how he feels. But there is no grace, no miracle, no victory in that. ... Anybody can keep from boiling over. ... The counterfeit victory means a struggle [Paul said, “strive together with me,” Rom. 15:30]. ... In real victory, He does it all. We do not dare to help [Paul says, “work, ... for ... God ... works,” Phil. 2:12]. ... We are to use our will to accept the gift of victory: we are not to make an effort to win the victory [Paul said, “I run, ... [I] fight, I keep my body under,” 1 Cor. 9:26-27. “I have fought a good fight,” 2 Tim. 4:7]. ... [In] the effortless life ... we use our will to believe, to receive, but not to exert effort. (Kindle 296-402).

### **1907-2019. Keswick and America’s Keswick**

A Keswick-authorized publication from 1907 ties this end of the chain back to its anchor in the unsaved Catholic mystics. The chapter on “The Founders and Some of the Leaders” begins with a poem of Guyon; and the chapter about Keswick writings says:

1907. Harford/Griffith Thomas. *On Keswick*. The initial impulse of the [Keswick] Movement came directly and immediately from America, though the roots of the distinctive teaching can easily be traced in the writings of Walter Marshall, William Law, John

Wesley, Fletcher of Madeley, Thomas a Kempis, Brother Lawrence, Madame Guyon, the letters of Samuel Rutherford, and the Memoir of McCheyne. It is hardly too much to say that in Marshall's [Puritan, 1628-1680] great work, "The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification," ... the essential theology of the Keswick Movement is clearly seen.

1913. Alexander. The first of the Victorious Life Conferences was held in 1913.<sup>202</sup>

1924. Polluck. The Victorious Life Testimony, ... ultimately became America's Keswick. ... Not until 1924 did it find a permanent home ... in the "pine-barrens" of central New Jersey.<sup>203</sup>

1962. Pollock. On John Stott at Keswick. John Stott ... spoke at Keswick for the first time in 1962 ... [with] exposition[s] of Scripture, directed more to the mind and will than to the emotions. ... Stott provoked considerable controversy when he returned to the Convention in 1965 and expounded Romans chapters 5-8. ... The Keswick teaching of the past had given great prominence to the call to believers to come to a point of surrender in their Christian lives in which through the Holy Spirit they knew victory over sin. ... Debates took place not so much about victory (this was already less prominent as a theme at Keswick), but about what it meant to die to sin. ... Stott challenged the view that the Christian was being told in that chapter to reckon the old sinful nature as dead through a conscious act. ... For Stott, death to sin took place in Christ's taking the penalty of sin on the Cross. ... As a result the old life, for the believer, was finished ... at conversion. ... The secret of holy living, for Stott, was in the Christian's renewed mind. ... At the 1967 Convention, however, Alan Redpath, the founder of the Mid-America Keswick, gave an evening message on Romans 6:6 which struck a traditional Keswick note. Redpath had been present at John Stott's studies in 1965 and had been deeply unhappy. ... The views of Stott and Redpath were discussed and it was generally

<sup>202</sup> Alexander, *Victorious Life Hymns*, iii.

<sup>203</sup> Pollock, *Keswick Story*, Kindle 3424-3428.

agreed there was a legitimate place on the Keswick platform for both points of view. But a statement by the Convention's Council (produced in 2000 for the new millennium) ... reaffirmed that the Convention was intended to encourage ... "a dependency upon the indwelling and fullness of the Holy Spirit for life transformation and effective living."<sup>204</sup>

1979. Pollock. Spring Harvest. A stress on ... the filling of the Spirit was characteristic of Keswick from its beginnings, but in the 1960s the Convention had to respond to the emerging charismatic movement, with its introduction of an expectation of a baptism of the Holy Spirit as an experience subsequent to conversion and associated with gifts of the Spirit such as speaking in tongues. ... In 1979, Spring Harvest was initiated, ... a young people's alternative to Keswick, sponsored by British Youth For Christ. ... Spring Harvest did not start off as a charismatic event. ... Younger people began to attend Spring Harvest in large numbers, with total attendance rising to 80,000 as it spread to other venues and other weeks. ... Numbers attending student and youth meetings at Keswick began to dip, and grey hair among those in the main tent became increasingly in evidence. ... The youth program at Keswick had diminished to a small group when Philip Hacking brought in Dave Fenton, ... who began to revitalize the youth work and, ... it became one of the exciting and growing dimensions of the Convention.<sup>205</sup>

### 2019. Current Keswick/America's Keswick Websites.

The current Keswick website merely says, "From its earliest days the Keswick movement has encouraged Christians to live godly lives in the power of the Spirit." But the America's Keswick website still uses stronger language. "The core message of America's Keswick (Victorious Life) is for an individual to ... live a life of sustained fellowship with God [how could a person in Messiah not have union with God?] ... and holiness, experience victory over sin, and use their gifts for His

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<sup>204</sup> Pollock, Keswick Story, Kindle 2821-2970.

<sup>205</sup> Pollock, Keswick Story, Kindle 2821-2970.

glory. ... It is the duty of each believer to live a holy life ... by his constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit's enablement ... for victory over sin and power for service ... designated in the Scripture as the filling of the Spirit (not His baptism)."

## ***1867-1906. The Holiness Movement***

### **1867. The National Holiness Association**

The Civil War caused many changes in the Methodist Church. The mourners' bench, holiness classes, and camp meetings fell into disuse. In 1867, several Methodist ministers called for "holding a camp meeting, the special object of which should be the promotion of the work of entire sanctification." "Irrespective of denominational ties" ... it was hoped all would "realize together a Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost." ... "Come, brothers and sisters of the various denominations, and let us in this forest-meeting, ... make common supplication for the descent of the Spirit upon ourselves, the church, the nation, and the world." ... The camp meeting was held in Vineland, New Jersey, on July 17, 1867; and the organization that set it up eventually became the National Holiness Association.<sup>206</sup>

### **1871. Charles Finney**

Charles Finney pushed the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit for sinless perfection and empowering more strongly than Fletcher (see the subsection, "1771. Fletcher. Last Check to Antinomianism.") "Gresham goes so far as to dub Finney 'the grandfather of Pentecostalism.'"<sup>207</sup>

1871. Charles Finney. Works. When [Christ] gave [the apostles] the commission to convert the world, He

<sup>206</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 265-296.

<sup>207</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 3649-3650.

added, “But tarry ye in Jerusalem till ye be endued with power from on high. Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” ... This baptism of the Holy Ghost, ... this enduement of power from on high, ... is the indispensable condition of performing the work which he has set before us. ... No one has ... any right to expect success, unless he first secures this enduement of power from on high. The example of the first disciples teaches us how to secure this enduement. They ... continued in prayer and supplication until the Holy Ghost fell upon them on the Day of Pentecost. ... This, then, is the way to get it. ... Everybody prays for this, at all times, and yet, ... few, comparatively, are really endued with this spirit of power from on high! ... How, then, is this discrepancy to be explained? ... 1st. We are not willing. ... 2d. ... The petitioner is often self-indulgent. 3d. He is uncharitable. 4th. Censorious. 5th. Self-dependent. 6th. Resists conviction of sin. ... 24th. By negligence in business, in study, in prayer. 25th. By undertaking too much business, too much study, and too little prayer. 26th. By a want of entire consecration. 27th. ... By unbelief. ... What an insult, what a blasphemy, to accuse God of lying! ... The misapprehension [is]: If we first get rid of all these [28] forms of sin ... have we not already obtained the blessing [of spiritual perfection]? ... There is a great difference between the peace and the power of the Holy Spirit in the soul. The disciples were Christians before the Day of Pentecost, and, as such, had a measure of the Holy Spirit [not so, not the indwelling Spirit which every Christian now has], ... but not the power which He had promised. ... Here is, I think, the great mistake of the Church. ... They rest in conversion, and do not seek until they obtain this enduement of power from on high.<sup>208</sup>

The previous quotation reveals several important mistakes in Finney’s doctrine. First, the disciples weren’t indwelt by the Holy Spirit because they prayed, or people would have prayed down Pentecost long before Pentecost. Pentecost had to come fifty days after the first Sabbath

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<sup>208</sup> Finney, Works Vol 1, Kindle 2754-2800.

after Passover (Lev. 23), which is also seven sevens, forty-nine days after Firstfruits. Firstfruits was fulfilled by Yeshua's resurrection, and Pentecost was fulfilled when Jews and Gentiles become his one body the Congregation when they were joined together by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Leaven, which signifies sin, was never used in Jewish temple sacrifices, except for the two leavened loaves of bread that had to be offered every year at Pentecost (Lev. 23), representing the future Congregation comprised of sinful men, both Jews and Gentiles.

Second, Finney accused people of calling God a liar for having doubts, when actually God never promised what Finney claims he promised. And third, Finney's twenty-eight reasons why a person might not receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit after praying for it, makes it impossible for anyone to know if they're asking aright anyway.

### **1891. R. C. Horner. Pentecost**

John Wesley had taught that sinless perfection was a second blessing after justification. The Methodist-Holiness movement had focused on these two steps, 1) justification, and 2) perfect sanctification. In 1891, R. C. Horner wrote an influential book, *Pentecost*, in which he said the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a third work empowering for service after justification and sinless perfection. "Also prominent in Horner's meetings were such 'physical manifestations' as 'prostration,' 'ecstasy,' and 'immediate laughter.'"<sup>209</sup>

The interdenominational, but mostly Methodist membership, of the National Holiness Association provided a way for the more extreme perfectionist proponents to further their agendas without the constraints of working through their denomination, which made them more dissatisfied with their denomination, and also made their denomination more dissatisfied with them.

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<sup>209</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 545-53.



## **1894. The Southern Methodist Church Statement**

The Methodist denomination began to resent the lack of denominational control over all the independent holiness activity in the Association. Methodist theologians and seminaries began to question whether sinless perfection was important, and whether it had really been important to Wesley. In 1894, the Southern Methodist Church issued a statement that made holiness promoters feel there was no longer any hope in redeeming the Methodist denomination, and many new holiness denominations were created.

Synan. In 1894 ... the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South [issued a statement,] “There has sprung up among us a party with holiness as a watchword; they have holiness associations, holiness meetings, holiness preachers, holiness evangelists, and holiness property. Religious experience is represented as if it consists of only two steps, the first step out of condemnation into peace and the next step into Christian perfection. The effect is to disparage the new birth, and all stages of spiritual growth from the blade to the full corn in the ear.”<sup>210</sup>

## **1895. Irwin’s Fire-Baptized Holiness Church**

Around 1895, Benjamin Irwin, interpreted John Fletcher’s writings, to teach, like Horner, that the baptism “with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Mt. 3:11), was a third work of grace after sinless perfection, rather than part of the second step. Several Wesleyan Methodist Churches left their denomination and became Fire-Baptized Holiness Churches. Fire baptisms included speaking in tongues.

Synan. Irwin [taught] additional “baptisms of fire” ... he named the baptisms of “dynamite,” “lyddite,” and “oxidite.” ... [One woman testified,] “August 1st, 1898, I was pardoned of my sins. On the following Sunday at eleven o’clock, God sanctified me wholly. A few days later I received the Comforter. Later in October, God

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<sup>210</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 386-454.



gave me the Baptism of fire. The devil and all the hosts of hell cannot make me doubt this. ... During services a night or so afterwards, ... I received the Dynamite. A few nights after this I received the definite experience of lyddite.” ... In 1904, William Fuller, who led the black churches in the denomination, wrote ... he [still] praised God for “the blood that cleans up, the Holy Ghost that fills up, the fire that burns up, and the dynamite that blows up.”<sup>211</sup>

### **1897. Mason’s Church of God in Christ**

In 1897, two Missionary Baptist pastors in Mississippi that had been expelled from their denomination for claiming to have received sinless perfection, C. H. Mason and C. P. Jones, held a holiness revival that eventually became the largest black Pentecostal denomination in world, the Church of God in Christ.

Synan. Like many of the holiness and Pentecostal bodies, the Church of God in Christ owed its existence to a strong and dominating founder. Mason stamped his personality on his church far more emphatically than any other holiness leader. Called by his followers a “Greater than the Apostle Paul.”<sup>212</sup>

### **1896. Tomlinson’s Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee)**

In 1896, three Irwin fire-baptized preachers from Tennessee held a revival in the Camp Creek hills of North Carolina. Several who received sinless perfection spoke in tongues, including children. Divine healing was also taught. In 1903, A. J. Tomlinson was invited to lead the group, and accepted after he saw a vision there. In 1907 the new denomination took the name Church of God, and eventually became one of the largest Pentecostal organizations in the U. S.

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<sup>211</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 575-639.

<sup>212</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 756-768.

Synan. The typical fire-baptized prohibitions were imposed, against medicines, meats, candies, and neckties. ... A. J. Tomlinson, ... [was] a mystical Quaker [from a church in Maine] called “The Church of the Living God for the Evangelization of the World, Gathering of Israel, New Order of Things at the Close of the Gentile Age.” ... In the early church “the ... light beamed forth from the Pentecostal chamber.” ... Then intervened the long period of apostasy known as the “dark ages.” ... Now that the true church had been rediscovered in the mountains of North Carolina; “the evening light ... is now shining.” ... Eventually the faithful of all denominations in every nation of the world would return to the true church and the Lord would set up his kingdom, beginning at Burger Mountain and ending in Jerusalem, ... all others being part of the “dark ages” of apostasy. ... [Tomlinson] reported that once, at the Union Grove church, people “fell on the floor, and some writhed like serpents,” while others “seemed to be off in a trance for four or five hours.” In all of this the preacher felt that the “church seemed to be greatly edified.” ... These demonstrations attracted large crowds. ... [In 1966 in Jerusalem,] Tomlinson[’s] ... eldest son Homer, ... [crowned himself] “King of the World.”<sup>213</sup>

### **1898. Holmes Theological Seminary**

N. J. Holmes was a Presbyterian preacher who experienced sinless perfection and started the The Holmes Theological Seminary in Greenville, SC. in 1898. The seminary is associated with the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, and is the oldest Pentecostal school in the world.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 771-860, 3804-3805.

<sup>214</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 661-70.

## **1900. Crumpler's Pentecostal Holiness Church**

A. B. Crumpler was disciplined in the Methodist church for preaching the doctrine of sinless perfection. So he started the Pentecostal Holiness Church in 1900.<sup>215</sup>

Synan. Most of the Southern holiness churches ... belonged to the more “radical” wing of the holiness movement emphasizing such new doctrines, as divine healing ... [and] a “third blessing” of “the fire,” ... [and were thus] predisposed to accept the even more radical doctrines of the Pentecostal movement when it began in 1906. ... The “third blessing heresy” of Irwin’s church was destined to become the orthodox position of the southern holiness/Pentecostal groups, with the single addition of speaking in tongues as the evidence of baptism by the Holy Ghost.<sup>216</sup>

Synan. Many of [the new] groups used the term “holiness” in their names, while others preferred the word “Pentecostal.” No other name, however, became as popular as “the Church of God.” Between 1880 and 1923 no less than two hundred groups adopted some version of this name. ... [including] D. S. Warner’s church, which began in 1880 in Anderson, Indiana. ... In general, groups that formed before 1894 belonged to the holiness persuasion and would not identify with the Pentecostal movement after 1906; those beginning after 1894 became Pentecostal later. The greatest sect-forming period in the South was 1894-98, following the anti-holiness policy statement of the General Conference of the Southern Methodist Church.<sup>217</sup>

Synan. The groups were basically Arminian in their theology and Wesleyan in their view of sanctification. ... Coca Cola, chewing gum, rings, bracelets, and earbobs were sinful ... [or] to wear a necktie or attend a county fair. ... Buying life insurance was frowned upon as an indication of lack of faith in God. Divine healing was taught in such a way that it was almost placed on a level with the new birth ... [because]

<sup>215</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 682-701.

<sup>216</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 725-736.

<sup>217</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 737-746.

physical healing for the body was provided “in the atonement.”<sup>218</sup>

## **1900. Alexander Dowie**

Synan. Alexander Dowie ... gained his greatest fame at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, where his healing services vied with Buffalo Bill’s show. ... In 1900, north of Chicago, Dowie founded a community he named Zion City, a place where “doctors, drugs, and devils were not allowed,” ... [having] a wooden tabernacle with seating for 8,000. ... Dowie sent missionaries around the globe ... [and] filled the largest auditoriums in the nation including Madison Square Garden. ... In 1901, Dowie proclaimed himself to be “Elijah the Restorer.” Then, in 1904, he announced that he would “restore apostolic Christianity” now that he was “the first apostle of a renewed end times church.” The next year, after suffering a stroke, he began to lose control of the church he had founded.<sup>219</sup>

Synan. The Church of God ... in Cleveland, Tennessee, [was] under ... Tomlinson, ... the Church of God in Christ, ... in Memphis, ... [was under] ... Mason. The Fire-Baptized Holiness Church ... [was] under ... J. H. King, ... [and] the Pentecostal Holiness Church ... [was under] Crumpler in ... North Carolina. All of these men led small holiness denominations that were practically identical in doctrine and operated in the same general territory. In the spring of 1906 the news reached all of these leaders about ... the Azusa Street Mission. ... The southern holiness churches, [were] the only major holiness groups to join the fledgling Pentecostal movement.<sup>220</sup>

## **1900. The Church of the Nazarene**

Synan. The largest holiness denomination in America began its history in [Los Angeles] when Phineas Bresee founded the “Church of the Nazarene” there in 1895 ...

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<sup>218</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 871-877.

<sup>219</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 884-887.

<sup>220</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 892-901.

in his “Peniel Tabernacle.” ... Joseph Smale, ... opened a mission called the “First New Testament Church” at Burbank Hall ... as “a fellowship for evangelical preaching and teaching and Pentecostal life and service.” ... By 1906 each of them preached to more than a thousand people at their Sunday services.<sup>221</sup>

### **1904. The Welsh Revival**

Synan. Smale, .... in 1904, ... participated in the famous Welsh revival under Evan Roberts ... which had seen over 30,000 conversions and 20,000 new church members. ... A young man attending Pastor Smale’s services was Frank Bartleman ... [who was impressed by] the appearance of “glossolalia,” or speaking with other tongues. ... Young men and women who knew nothing of Old Welsh would in their ecstasy speak in that tongue.”<sup>222</sup>

### **1912. H. A. Ironside Criticism**

Synan. Perhaps the most damaging broadside was the ... H. A. Ironside[‘s] ... *Holiness, The False and the True*, ... in 1912. The holiness churches were described ... as hotbeds of “pharisaism,” “tattling,” “selfishness,” and even frequent immorality. Speaking as a former member of the Salvation Army, Ironside’s book was taken by many critics to discredit the entire movement, becoming a veritable textbook of anti-holiness theology.<sup>223</sup>

## ***1906-1959. The Pentecostal Movement***

Why did the Pentecostal movement require a Sinless Perfection movement to precede it? Because it takes a lower level of gullibility to believe oneself and others to be sinlessly perfect, than it does to believe one’s own and others’ babblings to be supernatural. It’s easier to say

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<sup>221</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 917-923.

<sup>222</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 923-946.

<sup>223</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 879-882.

“your sins are forgiven” or “I’m sinlessly perfect,” which requires no visible change, than to try to imitate audible tongues or visible healings.

Mt. 9:5. Which is easier, to say, “Your sins are forgiven you;” or to say, “Arise, and walk?”

This is why the Pentecostal movement started in the Holiness churches. But why did it spread? Because society in 1900 was far more experiential and less conservative than society in 1800.

### **1900. Charles Fox Parham**

Synan. Parham ... first singled out “glossolalia” ... as the only evidence of having received the baptism of the Holy Ghost ... [and thus] laid the ... foundations of the modern Pentecostal movement. ... [He] had also been in services with Irwin’s Fire-Baptized people and [accepted] the idea of a “third experience” of a “baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire.” ... He had traveled to Chicago to hear Alexander Dowie, ... and to Shiloh, Maine, to investigate Frank Sandford’s “Holy Ghost and Us” church, ... [and] heard ... several students came down out of a “prayer tower” speaking in tongues. ... His students conducted a watch night service on December 31, 1900. ... After midnight and the first day of the twentieth century ... Miss Ozman reportedly began “speaking in the Chinese language.” ... When Parham[s] ... students visited Galena, Kansas, late January, ... [they] spoke in twenty-one known languages, including French, German, Swedish, Bohemian, Chinese, Japanese, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Russian, Italian, Spanish, and Norwegian. ... Parham immediately began to teach that missionaries would no longer be compelled to study foreign languages to preach in the mission fields. ... [In] 1905, he moved his headquarters to Houston, Texas.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 948-987.

## **1905. William Joseph Seymour**

Synan. From 1900 to 1902 Seymour [an African-American] attended classes in Martin Wells Knapp's "God's Bible School" in Cincinnati [where] he joined the "reformation" Church of God, also known as "the Evening Light Saints." ... In 1905 ... [he attended Parham's school in Houston where he] heard the new Pentecostal theology, ... that the holiness movement had been wrong in asserting that sanctification was also the baptism with the Holy Spirit; the latter was a "third experience." ... Sanctification cleansed ... while the baptism ... brought great power for service. ... No one should be satisfied ... until having spoken with tongues as "proof" that one had received the Holy Ghost. ... While studying under Parham, ... some claimed ... [they] were able to "command the classics of a Homer or talk the jargon of the lowest savage of the African jungle."<sup>225</sup>

## **1906. Azusa Street**

Synan. Neely Terry, ... a friend of William Seymour [at the school in Houston] later returned to her home in Los Angeles, where she found that her family and some close friends had been excommunicated from the black Second Baptist Church for professing the holiness sanctification experience. Subsequently they organized a small black holiness mission, [and] invite[d] Seymour to come [as an additional] pastor. ... When Seymour preached his first sermon [there] he took as his text Acts 2:4 and declared that speaking in tongues was the "Bible" evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit. ... The Pastor, Mrs. Julia Hutchins, ... of the Southern California Holiness Association, felt that this teaching was contrary to accepted holiness views, and the following night she padlocked the church door to keep Seymour out, ... [who] stay[ed] at the home of one Richard Asbery, ... [and] began to preach in the living room ... located at 214 Bonnie Brae Street, ... until the night of April 9, 1906, when Seymour and seven others

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<sup>225</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 989-1005.

fell to the floor ... speaking in tongues. ... News ... spread quickly through the neighborhood as the newly baptized enthusiasts went to the front porch to conduct their strange services. ... [They moved to] an old abandoned African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) building at 312 Azusa Street. ... Hundreds and later thousands of people began to flock to the mission ... from ... holiness movements around the country. ... “Elder” Seymour, ... rarely preached and much of the time kept his head covered in an empty packing crate behind the pulpit. At times he would be seen walking through the crowds, ... hurling challenges ... or ... encouraging seekers at the wood plank altars to “let the tongues come forth.” ... By December 1906, ... many other missions ... were beginning to operate in cities all over the United States, as visitors to Azusa Street carried the “fire” to their own homes. ... Spiritualists and mediums from the numerous occult societies of Los Angeles began to attend and to contribute their seances and trances to the services.<sup>226</sup>

### **1906. Garr and Barratt**

Synan. The first white man to receive the experience at Azusa was one A. G. Garr, pastor of a holiness mission in Los Angeles. After his “baptism,” Garr and his wife went to India where they expected to preach to the natives in their own languages. However, when this was attempted, it ended in failure. After their fiasco in India the Garrs traveled to Hong Kong where they set up a mission and learned Chinese in the more conventional manner. ... The Norwegian Methodist pastor T. B. Barratt, ... in November 1906, ... received the Pentecostal experience in New York and soon afterwards returned to Oslo. ... Barratt soon had Norwegian Methodists and Baptists speaking in other tongues. ... Spectacular news coverage ... created great crowds. ... He is credited with beginning the Pentecostal movements in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, France, and England.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 1009-1076.

<sup>227</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 1091-1124.



Synan. The Pentecostal movement was the child of the holiness movement, which in turn was a child of Methodism. Practically all the early Pentecostal leaders were firm advocates of sanctification as a “second work of grace” and simply added the “Pentecostal baptism” with the evidence of speaking in tongues as a “third blessing.” ... The probability is that thousands more had done the same in the many camp meetings and revivals ... after the Civil War. The ... Azusa Street revival ... acted as the catalyst that congealed tongue-speaking into a fully defined doctrine. ... Parham [preached]: “Now all Christians credit the fact that we are to be recipients of the Holy Spirit, but each have their own private interpretations as to his visible manifestations; some claim shouting, leaping, jumping, and falling in trances, while others put stress upon inspiration, unction and divine revelation.” ... It was precisely this settlement, that tongues were “the” evidence of the reception of the Holy Spirit, that gave Pentecostalism its greatest impetus. It at once solved the problem of proving to one’s self and the world that one had received the experience. Pentecostalism thus succeeded in “doing what the Holiness Movement could not do” in that it offered the believer a “repeatable and unmistakable motor expression which, in effect, guaranteed one’s possession of the Spirit.”<sup>228</sup>

### **1906. Cashwell**

Synan. [One] of Crumpler’s [Pentecostal Holiness Church] preachers, Gaston Barnabas Cashwell, of Dunn, North Carolina, ... [travelled to Azusa and] received the Pentecostal experience. ... Returning to his home in Dunn, North Carolina, he rented an old three-story building. ... The Pentecostal meeting he planned would be for the Southeast what Azusa Street had been to the West. Beginning on December 31, 1906, the meeting would result in the conversion of most of the southeastern holiness movement to the Pentecostal view. ... Cashwell had invited all the ministers of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church, the Pentecostal

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<sup>228</sup> Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition*, Kindle 1128-1198.

Holiness Church, and the Free-Will Baptist Church to attend. ... As he traveled through the South from 1906 to 1909, Cashwell established himself firmly as the “Pentecostal apostle to the South.” ... His opening volley in every meeting would be, “Come on, preachers, bring your Bibles out.” ... In 1909, he ... returned to the Methodist Church, as Crumpler had done before him. But try as he might, he could not undo [the results of] his own brief preaching tour of 1906 through 1908, ... the bringing of three holiness denominations into the Pentecostal movement, a seismic shift.<sup>229</sup>

### **1908. Absorption of Fire Baptized Holiness Church**

Synan. The Pentecostal Holiness Church [merged] with the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church in 1911 since the two denominations operated in practically the same territory and shared the same doctrines after 1906. ... These mergers, which produced the present Pentecostal Holiness Church, illustrated that both the Pentecostal and holiness movements contained strong ecumenical tendencies.<sup>230</sup>

Synan. The thousands of holiness devotees remaining in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, remained largely untouched by the movement. Other leaders, such as A. B. Simpson, head of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, rejected the Pentecostal view. ... In many areas the term “holiness church” would become synonymous in the public mind with Pentecostalism.<sup>231</sup>

The Church of the Nazarene, the Salvation Army, and the Free Methodists also rejected the Pentecostal view.

### **1910. Finished Work Controversy**

“By 1910, William Durham’s North Avenue Mission in

<sup>229</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 1202-1249, 1376-1378.

<sup>230</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle 1297-1312.

<sup>231</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle .

Chicago replaced Azusa Street as the center of the Pentecostal movement.”<sup>232</sup> Durham preached a “Finished Work” doctrine, that sanctification occurred at the time of justification, though it was experienced progressively, so brethren could skip right from justification to the baptism of the Spirit, without a sanctification experience to prepare the way. Now that Pentecostalism had arrived as the third blessing, the Congregations no longer needed the sanctification second blessing. The problem began as more men from non-Wesleyan backgrounds, like Baptist, converted to Pentecostalism. Most Pentecostal denominations formed after 1911 followed the “finished work” doctrine. About half of Pentecostals are in each camp today.<sup>233</sup>

### **1914. The Assemblies of God**

The Pentecostals that followed the Finished Work doctrine organized the Assemblies of God (AOG) denomination in 1914, led by E. N. Bell, and including H. G. Rodgers with 352 white ministers from the interracial Church of God in Christ, which ended its interracial character. The AOG eventually became the world’s largest Pentecostal denomination.<sup>234</sup>

### **1916. Jesus Name, Oneness, Pentecostal Unitarians**

At camp-meeting, baptismal service in 1913, R. E. McAlister mentioned that the apostles only baptized in Jesus’ name, never in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Hearing that, Frank Ewart, who had succeeded Durham in a Los Angeles ministry, began teaching there was only one personality in the trinity, Father and Holy Spirit describing different aspects of Jesus. Justification, sanctification, and the baptism of the Spirit with tongues all occurred at the same time, when,

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<sup>232</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle .

<sup>233</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle .

<sup>234</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle .

and only when, a person was baptized in Jesus' name, and those baptized any other way were unsaved and needed to be baptized. The Assembly of God general council in 1916 decided on the Trinitarian side, and 156 out of 585 preachers left the denomination, and formed what later became two "oneness" denominations, the mostly white United Pentecostal Church International, which currently has about 5 million people, and the mostly black Pentecostal Assemblies of the World which has about 2 million people. Some small oneness Pentecostal groups practice snake handling. About a fifth of U. S. Pentecostals are oneness Pentecostals.<sup>235</sup>

### **1946-1955. William Branham (1909-1965)**

At his birth in 1909, a "light come whirling through the window, about the size of a pillow, and circled around where I was, and went down on the bed." In 1946, an angel said he would be able to detect diseases by vibrations on his left hand. F. F. Bosworth wrote, "He does not begin to pray for ... the healing line each night, ... until he is conscious of the presence of the Angel with him on the platform. Without this consciousness, he seems to be perfectly helpless." "When the oppressing spirit is cast out in Jesus' Name, you can see Brother Branham's red and swollen hand return return to its normal condition." The Angel told him that the anointing would ... enable him to tell people many of the events of their lives from their childhood down to the present time. The audience hears all this over the public address system. When praying for the sick he would watch the Pillar of fire move around the building from one person to another, revealing the "thoughts and intents" of the heart, the past, the present and the future. His sermons were largely stories of his personal experiences. Many of his followers, however, accepted his sermons as oral scripture and referred to his teachings as "The Message." In 1963, Branham announced he was a prophet with the anointing of Elijah, who had

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<sup>235</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle

come to herald Christ's second coming. While his manager had paid personal income taxes on nearly \$80,000 in one year, Branham had claimed only about \$7,000 in that year. Around 1956, he agreed to pay the IRS a penalty of about \$40,000. He worked under the burden of that debt for the remainder of his life, and he left his family with the largest part still unpaid when he died.<sup>236</sup> A few quotes from Branham: "I was with Moses at the burning bush; I saw the Pillar of Fire; I saw His glory. ... I heard His voice. Don't try to explain it away from me now, 'cause I was there. I know what I'm talking about. I seen what happened. Yes, sir!" ... "So I repeat, I sincerely believe and maintain as a private student of the Word, along with divine inspiration that 1977 ought to terminate the World systems and usher in the millennium." "During that time I saw seven Angels in a form of a pyramid that swept down and picked me up. And I was brought east to open the Seven Seals for God."

### **1948. Latter Rain Movement**

1948 was an eventful year. Israel was re-established, Billy Graham and Oral Roberts became nationwide celebrities, and the New Order of the Latter Rain movement began after several leaders from the Sharon Orphanage in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, visited William Branham's meetings. They believed God would re-establish the offices of apostles and prophets, and some super apostle sons of God that can't die would become manifest, and bring judgment on the Congregation. Every pastor and government official will need to submit to them or be physically destroyed, and they will attain world dominion. They will control prophesy and doctrine, judge the Congregation, and destroy death, because they will actually become Christ incarnate collectively. "[Messiah] must reign, until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For [God] has put all things under his feet," 1 Cor. 15:25-27. The Pentecostal denominations

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<sup>236</sup> Harrell, All Things Possible, 37-40.

condemned their teaching, but many individuals still followed it, and it greatly influenced divine healing ministries, the third wave of independent charismatic Congregations, and the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), so named by Peter Wagner in 1996.<sup>237</sup>

Rev. 2:1-2. To the angel of the Congregation of Ephesus write, “I know ... how you can’t bear them which are evil, and you have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars.”

### **1952. Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship (FGBMF)**

This organization, started by a rich dairyman, Demos Shakarian, did much to bring the baptism of the Spirit experience and tongues to many who would never have gone to a Pentecostal Congregations.

## ***1959-1994. The Charismatic Movement***

### **1959. Dennis Bennett’s Episcopalian Charismatics**

In 1959, Dennis Bennett faced opposition after leading some of his Episcopalian Church members in St. Marks in Van Nuys, California, to speak in tongues; so he resigned and was given pastorship of St. Lukes in Seattle, which he turned into a large, tongues-speaking congregation with converts from many different denominations. Up until this time, there had been mostly closet tongues-speakers among traditional denominations. Tongues-speaking within non-Pentecostal denominations has been called the second wave of the Holy Spirit, and termed Charismatic rather than Pentecostal.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle

<sup>238</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle

### **1967. Duquesne, Pittsburgh Catholic Charismatics**

After 1960, the Catholic Church began declining in the US. in numbers of members, schools, and clergy. Pope John hosted a Vatican II council from 1962-1965 (Vatican I was in 1870), which promoted ecumenicism and which he called a “New Pentecost.” In 1967, two Duquesne University professors led a weekend retreat where David Wilkerson’s, *The Cross and the Switchblade* was required reading, and many were baptized with the Spirit and spoke in tongues. From that time to now, Catholic charismatics have become the largest denominational segment of charismatics worldwide. Charismatic Catholics and priests claim charismaticism deepens their devotion to the mass, confession, the rosary, and Mary. Charismatic theologians developed the “organic view” of baptism in the Spirit, in which a person could be baptized in the Spirit at the same time he was baptized by water as a baby, but the evidences, like speaking in tongues, could come later as an adult.<sup>239</sup>

### **1968. Jesus People**

David Wilkerson started Teen Challenge in 1960 and wrote *The Cross and the Switchblade* in 1963. Loren Cunningham also started Youth With a Mission (YWAM) in 1960. Many young people migrated to California under the hippie counter-culture movement, looking for peace and love in a world of nuclear threat and corporate domination. Chuck Smith, a Foursquare pastor in Costa Mesa, California, brought Lonnie Frisbie, a hippie evangelist, into his home in 1968. Thousands of hippies became Jesus People under their ministry. The Calvary Chapel denomination came out of this. Many of the new converts wrote Jesus folk music, and some, like the group “Love Song,” wrote early ‘Christian’ Rock, and released it under Calvary’s “Maranatha! Music” label. Kenn Gulliksen and John Wimber also became Calvary pastors. However, while Chuck Smith led the Calvary Chapel denomination

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<sup>239</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle

into expository Bible teaching to edify believers as their primary goal, and sought a middle path between fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, Gulliksen left in 1974 to emphasize charismaticism by founding the Vineyard Congregations, and Wimber joined him in 1982, and eventually led the Vineyard.

### **1970-1975. Shepherding Ministry**

The Fort Lauderdale Five, including Bob Mumford, shared a ministry beginning in 1970 where everyone would have a “covering” shepherd, that would transcend local Congregation and denominational divisions, with the Lauderdale Five at the top, like the Catholic tradition of “spiritual directors.” In 1975, the FGBM refused to allow any of the five to speak at their meetings, and Pat Robertson didn’t allow them to appear on the 700 Club. Such opposition brought and end to the Shepherding ministry by around 1986.

### **1974. Vineyard Churches**

In 1974, Kenn Gulliksen, started a Calvary Chapel Congregation that became the beginning of the Vineyard movement. He brought together Bible studies from the homes of musicians Larry Norman and Chuck Girard that Bob Dylan attended. John Wimber (1934-1997) came to faith in a Quaker church in 1963, and started a Calvary Chapel in 1977, but left in 1982, to join and eventually lead, the Vineyard movement. Wimber eventually wrote a book *Power Evangelism*, which term came from Lonnie Frisby’s ministry, with the idea that signs and wonders were necessary for Pentecost level evangelism and Congregation growth. In 1988, Wimber established relationships with the Mike Bickle and the Kansas City Prophets, Paul Cain and Bob Jones.

### **1977. Kansas City Conference**

In 1977 a conference for Pentecostals and charismatics



was attended by four million Pentecostals and five million charismatics, the majority of which were Catholics.<sup>240</sup> Speakers included Kevin Ranaghan, who led the Catholic Church's Charismatic Renewal Committee, and Catholic Cardinal Leo Suenens. The mixed group sang in tongues and danced before the Lord. Time Magazine reported, "a charismatic time was had by all."

## **1982. Kansas City Prophets**

1982. Mike Bickle, Kansas City Fellowship, IHOP International House of Prayer, Danielson. While visiting Cairo, Egypt [in 1982], Mike Bickle heard the audible voice of the Lord say, "I will change the understanding and expression of Christianity in one generation." God told Bickle to start ... the Kansas City Fellowship (KCF) Congregation. Bickle believed the KC movement had been established by the two resurrection angels which were at Jesus' tomb. He said, "We [KCF] have recognized a mandate from the Lord to make a special commitment to follow the leadership of John Wimber and Paul Cain." In 1990, Ernest Gruen wrote "Documentation of the Aberrant Practices and Teachings of Kansas City Fellowship (Grace Ministries)," exposing Paul Cain and Bob Jones. Wimber took KCF under Vineyard oversight, changing its name to Metro Vineyard Christian Fellowship, and Gruen stopped distributing his document, trusting Wimber to control KCF's abuses. Albert Dager also wrote articles and books to try to expose KCF's errors. Bickle's KCF ministry became the International House of Prayer (IHOP) in 1999.<sup>241</sup>

1975-1991. Bob Jones (1931-2014). Mike Bickle said of Bob Jones, "There is nobody in the natural that had a more integral role in establishing our foundations in that kind of prophetic way, than Bob." When Jones was 7 years old, and walking on a dirt road in Arkansas, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him on a white horse and blew a double silver trumpet in his face. Jones describes how he

<sup>240</sup> Synan, Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition, Kindle

<sup>241</sup> Danielson, Kansas City Prophets.

went from being a drunkard, fornicator, and bar room brawler, to eventually land in a mental institution, where he was regularly visited by demons who would hold conversations with him. Finally, Jesus Himself told Bob in order to get his mind back, to either kill or forgive twelve people he hated. He claimed he always had three to ten+ visions every night. His hands turned purple in the presence of sin. During one trip to heaven Jesus commissioned him to be one of God's new generals to lead his end time army. "They themselves will ... put death itself underneath their feet, ... a Church that has reached the full maturity of the god-man!" Wes Campbell told of Bob Jones' revelation of an upcoming "civil war" in the Congregation. In this war, the blue represents "revelation knowledge" people, fighting for freedom in the Spirit. "The gray" as in gray matter, those bound to their minds, you know, critical thinking. (I'm obviously on the gray side that Jones says is holding back the Congregation.) "There is a ministry after the fivefold called the ministry of PERFECTION, ... coming into the divine nature of Christ." Jones said the prophetic movement was started by an angel named Emma who is androgynous and appears as female. God told him the general level of prophetic revelation in the Congregation was about 65% accurate at this time. Some are only about 10% accurate, a very few of the most mature prophets are approaching 85% to 95% accuracy. God told him that prophets are like guns and prophecies are like bullets and inaccurate prophecies are like blanks. God said, "I'm loading the guns, I'm putting the blanks in!" God is responsible for inaccurate prophecies. In 1991, Jones was removed from ministering in a Vineyard Congregation after confessing to sexual misconduct with two women. Is. 9:15, "The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet that teaches lies, he is the tail."<sup>242</sup>

1996. Rick Joyner (1949-). Rick Joyner. Joyner is a Supreme Council member of "The Knights of Malta" blessed by the Vatican. In 1996 God told Rick Joyner "to

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<sup>242</sup> <http://letusreason.org/Latrain52.htm>.

begin preparing for ... war.” Wes Campbell says God gave Rick Joyner a vision. “Like the American Civil War, the coming spiritual civil war will also be between the Blue and the Gray. In dreams and visions blue often represents heavenly-mindedness - the sky is blue - and gray speaks of those who live by the power of their own minds - the brain is often called gray matter - This will be a conflict between those who may be genuine Christians, but who live mostly according to their natural minds and human wisdom, and those who follow the Holy Spirit.” He says the grays are “ruthless and cruel,” and must be “confronted and exposed and either converted or removed from their place of influence in the church.” After the grays, who he says constitute “nearly half of the believers in the world today,” are defeated, there will be “an entirely new definition of Christianity.”<sup>243</sup>

1987-2019. Paul Cain (1929-2019). Cain was born into a Pentecostal family. An angel told Paul’s mother to name her son Paul, because he would preach like Paul. At 19, Cain saw an angel with a bright shining sword pointed at a billboard that said Joel’s army was in training. In the 1950’s when Cain was engaged to be married, he was driving his Lincoln when Jesus materialized in the seat next to him and said he was jealous of his fiancé. The Lord said, ‘I walked alone.’ Paul said, ‘If you don’t want me to be married, ... you will have to do something about my feelings.’ The Lord placed his hand on him, and from that day on he never experienced any further sexual desire. John Wimber said Jesus, “physically touched [Cain] on the chest ... and took all sexual desire out of his body [and] for over 40 years he’s lived with no cognizant sense of sexuality.” Kansas City prophet Mike Bickle agreed that when Jesus appeared in the flesh and touched Cain on the chest, “the fire of God went through” him and his “chemistry was changed instantaneously.” From that hour on, Cain has not been aware of a single “romantic or sensual thought.” Wimber later acknowledged that Cain had become involved “with a woman I think in

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<sup>243</sup> Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, 169-171.

Scandinavia.”

Cain said William Branham was “the greatest prophet that ever lived in ... any of the generations of revival I’ve lived through.” Cain used to work with Branham, and the angel of the Lord instructed Branham to let Cain take over some of his largest crusades. Sexual impropriety caused Cain to go into seclusion for twenty-five years. During these silent years, the Lord promised him he would be “called to initiate the end time ministry.” In 1987, “The KCF eldership instantly felt the Lord prompting them to make a deep and permanent commitment to serve Paul Cain in any way possible for the rest of his days as the Lord permitted.” Bickle said Cain was a “Samuel looking for David.” Cain predicted a local earthquake would occur when he arrived at the Vineyard in December 1988, and supposedly one did. In February 1989, he stood in Wimber’s pulpit and announced, “I have found that leader [Wimber] that’s going ... to usher in a new move of God, a new wave.” According to Bickle, Jones was the prophet God used to confirm Cain’s selection of Wimber as the leader who would usher in the new wave and introduce to the body of Messiah the apostles that were yet to come in the nineties.<sup>244</sup>

Bob Jones said Cain is “the most anointed prophet that’s in the world today.” Wimber said, “he’s interacting in two dimensions continually. He’s not only seeing you and talking to you, but he’s hearing from God constantly. ... [He will] be in one room and be listening to the conversation of people in another place at the same time.” Cain used to call out the names, addresses, birthdays, and relatives names, of people in the audience with accuracy. In 1995, Cain said, “For quite a while I have been embarrassed to say anything about the latter rain. ... But I don’t care what they think any more... I believe we are going to have the latter rain and I am looking forward to it.” Cain said, “Joel’s army is also in the New Testament. It’s referred to as “the manchild,” Rev. 12:25. God is offering a “greater privilege than was ever offered to any

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<sup>244</sup> Hanegraaff, *Counterfeit Revival*, 163-7.

people of any generation at any time from Adam clear down through the end of the millennium. ... You're gonna ... become that glory." "God has invited us to have a role in establishing a new order of Christianity. ... Beware lest old order brethren rob you and steal this hope from you." "If you don't think I am anointed that just shows you how the devil has fooled you." In 2005, Cain had leave the ministry because of homosexuality and public drunkenness. He reentered the ministry in 2007, and died in 2019.

When did the apostles and prophets of the Bible do things like this? Did Peter or Paul's hands vibrate, swell, or turn colors? Did they follow a pillar of fire like Branham's move around the building from one person to another so they could shout out their names and addresses? You can read more about the latter rain, the Kansas City Prophets, the NAR, and later 'prophets,' like Todd Bentley and Benny Hinn, at <http://letusreason.org>.

### **1990. Promise Keepers**

Oppenheimer. James Ryle [board member co-founder] is PK Coach McCartneys [founder, 1990] pastor. So we can now see the Vineyard PK connection. ... Mike Timmis a Roman Catholic PK board member [prayed in] 1997 at a PK gathering in Washington, D.C., ... "We recognize that we do have doctrinal differences ... but, Father, we will not let these differences destroy our unity. ... Dave Hunt points out in his Berean newsletter, in Atlanta, Georgia, PK gathered 39,000 pastors. The conference brought together representatives of the apostate World Council of Churches and National Council of Churches, evangelicals, Mormons and Roman Catholics, including 600 priests. ... Speaking at a clergy conference in St. Petersburg, Florida, on February 19, attended by over than 3,000 pastors and church members, McCartney said that God told him to say that "every church that names the name of Jesus is supposed to give Promise Keepers \$1,000." (Steve Persall, "McCartney appeals for church donations." The Denver Post, Feb. 20. 1998). ... "I think we're going

to have another St. Valentine's Day massacre. I think Almighty God is going to rip open the hearts of our leaders. ... And I THINK HE'S GOING TO PUT THEM BACK TOGETHER AGAIN AS ONE. ONE LEADERSHIP. WE'VE GOT TO HAVE ONE LEADERSHIP, ONE LEADERSHIP ONLY" (Bill McCartney, Promise Keepers, Detroit Silver Dome, April 29, 1995). Who will run this one leadership pray, tell? ... The Church was never organized to have one leadership over the whole Church as in the Roman Catholic order, but a plurality of elders throughout local bodies.<sup>245</sup>

### **1992-1977. Lakeland, Toronto Blessing, Brownsville**

In 1992, Rodney Howard-Browne led meetings in Lakeland, Florida, characterized by outbreaks of 'holy laughter.' Holy laughter and animal sounds became even more famous at a 1993 revival at a Vineyard-associated Congregation at the Toronto airport that saw 600,000 new visitors from around the world by 1995. John Wimber expelled the Congregation from Vineyard association. It was followed in 1995 by a similar experience at Brownsville Assemblies of God in Pensacola, Florida which 1,600,000 persons had attended by 1977.

### ***1994-2020. The Apostles and Prophets Movement***

Also called the neo-charismatic movement, the river, post-denomination era, and other names. The focus has moved more to independent Congregations, and to mega-Congregations via the Church Growth Movement.

Here's a list of some large mega-churches and their membership count as of March 2019.

Seoul, South Korea: Yonggi Cho Yoido Full Gospel, 800,000.

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<sup>245</sup> <http://www.letusreason.org/Pent32.htm>

Hyderabad, India: Calvary Temple, 250,000.

Abidjan, Ivory Coast based: Works & Mission Baptist, 185,000.

Lagos, Nigeria: Deeper Christian Life, 180,000.

Kumuyi Lagos, Nigeria: Deeper Chr. Life Ministry, 120,000.

Houston, TX: Lakewood Church, 43,500.

Edmond, OK based: Life Church 41,000.

South Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Comm. Church, 25,700.

Houston, TX: Second Baptist Church, 23,700.

Lake Forest, CA: Saddleback Church, 22,000.<sup>246</sup>

### **1994. New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)**

In 1982, Peter Wagner (1930-2016) and John Wimber (1934-1997) taught a Signs and Wonders and Church Growth class together at Fuller Theological. Wagner continued to be Professor of Church Growth there until 2001. He taught “spiritual mapping,” which includes finding out the names of demons that rule certain areas and releasing angels against them. He also teaches seven-mountain dominionism.

He created the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) name in 1994, which is a hierarchical network like the Shepherding Movement, but which has escaped attack, unlike the Shepherding Movement, possibly because everyone who could attack is already in a good position near the top of the NAR.

Hanley. Peter Wagner insisted that the NAR is not an organization, has no top leader, no team and no annual meeting. However, this is completely misleading and factually incorrect. Yes, there is no organization called the NAR with a president, a board and an annual meeting. However, there is an elaborate structure, carefully engineered by Wagner and his colleagues which they call the “new wineskin.” This structure

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<sup>246</sup> <http://kirche-u30.de/en/10-largest-churches-worldwide>, 8/20/19.



looks organic and fluid, but is highly organized and sophisticated -- as though it were designed by someone with high-level marketing skills. The wording is carefully crafted to appear and sound non-controlling or threatening, and Wagner admitted this many times. There is an above ground structure with strict membership and dues, and there is an underground structure which operates under the radar and establishes teachings, goals and strategies. Instead of boards, they have “councils” and “roundtables” that meet frequently, and a secret, private “inner circle” of apostles and prophets that are “covenanted” together. Each apostle and network is submitted to and under the covering of an apostle in the inner circle who is submitted to the “presiding apostle.” However, they avoid the word “submission” and “covering” and instead speak of being “accountable” and “aligned.”<sup>247</sup>

The NAR focuses attention mostly on prophets, probably because a person can join up and become a prophet, but the office of apostle is reserved, and the identities of those who are apostles are kept secret for now, to avoid upsetting those who missed out. In a vision by Rick Joyner, who is an NAR prophet and probably also an apostle (who knows?), the eagles “are the hidden prophets who have been kept for this hour.”<sup>248</sup> Wagner was the top leader until 2010, when he resolved all future leadership transfer issues by putting a corporation, Global Spheres, Inc. (GSI) at the top, and then putting Chuck Pierce at the head of GSI.

GSI. All believers should be under the care of a ... pastor who has secured proper apostolic alignment. GSI is an apostolic network which provides proper alignment to leaders, [apparently to the highest echelon of new apostles who everyone else is aligned under].<sup>249</sup>

One NAR member, Steve Shultz, created the Elijah List website in 1997 with 280,000 subscribers as of 2018 to

<sup>247</sup> Hanley, *They Call Themselves Apostles*, 848-855.

<sup>248</sup> Philpott, *The New Apostolic Reformation*, 1773-1774.

<sup>249</sup> Hanley, *They Call Themselves Apostles*, 1188, quoting GSI website.



transmit fresh daily prophetic ‘manna’ from the Lord, regarding the days in which we live.

Apparently, it’s never fun to be at the bottom of a pyramid, so now the Independent Network Charismatic (INC) has also been set up.

Christerson. Peter Wagner, ... a highly influential INC leader himself, has coined the term the “New Apostolic Reformation” (NAR) to describe many of the leaders and ministries that we are calling Independent Network Charismatic. Wagner began to develop relationships with leaders whom he saw as apostles and formed two “apostolic networks”: Eagle Vision Apostolic Team (EVAT) [vertical] and the International Coalition of Apostles (ICA) [horizontal under EVAT]. Wagner until recently led EVAT, which has twenty-five members. ... The ICA is a larger group of 400 apostles who also meet annually and pay dues [like they do in the NAR]. ... Wagner [gave] leadership of the WLI [Wagner Leadership Institute] to Che Ahn. He handed off leadership of the ICA to apostle John Kelly, and Chuck Pierce leads ... Global Spheres [and thus EVAT]. The WLI is perhaps the largest and best-organized promoter of INC teachings. It describes itself as an “international network of apostolic training centers.”... [It’s] taught by high-profile INC leaders such as Che Ahn, Bill Johnson, Chuck Pierce, Randy Clark, and Cindy Jacobs. Wagner and his apostles teach that the kingdom of God can and will be founded on earth through the rise of apostles who will establish themselves as leaders in the “Seven Mountains of Culture”: religion, education, family, media, arts and entertainment, and business. They also assert that Christian believers will soon be the recipients of “the largest transfer of wealth in the history of mankind,” which they will use to bring about the transformation of the world.<sup>250</sup>

### **1996. Bethel Church, Redding**

Oppenheimer. Bill Johnson, pastor of Bethel Church

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<sup>250</sup> Christerson, *Network Christianity*, 8, 31.

[since 1996] is leading the charismatic charge with signs and wonders. ... Using Yoga and contemplative prayer from ancient monks and various other new age techniques, speaking of contacting and waking up angels for a new revival. We have the first new age hybrid church.<sup>251</sup>

## **2012. Judy Franklin & Ellyn Davis. The Physics of Heaven**

Judy Franklin, author, is administrative assistant to Bill Johnson. Kris Vallotton, Senior Associate Leader of Bethel Church, wrote the forward. Pastor Bill Johnson and his wife Beni wrote four chapters. Jonathan Welton, who wrote *The School of Seers: A Practical Guide on How to See in The Unseen Realm* wrote one chapter. Seers and unseen realms are becoming quite popular.

2012. Franklin. The Physics of Heaven. The zero-point field ... is an “underlying sea of quantum light,” and it will turn out that we can obtain power from it to do far more than Jesus did during His earthly ministry. [Franklin] believes that this energy is in us and around us and is the real power of God [749]. [Per] Bill Johnson, “We can’t just camp around old truth, but should seek newly revealed truth for our generation” [730]. Welton ... reasons that, if there is a counterfeit, there must be the genuine article. So then, he says, look into the counterfeit to find the truth. Mine the counterfeit, dig deep, search it out, and there will be truths as well as the counterfeit. He claims that the devil stole from God what we call the occult but that Christians should now reclaim these lost arts. Just like that! And Bill Johnson, Kris Vallotton, and the rest simply swallow it [736-738]. [Davis says that after she] moved to Sedona, “I was intrigued by what I found there. I saw healings and mystical experiences and revelation to rival anything I had seen or experienced in the church. . . . It wasn’t that I wanted to become a New Ager, I just wanted to find out if maybe they had uncovered some truths the church hadn’t.” ... God is

<sup>251</sup> <http://www.letusreason.org/DVDBethel%20or%20Ichabod.htm>

“moving on” into quantum mysticism, which is “unfamiliar territory that seems dangerous and sometimes seems to contradict what He’s done in the past” [775-778, 785-786]. Kris Vallotton, Bill Johnson, Jonathan Welton, and others (the predominant NAR notables) ... “all agree that the next move of God will cause a shift at the deepest level of who we are - perhaps at the very ‘vibrational level’ that the New Age movement has been exploring” [788-789]. [Johnson] is convinced that “realms are opening up right now to people because ... God has ... given them access to hidden things” [828-829, this sounds like Gnosticism]. Welton assures his readers that “I have found throughout Scripture at least 75 examples of things that the New Age has counterfeited, such as having a spirit guide, trances, meditation, auras, power objects, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, and more. These actually belong to the church, but they have been stolen and cleverly repackaged. ... When you see a counterfeit, don’t shrink back in fear - let this cry rise in your heart, ‘THAT IS MINE, AND I WANT IT BACK!’” [865-867].

Whether it’s new age channeling of messages from ascended masters, or using healing angels, or ascending ourselves into the ascendosphere; or whether it’s charismatic becoming the manifest sons of god, and releasing or using visiting angels, or being a seer into unseen realms; it’s the experience that proves it’s true, and the Bible is a hindrance.

## **2020. Caravan of Unity**

Unity Earth is coordinating two Caravans of Unity in 2020. One will travel from the Grace Cathedral in San Francisco on 8/28 and arrive at New York on 9/21 to celebrate the International Day of Peace on 9/21. At the same time, another will be moving from Rumi’s tomb in central Turkey to London. Unity Earth and its partners are holding a Toronto Convergence gathering on October 31 the day before the Parliament of the World’s Religions, by invitation only to leaders whose life’s work is dedicated to a successful transition to the next stage of spiritual

evolution. The objective here is broad, positive public impact. Music without words and dance, seven major musical transformative events along the route, is the method of bringing the world together. All Unity. All experience. No words, doctrine, or logic that could cause disagreements or divisions.

### **20??-20??. The Apostacy**

In 2000, Nobel prize winner, John Fogel, wrote “The Fourth Great Awakening and the Future of Egalitarianism,” in which he said American society is spiraling upwards to greater egalitarianism. In contrast to Fogel’s rosy picture, in a 2001 journal article, John Carpenter, says the so-called “Great Awakenings” were revivals attempts that failed to stem the decline of evangelicalism.

Whereas Fogel said the First Great Awakening weakened predestination and increased egalitarian benevolence, Carpenter says it scattered the Puritan hegemony to Baptists, the New Divinity, and the non-New Divinity groups.

Whereas Fogel said the Second Great Awakening furthered egalitarian abolition and women’s suffrage, Carpenter says it was soon followed by the evangelical loss of Yale and Andover (which itself had been an evangelical replacement for an earlier lost Harvard).

Whereas Fogel saw the Third Great Awakening as making egalitarian gains for labor and civil rights, Carpenter says Dwight L. Moody and Billy Sunday functioned more as an evangelical strategic retreat than a great awakening, and that the Pentecostal explosion was more religious than evangelical.

And finally, Carpenter sees a current Fourth Apostacy as being more behavioral, with fornication, homosexuality, and abortion being acceptable.<sup>252</sup>

I see the so-called “Great Awakenings” as the downward progression of the Charismatic/New Age

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<sup>252</sup> Carpenter, *Cycling Upwards or Spiraling Downwards*.

apostacy. In the First Great Awakening, bodily manifestations became accepted along with the revival work, though as “no part of the work ... itself.”<sup>253</sup>

In the Second Great Awakening, many Methodists and others deluded themselves into thinking they were sinlessly perfect.

In the Third Great Awakening, those who had already deluded themselves into believing they were sinlessly perfect, then deluded themselves, and much of the world, into thinking they were speaking in Pentecostal tongues.

In The Fourth Great Awakening, the Charismatics deluded themselves into thinking they exercised the gifts of the Spirit, including prophecy and divine healing.

The Fifth Great Awakening will be the end of true, born-again faith as the Congregation is taken out of the world at the rapture, and all religions will comfortably fellowship in religious, new age, outward manifestations without doctrinal differences being of any importance. The only uncomfortable part for them will be the 144,000 believing Jewish missionaries (Rev. 7:3-8), the multitudes truly saved (Rev. 7:9), and the two prophets during the 7-year tribulation period.

Rev. 11:3-10. I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days. ... And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast ... shall overcome them, and kill them. ... And they that dwell on the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

Why do I think the progression of the apostacy from the time immediately following the death of the twelve apostles up until the antichrist, and the main path of the Great Awakenings, proceeds through the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements? Because of the sheer numbers in the growth of these movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

All through the successive movements, that built one

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<sup>253</sup> Tracy, *The Great Awakening*, 278.

upon another - the mystics, the Let Go and Let God higher lifers, the sinless perfectionists, the Pentecostals, the Charismatics, the new prophets and new age movements - we see a self-centered, quest for power, like Satan's original quest for power.

Is. 14:13-14. I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also on the mountain of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most High.

And along with their quest for personal power, they feel a dissatisfaction with the truly supernatural, but boring, Word of God, and quiet fruit of the Spirit.

1 Tim. 2:15. Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Gal. 5:19-22. Combining Various Versions with the KJV as the Base. The works of the flesh are ... magic-show religion [MSG], ... jealousy [NIV], ... selfish ambition [NIV], ... heresies, envy; ... but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

There is not simply a progression from mysticism, to let go and let God and higher life, to sinless perfectionism, to charismaticism, to new age unity; but even doctrines and denominations that aren't directly on their path, have been leavened by each successive doctrine. So now we have fundamental Baptist Congregations, for example, where everyone believes you have to listen for direct revelation from God's still small voice via inner impressions to know his will, as if they were new age charismatics.

Mt. 13:4-33; 16:12. Some seeds fell by the way side, and the birds came and ate them up. ... When any one hears the word of the kingdom, and doesn't understand it, then the wicked one [the birds are interpreted to represent Satan] comes, and catches away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. ... The kingdom of heaven is like a grain

of mustard seed, which ... becomes a tree [abnormal growth], so that the birds [interpreted to be Satan above] of the air come and lodge in the branches of it. ... The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman [biblically not supposed to be teaching doctrine] took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. ... Beware of the leaven ... of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Wayne Grudem, in 1999, said ...

Grudem. “Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself ... without spot or wrinkle, ... holy and without blemish” (Eph 5:25–27). Throughout history ... sometimes that process of purification has been marked by specific historical events; for example, in 325 and 381, the Nicene Creed; ... in the 19th century, the growing consensus that slavery is wrong and must be abolished. ... The long-term pattern has not been nineteen centuries of decline in the purity and doctrinal and ethical understanding of the Church, but rather a pattern of gradual and sometimes explosive increase in understanding and purity.<sup>254</sup>

I don’t think Grudem can be right on this, because it would contradict the parable of the leaven, that in this period before the Messianic Kingdom is set up, all doctrine will become leavened. Messiah has already, past tense, sanctified the Congregation at the beginning, “having [already] cleansed her by the washing of water with the word” (Eph. 5:26), and her continuing faith and love in the midst of growing darkness, confusion, and leavened doctrine is a testimony to Messiah’s keeping power.

1 Tim. 4:1. Now the Spirit says expressly, that in the latter times, some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy.

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<sup>254</sup> Grudem, *The Bible Alone*.



When the antichrist comes and deceives the world (Rev. 13-14), it won't be by logically discussing biblical doctrine, but by a false prophet performing miracles.

2 Ths. 2:2-15. The day of Messiah ... will not come, unless there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who ... exalts himself above all that is called God, ... so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ... Whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness. ... God shall send them strong delusion [by allowing deceitful miracles], so that they will believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the [boring doctrinal] truth. ... But ... God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through ... belief of the [boring] truth. Whereto he called you by our gospel [not miracles], to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Messiah. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have been taught [not the miracles by which you've been mesmerized], whether by word [not experience], or our [boring] epistle.

Rev. 13:11-18; 19:20. I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. ... And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men [Wow, exciting!], and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do. ... And he had power to give life to the image of the beast [Wow!], so that the image of the beast would both speak [Wow! Wow!], and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast would be killed [God help us]. And he caused all ... to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads. ... And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that worked miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.



# Scripture Index

1 Cor. 1:1.....	425	1 Cor. 15:20.....	317
1 Cor. 1:10-12.....	268	1 Cor. 15:3.....	72, 301
1 Cor. 1:11.....	280	1 Cor. 15:30-32 .....	255
1 Cor. 1:11-12.....	280	1 Cor. 15:52.....	317
1 Cor. 1:12.....	205	1 Cor. 15:58.....	447
1 Cor. 1:1-2.....	248	1 Cor. 15:6.....	68, 69
1 Cor. 1:17.....	196	1 Cor. 15:8.....	424
1 Cor. 1:22.....	117	1 Cor. 16:1.....	296
1 Cor. 1:27.....	204	1 Cor. 16:10-11 .....	270, 301
1 Cor. 11:20-21.....	131	1 Cor. 16:11.....	275
1 Cor. 11:23.....	71	1 Cor. 16:12.....	270, 276, 279, 280, 430
1 Cor. 11:2-4.....	71	1 Cor. 16:15.....	202
1 Cor. 11:26.....	341	1 Cor. 16:16.....	444
1 Cor. 11:29.....	131	1 Cor. 16:17.....	267
1 Cor. 11:30.....	131	1 Cor. 16:19.....	133
1 Cor. 11:33.....	131	1 Cor. 16:1-9 .....	268
1 Cor. 11:33-34.....	131	1 Cor. 16:3-4 .....	254, 297
1 Cor. 12:1.....	105	1 Cor. 16:3-5 .....	259
1 Cor. 12:1, 7 .....	102	1 Cor. 16:3-6 .....	266
1 Cor. 12:10.....	104	1 Cor. 16:3-7 .....	275, 430
1 Cor. 12:13.....	96, 97, 103	1 Cor. 16:4.....	269
<b>1 Cor. 12:28</b> .....	108	1 Cor. 16:4-6 .....	300
1 Cor. 12:29.....	425	1 Cor. 16:5.....	267, 300
<b>1 Cor. 12:29-30</b> .....	108	1 Cor. 16:5, 10-11 .....	271
1 Cor. 12:30.....	119	1 Cor. 16:5-6 .....	277
1 Cor. 12:7.....	51, 123	1 Cor. 16:7.....	269
1 Cor. 12:7-10.....	120	1 Cor. 16:8.....	300, 317
<b>1 Cor. 12:8-10</b> .....	108	1 Cor. 2:11-13 .....	51, 92
1 Cor. 13:1.....	118	1 Cor. 2:12.....	109
1 Cor. 13:13.....	463, 464	1 Cor. 2:1-5 .....	204
1 Cor. 13:8.....	122	1 Cor. 2:2.....	204, 205
<b>1 Cor. 13-14</b> .....	108	1 Cor. 3:58.....	444
1 Cor. 14:2.....	120	1 Cor. 3:8-9 .....	444
1 Cor. 14:23-25.....	139	1 Cor. 3:9.....	412
1 Cor. 14:27-28.....	120	1 Cor. 3:9-10 .....	294
1 Cor. 14:37.....	109	1 Cor. 4:17.....	72, 270
1 Cor. 15:10.....	445, 463		

1 Cor. 5:1-5 .....	267	1 Ths. 2:14-18 .....	241
1 Cor. 5:7-8 .....	317	1 Ths. 2:17 .....	190
1 Cor. 5:9 .....	266	1 Ths. 2:9-13 .....	459
1 Cor. 6:5-9 .....	269	1 Ths. 3:1-11 .....	242
1 Cor. 6:9-10 .....	219	1 Ths. 3:1-2, 6 .....	245
1 Cor. 7:1-2 .....	267	1 Ths. 3:2 .....	406
1 Cor. 7:12 .....	419	1 Ths. 3:7-9 .....	466
1 Cor. 7:18 .....	340, 342	1 Ths. 4:15-17 .....	242
1 Cor. 7:19 .....	221	1 Ths. 4:18 .....	463
1 Cor. 7:21 .....	359	1 Ths. 5:12-13 .....	444
1 Cor. 9:16 .....	445	1 Ths. 5:16-17 .....	413
1 Cor. 9:19-27 .....	447	1 Ths. 5:16-18 .....	412
1 Cor. 9:20 .....	226, 342	1 Tim. 1:1 .....	212
1 Cor. 9:21 .....	221	1 Tim. 1:1-3 .....	275
1 Cor. 9:24-27 .....	465	1 Tim. 1:3 .....	277, 301
1 Cor. 9:26-27 .....	496	1 Tim. 1:3, 19-20 .....	281
1 Cor. 9:5-6 .....	182	1 Tim. 1:3-7 .....	5
1 Jn. 1:3 .....	459	1 Tim. 2:15 .....	532
1 Jn. 1:8 .....	48	1 Tim. 3:1, 8 .....	212
1 Jn. 1:9 .....	131	1 Tim. 3:12 .....	309
1 Jn. 2:27 .....	101	1 Tim. 3:14 .....	278
1 Kgs. 18:44-46 .....	427	1 Tim. 3:14-15 .....	277
1 Pet. 1:1 .....	217	1 Tim. 3:14-16 .....	278
1 Pet. 1:13 .....	460	1 Tim. 3:2, 8 .....	184
1 Pet. 1:22 .....	463	1 Tim. 3:8, 12 .....	309
1 Pet. 3:1 .....	420	1 Tim. 4:1 .....	533
1 Pet. 3:1-2 .....	196	1 Tim. 4:12 .....	409
1 Pet. 4:16 .....	55	1 Tim. 4:13 .....	278
1 Pet. 4:8 .....	463	1 Tim. 4:13-15 .....	460
1 Pet. 5:1 .....	109	1 Tim. 4:13-16 .....	463
1 Pet. 5:12-13 ...	182, 217, 243	1 Tim. 4:14 .....	466
1 Sam. 10:10-12 .....	98	1 Tim. 4:8 .....	444
1 Sam. 14:40-43 .....	73	1 Tim. 5:17 .....	445
1 Sam. 20:20-23 .....	72, 73	1 Tim. 5:8 .....	181, 411, 466
1 Sam. 3:1 .....	114	1 Tim. 6:12 .....	465
1 Ths. 1:1 .....	211, 245	1 Tim. 6:9 .....	412
1 Ths. 1:2-3 .....	461	2 Cor. 1:1 .....	406
1 Ths. 1:3 .....	443	2 Cor. 1:15-16 .....	298, 313
1 Ths. 1:9 .....	442	2 Cor. 1:15-16 .....	300
1 Ths. 2:10 .....	101	2 Cor. 1:15-16 .....	300

2 Cor. 1:15-18, 23-24 .....	299	2 Cor. 9:2.....	297
2 Cor. 1:15-20.....	431	2 Cor. 9:2-5 .....	306
2 Cor. 1:19.....	246	2 Cor. 9:3.....	312
2 Cor. 1:23.....	298, 313	2 Cor. 9:3-4 .....	305
2 Cor. 1:5, 8-10.....	294	2 Cor. 9:4.....	301
2 Cor. 1:8-10.....	255, 262	2 Cor. 9:6-7 .....	430
2 Cor. 11:14-15.....	309	2 Jn. 1:10.....	281
2 Cor. 11:23.....	255, 311, 445	2 Pet. 1:3.....	185
2 Cor. 11:25.....	387	2 Ths. 1:1.....	246, 405
2 Cor. 11:9.....	254, 258	2 Ths. 2:15.....	466
2 Cor. 12:11-12.....	70, 75	2 Ths. 2:2-15 .....	534
2 Cor. 12:12.....	111	2 Ths. 2:2-3 .....	246
2 Cor. 12:13.....	29	2 Ths. 3:17.....	405
2 Cor. 12:18.....	281	2 Ths. 3:6-15 .....	247
2 Cor. 13:1.....	273, 278	2 Tim. 1:15, 17-18.....	402
2 Cor. 13:1-5.....	305	2 Tim. 1:16-18;.....	403
2 Cor. 15:23.....	430	2 Tim. 1:5 .....	211, 235
2 Cor. 2:1.....	277, 281	2 Tim. 1:7-8.....	270
2 Cor. 2:1.....	299	2 Tim. 1:8, 16-17 .....	401
2 Cor. 2:12.....	210	2 Tim. 2:14-16.....	463, 467
2 Cor. 2:1-2.....	234	2 Tim. 2:2 .....	466
2 Cor. 2:12-13.....	304, 305	2 Tim. 2:22 .....	194
2 Cor. 5:1.....	317	2 Tim. 2:3 .....	462
2 Cor. 5:11.....	446	2 Tim. 2:3-6.....	447
2 Cor. 5:9-10.....	444	2 Tim. 2:8 .....	34
2 Cor. 6:14-15.....	139	2 Tim. 2:8-11.....	402
2 Cor. 6:14-15.....	419	2 Tim. 3:10-11.....	195
2 Cor. 7:4-16.....	305	2 Tim. 3:14-17 .....	462
2 Cor. 7:5-6.....	271, 281	2 Tim. 3:15 .....	211
2 Cor. 7:6.....	305	2 Tim. 3:9-11.....	183
2 Cor. 8:10.....	300	2 Tim. 4 .....	403
2 Cor. 8:1-4.....	297, 301	2 Tim. 4:10 .....	356
2 Cor. 8:16-17.....	272	2 Tim. 4:10-11.....	273, 361
2 Cor. 8:16-19, 22.....	301	2 Tim. 4:10-12.....	117
2 Cor. 8:16-24.....	117	2 Tim. 4:10-12, 20 .....	185
2 Cor. 8:1-7, 16-23 .....	306	2 Tim. 4:11 .....	361
2 Cor. 8:18, 22 .....	312	2 Tim. 4:11, 21 .....	408
2 Cor. 8:18-19.....	431	2 Tim. 4:11-19.....	402
2 Cor. 8:20.....	307	2 Tim. 4:12 .....	361
2 Cor. 8:23.....	69, 108, 185	2 Tim. 4:13 .....	262, 304

2 Tim. 4:16-20.....	111	Acts 1:8.....	30
2 Tim. 4:19.....	404	Acts 1:9-10 .....	66
2 Tim. 4:20.....	312, 356, 387	Acts 10:1-11:18 .....	152
2 Tim. 4:21.....	260	Acts 10:1-2, 22.....	99
2 Tim. 4:6.....	111	Acts 10:1-22 .....	152
2 Tim. 4:6, 9.....	270	Acts 10:19.....	428
2 Tim. 4:6-21.....	402	Acts 10:22.....	32
2 Tim. 4:6-7, 21.....	401	Acts 10:23, 28, 44-48.....	153
2 Tim. 4:7.....	465, 496	Acts 10:40-41 .....	68
2 Tim. 4:8.....	406	Acts 10:43.....	200
2 Tim. 4:9.....	260	Acts 10:43-44a.....	99
2 Tim. 4:9-11, 21.....	404	Acts 10:44.....	119
3 Jn. 1:9-12 .....	281	Acts 10:44-48 .....	232
Acts 1:1.....	210	Acts 10:44b.....	100
Acts 1:1.....	41	Acts 10:48.....	231
Acts 1:11.....	69	Acts 11:1-4, 15-18 .....	153
Acts 1:1-2.....	28	Acts 11:15.....	118
Acts 1:12-14.....	66	Acts 11:15-17 .....	100
Acts 1:13, 30 .....	267	Acts 11:18-21 .....	155
Acts 1:14.....	94	Acts 11:19-21 .....	116
Acts 1:14-17.....	247	Acts 11:19-26 .....	216
Acts 1:15.....	94	Acts 11:22-27 .....	168
Acts 1:15-23.....	66	Acts 11:25-26 .....	179
Acts 1:15-28.....	207	Acts 11:26.....	55, 166
Acts 1:16.....	167	Acts 11:28-30 .....	155
Acts 1:16-20.....	78	Acts 11:29.....	155, 429
Acts 1:2.....	71	Acts 11:29-30 .....	168, 178
Acts 1:22.....	68	Acts 11:30.....	235
Acts 1:23.....	68, 428	Acts 12:1.....	311
Acts 1:24-26.....	72	Acts 12:11-12 .....	429
Acts 1:26.....	74	Acts 12:12.....	157, 360
Acts 1:3.....	93	Acts 12:1-2 .....	109
Acts 1:3-5.....	66	Acts 12:12, 25.....	235
Acts 1:4.....	94	Acts 12:1-5 .....	156
Acts 1:4-5.....	97	Acts 12:17.....	158
Acts 1:4-8.....	45	Acts 12:17-19 .....	158
<b>Acts 1:8..</b> 47, 51, 97, 101, 117, 134, 147, 164, 166, 170, 171, 173, 185, 188, 217, 314		Acts 12:2.....	291
		Acts 12:23-24 .....	49
		Acts 12:24.....	200
		Acts 12:25.....	178

Acts 12:5, 12.....	133	Acts 13:9-10 .....	167
Acts 12:5, 12, 17.....	157	Acts 13:9-14 .....	425
Acts 12:6-8 .....	156	Acts 13-16 .....	438
Acts 12:7-8 .....	156	Acts 14:1 .....	233
Acts 12:9, 17-18 .....	156	Acts 14:1 .....	32
Acts 12:9-12 .....	157	Acts 14:10 .....	116
Acts 13:1.....	108, 167	Acts 14:11 .....	389
Acts 13:1.....	425	Acts 14:11-19 .....	180
Acts 13:12.....	233	Acts 14:1-3 .....	116
Acts 13:1-2 .....	164, 166	Acts 14:13-21 .....	196
Acts 13:13.....	181, 270	Acts 14:14 .....	69
Acts 13:13-14 .....	187, 188	Acts 14:15 .....	199
Acts 13:14..186, 188, 190, 191		Acts 14:15-17 .....	201
Acts 13:1-4 .....	424	Acts 14:15-19 .....	206
Acts 13:14-16 .....	226	Acts 14:1-7 .....	191
Acts 13:14-16, 45-46 .....	173	Acts 14:20-23 .....	212
Acts 13:14-46 .....	201	Acts 14:21 .....	109, 199
Acts 13:15.....	317	Acts 14:21-22 .....	207, 233
Acts 13:15-44 .....	207	Acts 14:21-23 .....	116
Acts 13:17.....	201	Acts 14:23 .....	210, 211
Acts 13:2...167, 171, 179, 183, 185		Acts 14:23, 26 .....	211
Acts 13:2-3 .....	167	Acts 14:25-26 .....	358
Acts 13:34.....	198	Acts 14:26 .....	212
Acts 13:38.....	198	Acts 14:26-27 .....	223
Acts 13:4.....	170	Acts 14:26-28 .....	212
Acts 13:42-45 .....	350	Acts 14:27 .....	217
Acts 13:43, 48.....	233	Acts 14:3 .....	111, 116, 117
Acts 13:44.....	217	Acts 14:5 .....	389
Acts 13:4-5 .....	173	Acts 14:5-6 .....	116
Acts 13:45-46 .....	174	Acts 14:6 .....	195, 390
Acts 13:47.....	37, 165	Acts 14:6-7 .....	196
Acts 13:49.....	200	Acts 14:7 .....	109, 199
Acts 13:5....173, 177, 179, 198		Acts 14:8-10 .....	111
Acts 13:50.....	195	Acts 15:1 .....	218, 220, 223
Acts 13:50-51 .....	194	Acts 15:12 .....	111, 180
Acts 13:50-52 .....	194	Acts 15:16-18 .....	37
Acts 13:7, 12.....	116	Acts 15:19, 24 .....	224
Acts 13:7-12 .....	179	Acts 15:2 .....	169, 225, 429
Acts 13:8, 11.....	116	Acts 15:22-25 .....	429
		Acts 15:23 .....	169, 172

Acts 15:24.....	220, 280	Acts 16:7.....	190
Acts 15:32.....	108, 189	Acts 16:9-12.....	40
Acts 15:32.....	425	Acts 17:1.....	192, 258
Acts 15:35-36.....	198	Acts 17:12-13.....	233
Acts 15:35-39.....	181	Acts 17:13.....	198
Acts 15:36.....	208	Acts 17:13-15.....	170
Acts 15:37-38.....	429	Acts 17:1-4.....	201
Acts 15:38.....	183	Acts 17:15.....	258
Acts 15:39-40.....	182	Acts 17:1-5.....	233
Acts 15:39-41.....	169	Acts 17:15-17.....	170
Acts 15:40.....	182	Acts 17:17-18.....	245
Acts 15:41-16:6.....	208	Acts 17:18.....	198
Acts 15:4-20.....	225	Acts 17:18-21.....	202
Acts 15:7.....	166	Acts 17:18-34.....	207
Acts 15:8.....	119	Acts 17:22-31.....	201
Acts 16:10.....	199	Acts 17:23.....	199
Acts 16:11-12.....	264	Acts 17:3.....	198
Acts 16:12.....	192, 235	Acts 17:31-32.....	198
Acts 16:12-15.....	230	Acts 17:34.....	201, 233
Acts 16:1-3.....	177, 183	Acts 17:5-10.....	192, 240
Acts 16:13-14.....	116	Acts 17:7.....	235
Acts 16:13-15, 32-34.....	232	Acts 18:1.....	245, 246, 273
Acts 16:14.....	32	Acts 18:1, 5.....	243
Acts 16:15.....	233, 235	Acts 18:11.....	246, 248
Acts 16:16-18.....	235	Acts 18:1-2.....	310
Acts 16:16-24.....	235	Acts 18:12-17.....	248
Acts 16:17.....	199	Acts 18:12-18.....	192
Acts 16:18.....	116	Acts 18:17.....	425
Acts 16:2.....	183	Acts 18:18 246, 254, 259, 266, 271, 273, 310	
Acts 16:23.....	116, 407	Acts 18:18, 32.....	205
Acts 16:23-26.....	255	Acts 18:18-19.....	235
Acts 16:26.....	111	Acts 18:18-22.....	213
Acts 16:30-32.....	116	Acts 18:19-24.....	250
Acts 16:30-34.....	231	Acts 18:2, 18-19.....	425
Acts 16:37-40.....	158	Acts 18:23.....	209
Acts 16:40.....	159	Acts 18:24.....	271, 280
Acts 16:4-5.....	224	Acts 18:27.....	270
Acts 16:6.....	190, 300	Acts 18:3.....	235
Acts 16:6-10.....	189	Acts 18:4.....	459
Acts 16:6-9.....	425		

Acts 18:4-17 .....	247	Acts 2:17-21 .....	37
Acts 18:4-7 .....	247	Acts 2:29-31 .....	200
Acts 18:5.....	170, 246	Acts 2:3 .....	99
Acts 18:8.....	232, 247	Acts 2:38 .....	231, 394
Acts 18:9-11 .....	192, 426	Acts 2:38 .....	31
Acts 19:1.....	259	Acts 2:38, 41 .....	232
Acts 19:10-12 .....	294	Acts 2:4 .....	99, 119
Acts 19:11-12 ....	111, 117, 252	Acts 2:41 .....	32
Acts 19:11-20 .....	252	Acts 2:4-11 .....	117
Acts 19:13.....	198	Acts 2:41-47 .....	130
Acts 19:13-18 .....	252	Acts 2:42 .....	130, 133
Acts 19:19-20 .....	253	Acts 2:43 .....	75, 109, 110
Acts 19:2.....	103	Acts 2:46 .....	132
Acts 19:20...49, 200, 253, 258, 266, 271, 276, 279, 293		Acts 2:5 .....	32
Acts 19:20.....	409	Acts 2:6-21 .....	123
Acts 19:21.254, 259, 266, 293, 298, 300, 313, 426		Acts 20:1 ...271, 281, 303, 304	
Acts 19:21-20:1 .....	296	Acts 20:1-3 .....	210
Acts 19:21-22 ....	278, 287, 299	Acts 20:13-14 ....	287, 319, 320
Acts 19:22..298, 301, 312, 425		Acts 20:15-17 .....	320
Acts 19:23-41 .....	302	Acts 20:16 .....	430
Acts 19:29.....	315	Acts 20:17 .....	212
Acts 19:33-41 .....	136	Acts 20:17-18 .....	109
Acts 19:5.....	231	Acts 20:18-19 .....	252, 303
Acts 19:5-6 .....	104	Acts 20:18-35 .....	5
Acts 19:6.....	103	Acts 20:18-38 .....	320
Acts 19:8, 10.....	235	Acts 20:2 .....	273
Acts 19:8-10 .....	251	Acts 20:20 .....	133
Acts 19:8-19 .....	233	Acts 20:20-21 .....	117
Acts 19:9-10 .....	193	Acts 20:22 .....	256, 287
Acts 19:9-10, 20 .....	117	Acts 20:22-24 .....	426
Acts 19:9-12, 18-20 .....	5	Acts 20:2-3 .....	235, 271, 274
Acts 2:1.....	94, 98	Acts 20:2-3, 6, 16 .....	300
Acts 2:10.....	102, 187	Acts 20:25 199, 254, 260, 286, 319, 354	
Acts 2:11.....	276	Acts 20:29-30 .....	295
Acts 2:1-3 .....	93	Acts 20:29-31 .....	281
Acts 2:14.....	74	Acts 20:2a .....	304
Acts 2:1-4 .....	98	Acts 20:2b-3a .....	307
Acts 2:16.....	125	Acts 20:3 ..278, 279, 303, 305, 313, 429	

Acts 20:3-5.....	281	Acts 22:21-22 .....	349
Acts 20:3b-4a.....	308	Acts 22:22-23 .....	288
Acts 20:4.. 117, 184, 278, 297, 301, 314, 315, 355		Acts 22:24-25 .....	289
Acts 20:4b-5.....	316	Acts 22:3.....	175, 318
Acts 20:5.....	254, 259, 260	Acts 22:3-19 .....	348
Acts 20:5-6.....	41, 318, 355	Acts 22:4-16 .....	70
Acts 20:6.....	264, 316	Acts 22:6, 17-21.....	165
Acts 20:6, 16.....	316	Acts 23:11 255, 260, 353, 354, 427	
Acts 20:7-11.....	132	Acts 23:12-13 .....	303
Acts 20:7-9.....	197	Acts 23:1-4 .....	289
Acts 20:9-12.....	111	Acts 23:26.....	39
Acts 21:.....	41	Acts 23:29.....	290
Acts 21:10.....	108	Acts 23:35.....	261
Acts 21:10-11....	108, 167, 286	Acts 23:4-5 .....	350
Acts 21:11.....	287	Acts 23:6.....	318, 351, 353
Acts 21:1-20.....	213	Acts 23:6-10 .....	350
Acts 21:12-14.....	287, 288	Acts 24:1.....	289
Acts 21:16.....	235, 324	Acts 24:11.....	353
Acts 21:17-26.....	227	Acts 24:11-18 .....	353
Acts 21:18-22.....	280	Acts 24:17.....	315, 353
Acts 21:20.....	339	Acts 24:22.....	372
Acts 21:20-26.....	323, 340	Acts 24:22-26 .....	354
Acts 21:20-27.....	345	Acts 24:2-3 .....	373
Acts 21:21.....	339, 340	Acts 24:24-25 .....	372
Acts 21:21-25.....	339	Acts 24:26-27 .....	40, 355
Acts 21:22-25.....	341	Acts 24:27.....	290, 314
Acts 21:27-29.....	348	Acts 24:5.....	289
Acts 21:29.....	387	Acts 25:19-27 .....	374
Acts 21:29.....	356	Acts 25:22.....	288
Acts 21:30.....	289	Acts 25:23.....	372
Acts 21:3-18.....	234	Acts 25:2-3 .....	304
Acts 21:33.....	314	Acts 25:25.....	290
Acts 21:39.....	170	Acts 25:8.....	371
Acts 21:4.....	286	Acts 25:9-11 .....	371
Acts 21:6-22:8.....	386	Acts 26:10.....	407
Acts 21:8.....	108, 235	Acts 26:10-11 .....	375
Acts 21:9.....	108	Acts 26:12-14 .....	379
Acts 22:17-18.....	424	Acts 26:15.....	382
Acts 22:19.....	349, 375	Acts 26:15-18 .....	381



Acts 26:16-18 .....	165	Acts 3:11-12 .....	50
Acts 26:17.....	69	Acts 3:1-2 .....	168
Acts 26:2, 5-7, 20-21 .....	374	Acts 3:12-28 .....	116
Acts 26:22-23 .....	382	Acts 3:18 .....	200
Acts 26:23.....	199	Acts 3:19-20 .....	31, 395
Acts 26:24.....	384	Acts 3:7 .....	116
Acts 26:25-28 .....	384	Acts 3:8, 22 .....	110
Acts 26:28.....	55	Acts 4:10-12 .....	49
Acts 26:31.....	290	Acts 4:13 .....	178
Acts 26:32.....	291	Acts 4:1-31 .....	133
Acts 26:9-20 .....	70	Acts 4:1-4 .....	50, 116
Acts 27:1.....	39, 314	Acts 4:14-17 .....	85
Acts 27:1-2 .....	41, 356	Acts 4:18 .....	134
Acts 27:2.....	387	Acts 4:19 .....	116
Acts 27:20-26 .....	112	Acts 4:3 .....	116
Acts 27:21-31 .....	427	Acts 4:31 .....	51, 98
Acts 27:5-6 .....	356	Acts 4:32-37 .....	135
Acts 27:9.....	317	Acts 4:34 .....	68
Acts 27:9-11, 21 .....	387	Acts 4:34-5:12 .....	138
Acts 28:10.....	117	Acts 4:36 .....	181
Acts 28:16.....	314, 356	Acts 4:36-37 .....	138
Acts 28:16.....	41	Acts 4:4 .....	32
Acts 28:1-6 .....	391	Acts 4:8 .....	167
Acts 28:17-29 .....	396	Acts 4:8-10 .....	98
Acts 28:17-31 .....	392	Acts 5:10-13 .....	137
Acts 28:19.....	40	Acts 5:1-11 .....	137
Acts 28:23.....	396	Acts 5:12 .....	109, 116, 133
Acts 28:23-31 .....	117	Acts 5:12-14 .....	116
Acts 28:25.....	167	Acts 5:12-16 .....	110
Acts 28:25-26 .....	31	Acts 5:13 .....	138
Acts 28:25-27 .....	37	Acts 5:13-16, 42 .....	139
Acts 28:29.....	397	Acts 5:15-16 .....	109
Acts 28:29-31 .....	37	Acts 5:17-20 .....	156
Acts 28:30.....	260, 356, 401	Acts 5:20 .....	157
Acts 28:31.....	47, 199	Acts 5:20-21 .....	116
Acts 28:4-6 .....	391	Acts 5:27-29 .....	134
Acts 28:5, 8.....	111	Acts 5:40 .....	116
Acts 28:8-9 .....	117	Acts 6:1 .....	216
Acts 28:9.....	111	Acts 6:1-7 .....	142
Acts 3:11.....	116	Acts 6:1-8 .....	142

Acts 6:2 .....	74, 142	Acts 9:32-38 .....	169
Acts 6:25 .....	142	Acts 9:33-41 .....	110
Acts 6:3 .....	143	Acts 9:6, 10 .....	423
Acts 6:3-5 .....	428	Acts 9:9 .....	165
Acts 6:7 .....	48, 200	Col. 1:1 .....	406
Acts 6:8 .....	109, 110, 116	Col. 1:18-27 .....	35
Acts 7:13-16, 43 .....	179	Col. 1:23-25 .....	33
Acts 7:37-38 .....	136	Col. 1:28-29 .....	444
Acts 7:38 .....	136	Col. 1:4-7 .....	360
Acts 7:59 .....	407	Col. 1:5-6 .....	462
Acts 7:60 .....	116	Col. 2:13-17 .....	225
Acts 7:60-8:1 .....	109	Col. 2:8 .....	72
Acts 8:11 .....	116	Col. 3:1 .....	460
Acts 8:12 .....	103, 232, 396	Col. 3:10 .....	462
Acts 8:12-18 .....	102	Col. 3:16 .....	462
Acts 8:1-3 .....	311	Col. 3:16-23 .....	466, 467
Acts 8:14 .....	168	Col. 3:17-23 .....	463
Acts 8:15 .....	104	<b>Col. 3:18-4:1</b> .....	363
Acts 8:16 .....	231	Col. 3:2-16 .....	464
Acts 8:1-6 .....	148	Col. 4:10 .. 178, 181, 182, 183,	
Acts 8:23 .....	148	360	
Acts 8:26-40 .....	428	Col. 4:10 .....	358
Acts 8:36-38 .....	230, 232	Col. 4:11 .....	362
Acts 8:4 .....	116	Col. 4:11-13 .....	461
Acts 8:5 .....	169	Col. 4:12 .....	443
Acts 8:5, 12 .....	116	Col. 4:13 .....	360
Acts 8:6 .....	116	Col. 4:14 .....	405
Acts 8:6-7 .....	110, 427	Col. 4:14 .....	361
Acts 9:10 .....	69	Col. 4:15 .....	133
Acts 9:1-22 .....	70	Col. 4:16 .....	363
Acts 9:15 .....	30	Col. 4:17 .....	360
Acts 9:15-16 .....	347	Col. 4:3-18 .....	364
Acts 9:15-16 .....	33	Col. 4:7 .....	363
Acts 9:18 .....	232	Col. 4:7-17 .....	117
Acts 9:20 .....	198	Col. 4:7-8 .....	361
Acts 9:26-28 .....	179	Dan. 2 .....	393
Acts 9:27 .....	69	Dan. 2:44 .....	393
Acts 9:29-30 .....	172, 424	Dan. 7:13 .....	383
Acts 9:32 .....	148	Dan. 9:26 .....	383
Acts 9:32-35 .....	148	Deut. 18:10 .....	238

Deut. 18:15.....	380	Ex. 12:3-6 .....	94
Deut. 18:9-15 .....	238	Ex. 12:6.....	94
Deut. 34:9.....	97	Ex. 12:6, 18.....	383
Eph. 1:1 .....	363	Ex. 16:15-18 .....	137
Eph. 1:20-23 .....	100	Ex. 16:17-18 .....	155
Eph. 1:9-10 .....	100	Ex. 16:29.....	95
Eph. 1:9-10, 20-23 .....	36	Ex. 18:20-22 .....	84
Eph. 2:11-13 .....	135	Ex. 20:13.....	220, 221
Eph. 2:11-18.....	100	Ex. 22:28.....	350
Eph. 2:11-18.....	36	Ex. 23:14-17 .....	348
Eph. 2:14-15.....	96	Ex. 23:2.....	380
Eph. 2:15 .....	380	Ex. 28:28.....	438
Eph. 2:15-17 .....	135	Ex. 3:21.....	140
Eph. 2:19-20.....	109, 187, 294	Ex. 31:13-17 .....	95
Eph. 2:20 .....	185, 425	Ex. 31:2-4 .....	97
Eph. 20:20 .....	446	Ezk. 13:1-10.....	87
Eph. 3:1-12 .....	34	Ezk. 20:12.....	96
Eph. 3:14-16.....	466	Ezk. 20:37-40.....	125
Eph. 3:4-11 .....	343	Ezk. 40:40-41.....	341
Eph. 3:4-6.....	100, 175	Ezk. 47:1-12.....	104
Eph. 3:4-6 .....	37	Ezra 10:3 .....	76
Eph. 4:1 .....	364	Gal. 1:1 .....	70
<b>Eph. 4:11</b> .....	108	Gal. 1:11.....	72
Eph. 4:1-3 .....	6	Gal. 1:1-2.....	212
Eph. 4:22 .....	464	Gal. 1:15-16.....	165
Eph. 4:7-14 .....	107	Gal. 1:15-17.....	71
Eph. 4:8 .....	102, 104	Gal. 1:6.....	223
<b>Eph. 5:21-6:9</b> .....	363	Gal. 1:6-7, 30-31 .....	223
Eph. 5:22-25 .....	418	Gal. 1:8.....	118
Eph. 5:25 .....	419	Gal. 2:1 .....	178
Eph. 5:26 .....	533	Gal. 2:11.....	218
Eph. 6:11-18.....	464	Gal. 2:11-13.....	224
Eph. 6:12-14.....	194	Gal. 2:15-16.....	219
Eph. 6:17 .....	51	Gal. 2:17.....	219
Eph. 6:18-24.....	6	Gal. 2:1-9.....	216
Eph. 6:2 .....	412	Gal. 2:19-20.....	220
Eph. 6:21 .....	363	Gal. 2:9 .....	165
Eph. 6:21-22 .....	361	Gal. 3:28.....	396
Eph. 6:6-8 .....	446	Gal. 3:28.....	38
Ex. 12:36.....	140	Gal. 5:11, 13.....	223

Gal. 5:18 .....	190	Heb. 8:13 .....	222
Gal. 5:19-22 .....	532	Heb. 8:1-5 .....	341
Gal. 5:21-22 .....	101	Heb. 8:4-5 .....	226
Gal. 5:3 .....	221	Heb. 9:12 .....	341
Gal. 6:10 .....	181	Is. 11:6 .....	393
Gal. 6:15 .....	219	Is. 14:13-14 .....	532
Gen. 1:5 .....	132	Is. 42:1-7 .....	382
Gen. 15:6 .....	59	Is. 42:6 .....	30
Gen. 17:10-14 .....	339	Is. 49:1, 6 .....	30
Gen. 2:24 .. 101, 417, 419, 420		Is. 49:6 .....	173
Gen. 2:7 .....	118	Is. 52:14-15 .....	186
Gen. 21:10 .....	223	Is. 53 .....	382
Gen. 22:8 .....	383	Is. 61:5-6 .....	336
Gen. 3:15 .....	383	Is. 63:1-6 .....	336
Gen. 3:20 .....	119	Is. 65:25 .....	393
Gen. 3:3 .....	68	Is. 65:8 .....	354
Gen. 39:11-12 .....	194	Jas. 1:13-15 .....	91
Gen. 5:2 .....	118	Jas. 1:3 .....	492
Gen. 9:4 .....	225	Jas. 2:10-11 .....	221
Heb. 1:1-2 .....	115	Jas. 4:4 .....	140
Heb. 10:25 .....	134, 412	Jas. 4:6 .....	175, 444
Heb. 10:26 .....	463	Jas. 4:7 .....	462
Heb. 10:32-34 .....	407	Jas. 5:1-5 .....	137
Heb. 10:34 .....	407, 446	Jdg. 15:14-15 .....	98
Heb. 10:4 .....	340	Jdg. 6:12, 16-17, 37-39 .....	88
Heb. 12:1-4 .....	465	Jdg. 6:34 .....	98
Heb. 12:4 .....	407	Jer. 11:19 .....	383
Heb. 13:12-13 .....	354	Jer. 17:9 .....	116
Heb. 13:18-19 .....	406	Jer. 23:16 .....	235
Heb. 13:18-19, 23 .....	406, 408	Jn. 10:16 .....	32
Heb. 13:23 .. 270, 405, 406, 408		Jn. 12:19-24 .....	29
Heb. 13:24 .....	405	Jn. 13:35 .....	233
Heb. 13:8 .....	123	Jn. 13:35 .....	463
Heb. 2:3-4 .....	400	Jn. 14:16 .....	101
Heb. 3:13 .....	463	Jn. 14:16-17 .....	96
Heb. 3:3 .....	381	Jn. 14:16-18 .....	93
Heb. 4:12 .....	92	Jn. 14:16-20 .....	459
Heb. 6:8-18 .....	448	Jn. 14:17 .....	101
Heb. 6:9 .....	462	Jn. 15:18-19 .....	140
Heb. 8:10 .....	460	Jn. 15:26 .....	101

Jn. 15:26-27 .....	66	Lu. 11:2 .....	461
Jn. 16:13 .....	101	Lu. 18:31-34 .....	286
Jn. 16:2, 8-9 .....	347	Lu. 2:32 .....	30
Jn. 16:7, 13 .....	29	Lu. 21:20-21 .....	400
Jn. 17:2 .....	207	Lu. 21:36 .....	461
Jn. 17:22-23 .....	92	Lu. 22:42 .....	288
Jn. 18:22-23 .....	289	Lu. 22:66 .....	288
Jn. 18:28, 33 .....	261	Lu. 23:11 .....	291
Jn. 19:1 .....	289	Lu. 23:1-2 .....	288
Jn. 19:26-27 .....	6	Lu. 23:14 .....	290
Jn. 19:6 .....	290	Lu. 23:18-23 .....	288
Jn. 19:8-15 .....	290	Lu. 23:2, 5 .....	289
Jn. 2:5-7 .....	309	Lu. 23:4 .....	289
Jn. 20:31 .....	392	Lu. 23:8 .....	288
Jn. 20:3-4 .....	408	Lu. 6:13 .....	75, 177
Jn. 21:3-16 .....	142	Lu. 8:38-39 .....	170, 171
Jn. 21:6 .....	447	Lu. 9:22 .....	286
Jn. 5:38 .....	48	Lu. 9:44 .....	286
Joel 2:17-31 .....	124	Lu. 9:51 .....	287
Joel 2:30 .....	125	Lu. 9:9 .....	288
Jon. 1:7-12 .....	73	Mal. 4:5 .....	112, 115
Jon. 3:5-8 .....	395	Mk. 1:1-2 .....	115
Jon. 4:10-11 .....	190	Mk. 1:14-15 .....	393
Josh. 7:16-22 .....	73	Mk. 1:38 .....	190
Judg. 11:34 .....	76	Mk. 13:33 .....	461
Lev. 17:11 .....	340	Mk. 14:50-53 .....	408
Lev. 23:11 .....	95	Mk. 14:51-52 .....	270
Lev. 23:15-17 .....	95	Mk. 15:16 .....	261
Lev. 23:16-17 .....	96	Mk. 15:21 .....	312, 405
Lev. 23:5 .....	94, 325	Mk. 16:15 .....	196
Lev. 23:6 .....	94	Mk. 16:15-16 .....	44
Lk. 1:1-4 .....	41	Mk. 16:17 .....	109
Lk. 24:47 .....	44	Mk. 16:20 .....	117
Lk. 24:47-49 .....	45	Mk. 2:6-8 .....	92
Lu 10:1 .....	287	Mk. 6:12 .....	392
Lu 9:51-52 .....	287	Mk. 6:7 .....	167
Lu. 1:1-4 .....	358	Mk. 8:23-25 .....	85
Lu. 1:3-4 .....	28	Mt. 10:16 .....	194
Lu. 10:1 .....	167	Mt. 10:17-20 .....	347
Lu. 10:27 .....	462	Mt. 10:2-4 .....	108

Mt. 10:5-6.....	29	Mt. 4:12-23.....	393
Mt. 10:8.....	21	Mt. 4:17.....	30, 392
Mt. 11:20.....	113	Mt. 4:17, 23.....	197
Mt. 11:20-21.....	392	Mt. 6:10.....	393
Mt. 11:20-21.....	31	Mt. 6:19-21.....	137
Mt. 11:41.....	392	Mt. 8:16-17.....	102, 113
Mt. 11-12.....	392	Mt. 9:36.....	190
Mt. 12:22-24.....	85	Mt. 9:38.....	442
Mt. 12:41.....	395	Mt. 9:5.....	508
Mt. 12:41.....	31	Num. 15:32-36.....	137
Mt. 12:9-14.....	394	Num. 15:37-40.....	220
Mt. 13:23.....	446	Num. 21:9.....	383
Mt. 13:4-33.....	532	Phil. 1:1.....	212, 260, 309, 404, 406
Mt. 14:29-30.....	391	Phil. 1:13.....	253, 261
Mt. 15:21.....	113	Phil. 1:20.....	255, 260
Mt. 15:4.....	212	Phil. 1:25.....	259
Mt. 16:12.....	532	Phil. 1:25-26.....	254, 277
Mt. 16:13.....	113	Phil. 1:27.....	466
Mt. 16:18.....	210	Phil. 1:7.....	259
Mt. 16:18.....	29	Phil. 2:12.....	496
Mt. 16:29.....	99	Phil. 2:12-13.....	462
Mt. 17:14-18.....	85	Phil. 2:12-14.....	443
Mt. 19:1.....	113	Phil. 2:17.....	255, 260
Mt. 19:19.....	188	Phil. 2:19.....	270
Mt. 19:28.....	75	Phil. 2:19, 24.....	271
Mt. 2:16.....	291	Phil. 2:19-20, 25-26.....	265
Mt. 20:18-19.....	287	Phil. 2:19-26.....	404
Mt. 22:15-46.....	94	Phil. 2:24.....	259, 267, 277
Mt. 22:30.....	419	Phil. 2:25.....	443
Mt. 23:39.....	31, 394	Phil. 2:25-30.....	112, 263
Mt. 26:36.....	287	Phil. 2:2-8.....	460
Mt. 26:41.....	461	Phil. 2:3-5.....	463
Mt. 26:44.....	461	Phil. 3:5.....	175, 318
Mt. 27:27.....	261	Phil. 4:1.....	463
Mt. 28:18-20.....	248	Phil. 4:10.....	254, 259, 267
Mt. 28:18-20.....	44	Phil. 4:14.....	265
Mt. 28:19.....	230	Phil. 4:15-16.....	240, 253, 258
Mt. 28:19-20.....	44	Phil. 4:16.....	258
Mt. 3:1-2.....	392	Phil. 4:22.....	261, 262
Mt. 3:2.....	30, 392		

Phil. 4:2-4 .....	443	Rev. 20:11-14 .....	403
Phil. 4:4 .....	466	Rev. 21:4 .....	115
Phil. 4:8 .....	467	Rev. 22:18 .....	112, 114
Phm. 1:1, 10 .....	361	Rev. 7:3-9 .....	531
Phm. 1:1, 8-14, 22-24 .....	359, 364	Rom. 1:1 .....	233, 492
Phm. 1:1-2 .....	133, 360	Rom. 1:11 .....	102
Phm. 1:22 .....	359	Rom. 1:13 .....	190, 430
Phm. 1:23 .....	360	Rom. 1:16 .....	173, 174
Phm. 1:23-24 .....	361	Rom. 1:16 .....	459
Phm. 1:24 .....	362	Rom. 1:18 .....	93
Prov 18:19 .....	209	Rom. 1:8-15 .....	308
Prov. 16:33 .....	74	Rom. 1:9-12 .....	234
Prov. 22:29 .....	148	Rom. 10:13-17 .....	196
Prov. 31:30-31 .....	418	Rom. 10:14-17 .....	459
Ps 37:23 .....	431	Rom. 11:13 .....	165
Ps. 109:5-8 .....	66	Rom. 11:24 .....	173
Ps. 2:1-6 .....	336	Rom. 11:5 .....	354
Ps. 22 .....	383	Rom. 12:2 .....	446
Ps. 30:5 .....	132	Rom. 12:2-3 .....	93
Ps. 4:4 .....	87	Rom. 12:2-3 .....	460
Ps. 69 .....	383	Rom. 12:7 .....	104
Ps. 78:21-22 .....	59	Rom. 13:12 .....	132
Rev. 1:11 .....	217	Rom. 13:1-2 .....	134
Rev. 1:12-16 .....	220	Rom. 13:12-13 .....	464
Rev. 1:20 .....	295	Rom. 13:3-4 .....	309
Rev. 1:9 .....	217	Rom. 15:16 .....	316
Rev. 1:9-11 .....	112	Rom. 15:18-19 .....	276
Rev. 11:3-10 .....	531	Rom. 15:19 .....	272, 273, 278
Rev. 11:3-6 .....	112	Rom. 15:19, 25 .....	279
Rev. 13:11-18 .....	534	Rom. 15:20 .....	187
Rev. 14:12-14 .....	445	Rom. 15:20-22 .....	187
Rev. 19:11-21 .....	336	Rom. 15:20-25 .....	295
Rev. 19:20 .....	534	Rom. 15:23-32 .....	187
Rev. 19:9 .....	104	Rom. 15:25 .....	279, 308
Rev. 2:10 .....	117	Rom. 15:25, 28 .....	298
Rev. 2:13 .....	262	Rom. 15:26 .....	301, 307
Rev. 2:2 .....	281, 462	Rom. 15:26-27 .....	175, 296, 297
Rev. 2:2-3 .....	443	Rom. 15:27 .....	173
Rev. 2:2-4 .....	7	Rom. 15:29-32 .....	234
Rev. 2:5 .....	295	Rom. 15:30 .....	496

Rom. 15:6-7 .....	311	Rom. 6:3 .....	93, 231
Rom. 15:7 .....	311	Rom. 6:6-11 .....	446
Rom. 15:8-16 .....	33	Rom. 7:10 .....	375
Rom. 16 .....	403	Rom. 7:1-3 .....	61
Rom. 16:1-12 .....	117	Rom. 7:22 .....	375
Rom. 16:1-2 .....	309	Rom. 7:4 .....	61
Rom. 16:13 .....	235, 311, 405	Rom. 7:6 .....	441
Rom. 16:14 .....	133	Rom. 8:14 .....	190
Rom. 16:15 .....	133	Rom. 8:15 .....	94
Rom. 16:2 .....	403	Rom. 8:3-9 .....	441
Rom. 16:21-22 .....	312	Rom. 8:9-10 .....	97
Rom. 16:23 .....	133, 235, 312, 425	Rom. 9:1-3 .....	40
Rom. 16:25 .....	34	Titus 1:2 .....	114
Rom. 16:25-27 .....	459	Titus 1:5 .....	273, 276
Rom. 16:3 .....	310	Titus 1:6-7 .....	184
Rom. 16:3-5 .....	133, 256	Titus 2:14 .....	463
Rom. 16:5 .....	310, 403	Titus 3:1-14 .....	463
Rom. 16:6, 12 .....	442	Titus 3:12 .....	273, 276, 279, 301, 431
Rom. 16:7 .....	358, 407	Titus 3:12-13 .....	117
Rom. 2:16 .....	34	Titus 3:12-13 .....	277
Rom. 2:26 .....	221	Titus 3:13 .....	276, 277, 279, 280
Rom. 3:1-2 .....	42	Zech. 12:9 .....	124
Rom. 3:23-25 .....	341	Zech. 12:9-13:1 .....	395
Rom. 3:4 .....	115	Zech. 12:9-13:1 .....	31
Rom. 3-4 .....	392	Zech. 13:7 .....	383
Rom. 4:25 .....	94	Zech. 13:8 .....	124
Rom. 4:3-8 .....	122	Zech. 14:1-3 .....	336
Rom. 5:3 .....	446	Zech. 9:9 .....	383
Rom. 6:11 .....	465	Zeph. 3:9 .....	119
Rom. 6:14 .....	221		
Rom. 6:15 .....	380		



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