

Church On Fire

A look at the radical and rapid growth of the early church through the book of Acts. In this inspired historical narrative we will see the courage of the early church in pushing forth the Gospel and we will be encouraged to follow in their footsteps.

The Fire is still Spreading

Acts 27-28

Sailing to Rome – Acts 27:1-12

- (Paul & other prisoners given to centurion Julius.
- First stop Sidon, let Paul go with friends and be cared for.
- Headed around Cyprus, passed Cilicia & Pamphylia came to Myra.
- Put on ship from Alexandria headed to Italy
- Cnidus to Crete, Paul warns that because of season they shouldn't continue. Put back out anyway trying to make it to Phoenix.)

Storm – Acts 27:13-38

- (Sail along Crete until Northeaster hits!
- Barely secure the ship's boat.
- Ropes under ship, lower the "gear" and are driven along.
- Throw cargo overboard.
- 3rd day tossed tackle overboard.
- Many days no sun or stars so they give up hope of being saved.)
- Paul Addresses the Crew
 - Acts 27:21-26 – ²¹After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.²² But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. ²³Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me ²⁴and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.'²⁵ So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. ²⁶Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."
- (Sailors take soundings, water is getting more shallow. Let down 4 anchors.
- Sailors try to escape with lifeboat. Stopped and boat cut loose.
- Paul urges them to eat. They eat and the rest is tossed overboard.)

Shipwreck – Acts 27:39-44

- (Didn't recognize land but see beach to run ashore.
- Cast off anchors, untie rudder and hoist sail for beach.
- Strike sandbar, bow is stuck and stern is being broken by surf.
- Soldiers plan to kill prisoners, centurion stops them.
- Swimmers told to jump in and the rest to find something to float on.
- Everyone safe to land.)

Miracles on Malta – Acts 28:1-10

- (Islanders showed unusual kindness. Built a fire and welcomed us because it was raining and cold.
- Paul gathers wood, throws it in fire, viper jumps out and fastened on his hand.
- Islanders think it is an act of Justice. Paul shakes it off with no effects. They change their minds and say he is a god.
- The chief official welcomes with hospitality. Paul prays for his sick father and he's healed.
- The rest of the sick on the island come and are cured.
- Furnished with supplies when they left.)

Finally in Rome – Acts 28:11-31

- (3 months later put back out to sea in another Alexandrian ship.
- Get to Italy and brothers and sisters had heard Paul was coming.
- Paul is encouraged and grateful at the sight of believers.)

- Acts 28:16-31 – ¹⁶When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

¹⁷Three days later he called together the local Jewish leaders. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: "My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans.¹⁸They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. ¹⁹The Jews objected, so I was compelled to make an appeal to Caesar. I certainly did not intend to bring any charge against my own people. ²⁰For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain."

²¹They replied, "We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of our people who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. ²²But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect."

²³They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. He witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus. ²⁴Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. ²⁵They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors when he said through Isaiah the prophet:

²⁶“Go to this people and say,
“You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.”

²⁷For this people’s heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.’^[a]

²⁸“Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!” ^[29] ^[b]

³⁰For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. ³¹He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

Acts isn’t Over!!!

- Paul isn’t Done

- While in prison Paul writes Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians & Philemon.
- After release it’s believed that Paul continued to stay on mission and wrote 1 Timothy and Titus.
- Paul is put in Roman prison a second time and writes 2 Timothy while awaiting his execution.

- God isn’t Done!

- In Us

- Philippians 1:3-6 – ³I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

- Through Us

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin^[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- **Matthew 28:18-20** – ¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”