

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral
Lesson 50 “Generational Ministry”

I. Introduction - We are closing out our series on the book of *Acts* today. We began studying through last January to understand how the gospel went viral (spread) in the first century through various revivals and outpourings of the spirit. The goal has to been to learn lessons from the early church about how we can turn our world right side up in the midst of chaos.

A. Today as we close, we are going to look at Paul’s arrival in Rome after getting off track for 2 over years when he went to Jerusalem.. This was a strategic move of God to infiltrate the most powerful empire of that day.

B. I’m not going to spend as much time focusing on the 20 or so verses of what happened as I am on the takeaways to us.

1. The reason is the end to *Acts* is pretty underwhelming. It’s kind of like Luke stopped writing in the middle of the story. He basically said Paul met with some Jewish leaders and preached the gospel. Some believed and some didn’t. Then Paul kept preaching the kingdom of God. That’s it. Why does it end this way?

2. I personally think the reason *Acts* ends this way is because the book of *Acts* doesn’t end. What was recorded is done and shouldn’t be added to, however the mission of the church still goes on. It’s generational!

3. Many people are bored with Christianity because they don’t live with the spirit of the book of *Acts* in their heart and are only waiting for the return of Jesus. This makes us passive and God doesn’t want that, which is why today I’m going to talk with you about *Acts 29* or **Generational Ministry**.

II. Generational Ministry

A. **Acts 28:11-16 Arrival at Rome**

1. After 3 months, Paul and his team left Malta and ported in several other cities in Italy before arriving in Rome.

2. **Verses 15** The brethren were so excited to meet Paul they came to Appii Forum and Three Inns which were towns outside of Rome. This is the treatment that would be given to emperors when they returned home from a trip.

3. **Verse 16** Paul was given unusual favor in Rome and allowed to stay by himself with a Roman soldier in a rented house. Paul was prosperous.

B. **Acts 28:17-31 Paul’s Ministry in Rome**

1. Paul initially called a meeting with Jewish leaders who wanted to meet with him, which is consistent with his pattern everywhere else he went.

- 2. **Verses 17-22** Paul shares his testimony about what happened to them in Jerusalem and was given a day to share the gospel (different response from the Jews and Rome versus those in Jerusalem - why we need to be in the will of God.)
- 3. **Verses 23-27** Paul shares about the kingdom of God from the law and prophets these were always given to point us to Jesus. Some people believed and some did not. Quotes **Isaiah 6:9-10**.
- 4. **Verses 28-29** Paul then told them because they have rejected Jesus, salvation has been sent to the Gentiles. We'll study this theme more in **Romans**, but the God chose the Jews and when they rejected the gospel, He then sent the gospel to the gentiles with the hopes of provoking the Jews to jealousy and then grafting them back into the family of God.
- 5. **Verses 30-31** Paul rented a house for 2 years and preached the gospel of the kingdom for the rest of the time he was in Rome. He both preached (proclaimed) and taught (explained) how the kingdom works. Teaching is how the kingdom happens.

C. What Happened Next and Takeaways

- 1. Some of Paul's greatest ministry happened while he was in Rome. This is where he wrote **Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon**. Where would be without those letters?
- 2. Paul stood trial before Nero and was released. He ended up traveling to Spain, maybe the UK, and back to Ephesus, Philippi, and other places. In Ephesus, he poured into a young pastor named Timothy who wrote 2 more letters to during his second imprisonment in Rome.
- 3. Paul was eventually arrested and imprisoned again. Church history says he was beheaded in approximately 67 A.D.
- 4. The lesson to learn from Paul and the end of **Acts** is the kingdom of God never ends: **Isaiah 9:7**. One of the things that shaped Paul's theology as a Jewish man is his understanding of the temple. The Jews saw the temple in Jerusalem as a place where heaven and earth collided. After he came to Christ, he learned that we are now the temple of the Holy Spirit and we are the place where heaven and earth collides (a christian was the place where heaven met earth - **Matthew 6:10**). The thing that motivated Paul was to see God's kingdom expand and to see earth become a little more like heaven.

III. Conclusion - Our charge as the church is to spend time in the presence of Jesus each day and to co-labor with God to see earth become more like heaven. This isn't a one time event, but this is an ongoing process Jesus has entrusted us with until He returns physically and consummates the kingdom.

A. Closing Prayer and call Up Prayer Team