

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral
Lesson 47 “The Power of Vision”

I. We have been studying through *Acts* and how the gospel went viral through various revivals in the first century. This is what caused the gospel to spread so rapidly in the first century.

A. Most recently currently studying Paul’s ministry in Jerusalem. As we’ve studied, Paul was in Jerusalem because of his disobedience to the call of God on his life to go to the Gentiles. He also ignored 2 prophetic words that told him if he went to Jerusalem, he would suffer.

1. After being arrested and imprisoned we saw over 40 Jews decide they were going to set up an ambush to have Paul killed.
2. God moved supernaturally through Paul’s nephew hearing the plot and a Roman centurion delivering Paul from Jerusalem to Caesarea with a 470 person armed caravan.
3. Once Paul got to Caesarea he was put on trial and even though he proved his innocence, the Roman Governor Felix held him in prison 2 more years.

B. This leads to the question, what made Paul keep going? **Proverbs 29:18** - Vision keeps us focused and also keeps us from casting off restraint. Today we are going to talk about the Power of Vision.

II. The Power of Vision

A. **Acts 26:19-20** Paul had a vision for his life that came from God. The vision touched his heart and motivated him to work and suffer things that would have broken most of us.

1. **John 4:34** Godly vision nourishes us - something we willingly sacrifice for.
2. **Nehemiah 1:3-4** Godly vision will move our emotions.
3. **Philippians 2:13** God works in us to both will and to do. Vision affects us internally. It creates a desire to will and to do.

B. **Acts 25:1-12 Paul Appeals to Caesar**

1. Once again the same accusations are made against Paul. This time they are made to Festus who was Felix’s replacement as Governor of Judea.
2. Historically, Festus is considered a better man than Felix, however, he tried to send Paul to Jerusalem to stand trial to earn favor with the Jews. Paul would have been murdered if he went to Jerusalem.
3. Paul appealed to Caesar (a right he had as a Roman citizen) to avoid having to go to Jerusalem - SMART - mind of God. This also is what initiated Paul getting to Rome, which was always God’s plan for Paul.

C. Acts 25:13-Acts 25:27 Paul Appears Before Herod Agrippa

1. Festus explains the events concerning Paul's situation to Herod Agrippa who was a Roman King of territories around Judea.
2. He explains he wanted to send Paul to Jerusalem, but Paul appealed to Caesar.
3. Paul appeared before Herod and Bernice in the auditorium (courtroom where cases were heard). Festus said Paul hadn't done anything deserving of death, he decided to send him to Caesar as Paul requested. He also stated it was unreasonable to send a prisoner and not specify the charges against him.

D. Acts 26:1-23 Paul Shares His Life Vision

1. **Acts 26:1-11** Paul shares his testimony and identifies with his accusers as one who opposed and persecuted Christians. He grew up as a Pharisee and without saying it he was saying he was more committed and sincere to the Jewish faith than his accusers. His identifying as all in with the Jewish faith.
2. **Acts 26:12-23** Paul shares his heavenly vision.
 - a. He had an encounter with God that changed his life. We all need these.
 - b. Andrew Wommack March 23rd 1968 encounter with the unconditional love of God changed his life.
 - c. Neither of these experiences were random. Both men were in the word for years prior to the encounter. The word was preparing their hearts and then when God manifested, he brought correction and greater insight into the word so they could go from misapplying it to applying it. **They had to prepare the soil of their heart first!**
 - d. Hard to kick against the pricks - the Holy Spirit had been dealing with Paul's heart for years. We must respond to these promptings of our heart.
 - e. God's vision was to deliver Paul from the Jews (shouldn't have gone back to Jerusalem) and send him to the gentiles so he could to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified^[d] by faith in Jesus.
 - f. Paul went on to say he obeyed this vision and proclaimed light to the Jews and Gentiles.

III. Conclusion - This story contains the 3rd and 4th times Paul shares his testimony to government officials that have the capacity to set him free. Paul had gone through tremendous hardship that would have caused many of us to quit. What caused Paul to keep going? **Vision!**

A. Martin Luther King Example - quote just before his death - "Like anybody, I would like to live a long life — longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over and I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want

you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land. And so I'm happy tonight; I'm not worried about anything; I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." **Martin Luther King's vision gave him the capacity to sacrifice and endure!**

B. Vision changes us on the inside and brings forth focus and the ability to endure hardship that the person without godly vision doesn't have the ability to pursue.

C. Call Up Prayer Team

D. Pray Closing Prayer