

Bible Study: Acts

(Part 11—Chapters 21-26)

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We left off of our study with **verses 10-14 of Chapter 21** and were speaking of personal prophecy. I would like to share with you this true story concerning personal prophecy as we start in our Acts study. Also, we need to clarify our position on tongues, whether or not it is the only evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit before we get into the text again.

“In heaven we’ll understand why.”

“KEITH GREEN was a struggling Hollywood nightclub singer, but at the same time he was fascinated with Jesus. A Christian friend invited Keith and his wife, Melody, to a Bible study of his Vineyard Christian Fellowship at a home in Beverly Hills. The leader spoke about how God sent his Son to earth to show the way to the Father. He explained, ‘You need to open your heart to Jesus and let him come into your life.’

“As he ended his talk, he asked those wanting to receive Jesus to raise their hands. Keith raised his hand, but Melody couldn’t get her hand to move. The leader had those who raised their hands repeat a prayer, and then they were dismissed.

“Keith had a gig that night at a bar, but during one of his breaks, he told Melody, ‘I just can’t do this anymore.’ The next week seemed to go on forever for Melody. She kept thinking, *I want to go back to the Vineyard. I hope he asks us to raise our hands again.*

“They returned to the Bible study the next Friday night. At last the leader got to the hand-raising part. Melody raised her hand and a rush of peace greater than anything she had ever experienced filled her heart.

“Keith Green quickly became one of the most popular Christian singer-songwriters. His debut album set a record for sales in the Christian recording industry. As a result, requests for concert bookings came flooding in. Not only did God give Keith success in his music and speaking ministry, but in the next years he blessed them with three children: Josiah, Bethany, and Rebekah.

“On **July 28, 1981**, the Greens and their children were at the Youth With A Mission base in Cimmaron, Colorado. Melody was rejoicing because she had just learned she was pregnant again. While leading a worship time for the staff, Keith surprised Melody by announcing to the group, ‘God is going to raise my wife up! She is going to speak against abortion—but that is not all. The Lord is going to use Melody in a mighty way, and she’s going to speak about many different things in many different places.’

“After dinner the pilot who had flown their family to Colorado offered to take Keith, his children, and another family on a plane ride to see the area from the air. Keith took their two oldest children, Josiah and Bethany, with him for the plane ride. As he was leaving he called to Melody in an offhand way, ‘If I don’t come back, raise Rebekah to be a woman of God.’ Keith jumped in the car and drove to the airstrip.

“In a short while Melody received a phone call that the plane had crashed. Rushing to the crash site, she learned that there were no survivors. Keith Green was just twenty-eight.

“That night a close friend called Melody with a word she had received from the Lord for her. Melody quickly got a pencil and wrote as her friend spoke: ‘They are with me. My glory is revealed to them. They are in my arms.’

“The following winter Melody gave birth to Rachel. In the next two years Melody traveled to 110 cities and spoke to three hundred thousand people at Keith Green Memorial Concerts. She served as president of Last Days Ministries and its sister organization, Americans against Abortion...” (*The One Year Book of Christian History, A daily Glimpse into God’s powerful work* by E. Michael and Sharon Rusten)

THERE SHOULD NOT BE DIVISIONS OVER THE FILLING

Before we start a new section in our study, I would like to clarify my position on the filling of the Holy Spirit. As you have been reading, you may have gotten the impression that I am teaching that in order to have the filling of the Holy Spirit one has to speak in tongues, this is not the case, nor has this ever been my position. I would like to give our view on this subject from our statement of faith. You can find the whole statement of faith in the section with my testimony, but here is the part in question: We believe:

“In the filling (baptism) of the Holy Spirit. This usually takes place after salvation. Also, one is to continue to seek to be refilled after the initial filling (Acts 2:17-18, 38; 10:44-48; 19:6; Ephesians 5:18). The 'filling' comes by faith 'alone'. Signs follow as a result, but not always at the same moment of the filling. Speaking in tongues is 'one of the signs,' and is 'available' for every believer [who is Spirit filled].

“This speaking in tongues is different than the 'gift of tongues' that is to be used in the church (1 Corinthians 12:30). The main benefit of personal tongues is to the individual and will result in the building up of oneself in the spirit (1 Corinthians 14:4a; Jude 20). The main result of the filling (or baptism) of the Holy Spirit will be in the boldness to do evangelism, and the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit (Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22-23).

“The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not to be forbidden from the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12-14). The gifts are to be used in love (1 Corinthians 13) to build up the body and not to tear it down. The rules of 1 Corinthians 14 must be followed in the use of the gifts.” [*Statement of Faith*, Section concerning filling (baptism) of the Holy Spirit]

The reason we need to discuss this is because today there is a division right down the middle of the Evangelical churches on this subject of the filling (baptism) of the Holy Spirit. Some insist that if you speak in tongues, even in private, you have sinned against the Lord. Others say if you don't speak in tongues you certainly cannot be filled or baptized by the Holy Spirit.

I have faced this first hand in my own life and ministry. When Marlene and I were first filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues, our relatives were very upset with us. We knew we would no longer be accepted in many denominations as far as service. When I went to a Pentecostal denomination to serve, I was given a license to preach, but not an ordination because of the stand I have taken. That stand is stated in our statement of faith above. To many Pentecostals this does not go far enough, they teach that unless you speak in tongues

you cannot be filled (baptized) with the Holy Spirit.

We believe as the statement of faith states, tongues is 'one' of the signs of the filling and is 'available' to those who are filled with the Holy Spirit. There are those throughout history, for one reason or another who never spoke in tongues, but they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

The reason I have taken this position is because in some of the Scriptures that speak of the filling, there is no mention of tongues, but there were other results, such as in Acts 2:17-18; 4:31; 6:3,5; 9:17, 20. It does not say Paul spoke in tongues immediately upon his filling, even though we know from 1 Corinthians 14:18 he did speak in tongues. Even in the Acts 19:1-6 passage one could argue that some spoke in tongues and others of the twelve prophesized. Yes, it does seem that there were at least four times where people did speak in tongues in Acts when filled, so we need to be balanced here in our theology.

Some argue that tongues did not happen after the Twelve Apostles, but John Wesley documents tongues taking place in history after the Twelve Apostles, and he says: "The most controversial miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit is the gift of tongues. This, it is sure, was claimed by the primitive Christians, because Irenaeus says expressly, 'We hear many in the church speaking with all kinds of tongues.' While saying that many in his day had this gift, he did not have the gift himself."

["...There may be many reasons in the depth and wisdom of God for His doing many things at various times and places which were never recorded at all. Such acts may have been done by either His natural or supernatural power. Indeed, many could have once been recorded with the fullest evidence, but are lost to us now at a distance of hundreds of years.

["It is possible that this is the situation in the case before us. Many may have spoken in new tongues of whom there is no record. At least, the record of such are lost in the course of many years. It is not only possible that such records are lost, but it is absolutely certain...

["...To follow the axiom, that something not recorded did not occur, would leave us in a peculiar position. The consequence of such would be a conclusion that the apostles no more spoke in tongues than their successors.

["...An historical mistake is the statement that this gift has not appeared in an authentic setting since the Reformation. It is a mistake to deny that an authentic appearance of this gift is missing from Christianity.

["One well-known instance of new tongues occurred in France among the Huguenots. That movement of the Holy Spirit was put down after much effort by Louis XIV, not by the pen of his scholars, but with swords and bayonets of his dragoons." {An excellent review of the history of tongues is Kelsey's *Tongue Speaking*. The details of the Huguenot outbreak of the charismata are included in it, pp. 52ff, Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking*, (Garden City, New York: Waymark Books/Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1968).} *The Holy Spirit and Power* by John Wesley as paraphrased by Clare Weakley.]

The Church should not be divided any longer over this issue! Just because you or I spoke in tongues when we were filled, does not prove that everyone has to in order to be truly filled. What does Scripture say? I could not say, even to be ordained, 'the evidence of the filling (baptism) is always speaking in tongues.' **I could not bring myself to say tongues is the evidence of the filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit, because it does not**

say this in Scripture! Nor is it the experience of millions of others who are now alive or who lived before this time, who were filled with the Holy Spirit, but did not speak in tongues. We cannot, nor should we try to put the Holy Spirit in a box of our own theological making!

This division in the Church is grieving the Holy Spirit, and has gone on long enough! Born Again, Spirit filled Christians who do speak in tongues need to accept those who do not speak in tongues. Born Again, Spirit filled Christians who do not speak in tongues need to accept those who do speak in tongues. In this study I am trying to show the beliefs of both groups, so you ‘reader,’ can see that both groups can truly be filled with the Holy Spirit, with or without speaking in tongues. They have both experienced ‘signs’ after being filled, that let them know they certainly were filled! (Can you say, you know for certain you have been filled with the Holy Spirit?)

Also, I want to show that when we use the terms ‘filling’ or ‘baptism’ of the Holy Spirit we are really arguing about semantics. For the sake of peace, and being most agreeable with all groups, the term ‘filling of the Holy Spirit’ is most acceptable. When I am working with Baptists they will accept this term, but they will only use the term ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ for being baptized into the body of Christ at salvation (1 Corinthians 12:13). Since this is the case, now, (for R. A. Torrey believed both terms were synonymous) for the sake of peace we need to accommodate others. We do not want Christians to throw out the baby with the bath water over terminology, do we? I’m sure this is the reason the authors of the *New Spirit Filled Life Bible* chose the title that they did.

The one common denominator in all the fillings we have spoken of in Scripture and in experience, has been **power (boldness)** to do evangelism. Remember what Jesus said would happen when the Holy Spirit comes? “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are **witnesses** of these things. Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with **power** from on high.” (Luke 24:46-49)

[**“Power from on High**, Jesus’ instructions to the disciples before His ascension were clear—wait in Jerusalem and expect **power**. There was no hint given about what would happen, but clearly the evidence shows that Jesus knew what would occur and would make it abundantly clear to them. ‘The Promise of My Father’ and all they experienced at the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost are one and the same.

[“As the Baptizer with the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16), Jesus’ instruction to His followers in Luke 11:13 to ‘ask’ for the {fullness of the} Holy Spirit and to wait until they receive power is pertinent to all believers for all times. All who believe are to ask and expect God to fill them with His Spirit and to be empowered for their mission to serve Him. It is this supernatural **power [boldness]** that Jesus uses to fulfill His mission to the world through His church.” (*New Spirit Filled Life Bible*)

After the resurrection when Jesus was with the disciples it says this happened: “So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’ And when he had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” (John 20:22) So they had the Holy Spirit in their lives, and were born again, but now they would also need the filling. So before Jesus went back to heaven He reminded them “...not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, ‘which,’ *He said*, you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from

now.” (Acts 1:4b-5)

He said this, “But you shall receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) This is why we have chosen this verse as our key verse. And this is where we have to remember that this book of *The Acts of the Holy Spirit* is a **blueprint** for us in the church today. Let’s not lose sight of the reason for the filling, nor should we be surprised when someone does speak in tongues when filled. By the same token, nor should we be surprised when someone has another sign such as boldness to share the Gospel like they never had before.

With this in mind, let me remind you, as we have done this study, I have shown examples of some Christians that were filled, who did speak in tongues, and others who did not claim to speak in tongues when they were filled, but had one or more signs of another kind other than tongues. There were several examples in this study of men being filled who made no mention of speaking in tongues and these were: W. Phillip Keller, Mr. Keller spoke about ‘the pivot point’ of his life, and also we spoke of the teaching of Oswald J. Smith, John Wesley, R.A. Torrey and so on.

I could have mentioned many others that were obviously filled with the Holy Spirit and that were used mightily of the Lord, but who make no mention of tongues as a sign when they were filled. Now that is not to say that everyone reveals this in their writings, or if it is a biography, this may not be known.

Setting this argument of silence aside, think of men like A.B. Simpson, Charles Spurgeon, Dwight L. Moody, R.A. Torrey, Billy Sunday, Mel Trotter, General William Booth, Peter Marshall, and women like Corrie Ten Boom, Gladys Aylward, Mother Teresa and many many other men and women we could name; are we to say that they were not filled with the Holy Spirit because they did not speak in tongues?

How else can you account for the **power to witness** that they had, unless they were filled with the Holy Spirit?! It did not happen one way in Acts and another way today. God is working the same way He did back then, keeping His promise to fill all those who ask. Some will speak in tongues, others will preach or teach in the **power** of the Holy Spirit. All will be women and men of prayer!

Here is another example of someone who you may have heard of, that claims to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and believes it is a command, but has not spoken in tongues. His name is Billy Graham and here is his testimony concerning this subject of the ‘filling of the Holy Spirit.’

“Twenty-eight-year-old Billy Graham thrust his hands into his pockets as he walked off the stage at his third Youth for Christ crusade meeting in the small Welsh town of Gorseinon. As he walked down the stairs, just ahead of his chorus director, Cliff Barrows, Billy thought about the service that had just concluded. It had been like so many others he had held back in the united States, but somehow it had lacked something. But what? He grappled for a word. **Power.**

“**Power** was the closest he could come to describing what was missing. The meetings he had held so far were discouraging. The number of people gathered was small, and they fidgeted and whispered to each other while he preached. Billy Graham was well aware that he was in Wales, home to some of the greatest revival preachers of all time, and that his style was very different from what the Welsh were used to. But he had felt called to come to Wales, and God provided the money needed to get there.

“He had felt this call soon after returning to the United States with Torrey Johnson. In the spring the two men had been commissioned to go to Europe and establish the ministry of Youth for Christ. Billy had been discouraged by what he saw in Europe, particularly in England. The land of William Carey, Charles Spurgeon, and William Booth had become spiritually lethargic, and Billy Graham had seemed to lack what was needed to wake it up.

“In late summer, Billy spoke at the Maranatha Bible Conference in Michigan. A man by the name of Clarence Benware heard him share about the great spiritual need in Europe, especially Great Britain. Benware came after the service and gave him one hundred dollars saying, ‘You must go back.’

“This had struck a responsive chord in the evangelist’s heart and he determined to return to Britain as soon as possible.

“Now here he was in Wales, but so far things had not turned out as he had hoped. He had not been able to penetrate the tough Welsh exterior.

“That night, lying in bed, Billy began to seek more of God. As he did so, a man kept coming to mind. The man was Steven Olford, a Welsh evangelist whom Billy and his small team had stopped to hear in Gravesend on their way to Wales. In that brief encounter Billy sensed Steven Olford had something in his life he desperately wanted. There was a dynamic exhilaration about Olford that bubbled over to all he talked to.

“Steven Olford lived only eleven miles from where Billy Graham was currently staying. The next morning the evangelist determined to track him down and ask some serious questions about the power behind his ministry.

“Delighted to hear from the young American evangelist, Steven Olford invited Billy to meet at a small hotel in the nearby village of Pontypridd. The two men began talking about spiritual things immediately. Billy soon learned that Steven Olford was the son of missionaries and had been raised in Africa. Olford’s father had been led to Christ under the preaching of R. A. Torrey, while Steven himself had been led into a rich experience of the Holy Spirit under the influence of the Keswick movement in Great Britain. The Keswick movement emphasized the Spirit-filled life of total dedication to Christ.

“Soon both men had their Bible open and were down on their knees in their little hotel room. They sought God’s heart and power for Billy Graham and his ministry. The hours rolled by as they turned pages together and shared the truths of God’s Word.

“By the end of the first day, Steven Olford had introduced Billy Graham to the concept of the ‘quiet time.’ Olford urged the young American to develop a life of prayer and Bible study that was consistent and disciplined and emanated from a hunger for God’s best. The next day Olford led Billy Graham in a Bible study that expounded the power that comes into the life of the believer who is willing to submit moment by moment to the sovereignty of Christ and the authority of the Word.

“At the end of the study, Steven Olford began to pray for Billy Graham. Billy prayed silently for a while and then, like Jacob of old he cried out, ‘Lord I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.’

“Steven Olford testified to how God had completely turned his life inside out through experiencing the fullness

and anointing of the Holy Spirit. As he spoke, Billy Graham replied with tears streaming down his face, ‘Steve, I see it. That’s exactly what I want. It’s what I need in my life.’ He then began pouring out his heart in a prayer of total dedication to the Lord.

“Finally, he turned to Steven Olford. ‘My heart is so aflood with the Holy Spirit, I want to laugh and praise God all at the same time,’ he said. Graham then got up and began pacing back and forth across the narrow room declaring, ‘**I have it. I’m filled.**’ Finally he turned and grasped Steven Olford’s had. ‘This is a turning point in my life,’ he said, his eyes shining brightly.

“On the third day, the two men went their separate ways, though Steven Olford promised to return for Billy’s evangelistic meeting that night.

“That night, for some unknown reason, the hall where Billy Graham was scheduled to preach was filled to overflowing, unlike the other nights when only a smattering of loyal churchgoers had shown up. From the moment Billy opened his mouth to preach, Olford sensed something was different. Billy preached a sermon he had preached before on the feast of Balshazzar. Yet this time it was delivered with power and authority Billy had longed for, but never quite achieved. As soon as he gave an invitation to come forward, working men and women jammed the aisles, jostling to be the first to the front.

“Later Steven Olford confessed that he was so moved by the change in Billy’s demeanor that he could hardly concentrate on the road as he drove home. At home Olford’s father took one look at his son and blurted out, ‘What on earth has happened?’

“Olford sat down at the kitchen table and said, ‘Dad, something has happened to Billy Graham. The world is going to hear from this man. He is going to make his mark in history.’

“Billy Graham himself reflects back on that day as the definitive turning point in his ministry of evangelism. The experience has to a significant degree influenced Billy’s whole understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in evangelism.” (*The Evangelist* by Lewis A. Drummond, Foreword by John R. W. Stott) I believe that if we could go back to each one of the men and women that we mentioned above, that were used so powerfully of God, and ask them what was their secret of success, that they would say it was the filling and empowering of the Holy Spirit in their lives just like what happened to Billy Graham.

Chapter 21: 15-

(15-16) “The Greek of this verse is a bit obscure and may be translated either **bringing (brought) us to the house (home) of Mnason...(RSV, NIV)** or **with whom we should (were to) lodge (AV, NKJV)**. If the former is correct, Mnason lived some-where between Caesarea and Jerusalem (a journey of sixty-five miles), and there the party spent the night. It is equally likely, however, that Mnason, a disciple from the earliest days (an old disciple AV) but a Hellenistic Jew, owned a house in Jerusalem, where he planned to entertain Paul and his party.

“Paul was accompanied by Gentile Christians, and it was not clear how these Gentiles would be welcomed by the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. The lodging provided by Mnason promised to avoid tensions that might arise because of associations between Jewish and Gentile believers.” (*Wycliffe Bible Commentary*)

“*Mnason*. Must have been a disciple of some means to be able to accommodate Paul and a group of about nine men traveling with him.” (*NIV Study Bible*)

(17) “*arrived at Jerusalem*. No more than a day or two before Pentecost. *the brothers received us warmly*. May indicate the grateful reception of the offering as well.

(18-19) “*James*. The brother of the Lord, author of the letter of James and leader of the church in Jerusalem (see Galatians 1:19; 2:9). He is called an apostle but was not one of the Twelve.” (*NIV Study Bible*)

“*we*. Evidently Luke was still with Paul as they came to Jerusalem.” (*The Defenders’ Study Bible*)

“**The Closing Scenes of Paul’s life**. 21:18 to 28:31.

1. Paul and the Jewish Christians. 21:18-26.
2. Paul and the non-Christian Jews. 21:27-31.
3. Paul’s arrest. 21:32-40.
4. Paul’s defense before the Jews and the result. 22:1-30.
5. Paul before the Jewish council. 23:1-10.
6. His removal to Caesarea. 23:11-35.
7. Paul before Felix. Chapter 24.
8. Paul before Festus. Chapter 25
9. Paul before Agrippa Chapter 26.
10. Paul’s journey to Rome. Chapters 27,28.

“Paul was well received by the church at Jerusalem (21:17, 18), but they felt anxious for his safety, for the rumor had spread that Paul was preaching against the law of Moses and that he was persuading the Jews to forsake it. Because of this rumor (which was false) the Jews of Jerusalem felt towards Paul as we would feel towards an anarchist—one opposed to law and order.

“In order to disarm the Jews’ hostility, and to prove the falsity of the rumor, Paul consented to the observance of a Jewish ceremony. In doing this, he did not compromise in any fundamental matter, but acted upon the following principles laid down by himself in his writings: he became a Jew to the Jews that he might win the Jews, as willingly as he became as a Gentile in order to win the Gentiles (1 Corinthians 9:20,21); he had given it as a rule that no man should change his external observances because he became a Christian. 1 Corinthians 7:17-19. Paul’s action in regard to testimony to Timothy (16:3) proved the falsity of the accusation that he was persuading the Jews to forsake the law of Moses.

[‘Luke has related the extension of the church from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria until a semi-independent Gentile church was established in Antioch. From Antioch the Gospel was carried by Paul on three missions through Asia and Europe. Evangelistic and missionary work was undoubtedly being carried on during this time by other apostles. We have, for instance, no account of the evangelization of Egypt, with its great center, Alexandria. Luke is concerned only to trace the main outlines of what he considers to be the most significant line of expansion—toward Rome. There remains only the need to record Paul’s mission of taking the Gospel to Rome.’ (*Wycliffe*)]

(20-25) It seems that there were even Christians in those days who misunderstood the use of the Law in the

Church Age. Remember hardly any Christians at that time would have had an opportunity to read the book of Romans that Paul had recently written and sent to the Christians in Rome. {Look at our Study on Romans Part One} Also, as you read this section don't confuse the Christian Jews that were zealous for the law of Moses (v. 20-22) with the Jews that try to kill Paul (v. 27). The Christians that were legalists would not go as far as to kill Paul, since they too were believers in Christ as Messiah. The Jews that were not believers in Christ as Messiah did want to kill Paul, this shows that their heart was not right with God (v. 31).

[‘Although the leaders of the Jerusalem church were delighted with Paul’s report, they had a word of caution for him. They told him that there were thousands of believing **Jews** who even as Christians continued to be **zealous for the law** of Moses, and that these had been informed that Paul not only preached to Gentiles a gospel of grace entirely apart from the Law, but also taught the Jews of the dispersion to **forsake Moses** and to neglect **circumcision** and the observance of the Old Testament customs. This meant that Paul urged Jews to abandon Judaism and cease to be Jews, i.e., to become Gentiles.” (Wycliffe)

[“**forsake Moses**. These were false charges, no doubt spread by the Jews who had opposed Paul in the cities of Asia where he had preached. Presumably many of these, like Paul, had come to Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost and stirred up the citizenry with slanders when they saw Paul there. The stratagem devised by James and the Jerusalem elders to blunt these charges by having Paul associate himself with certain Jewish believers who had taken a Nazarite vow, even paying the expenses involved in the associated ritual, backfired. The very attempt to appease them by Paul was used by them to bring further false accusations against him and to get him arrested.” (The Defender’s Study Bible)]

[“There was still wide debate about Paul’s teaching and Gentile Christianity (v. 21). So the apostolic leadership in Jerusalem asked Paul, out of courtesy to those who were suspicious of him, to purify himself ceremonially. The apostles themselves, however, knew that the accusations were baseless (v. 24). {**Pay their expenses** was a pious and charitable way for an Israelite to associate himself with those who had taken a Nazirite vow (see...Numbers 6:1-21). This involved 30 days of ritual purification, including shaving the head.} Furthermore, the decree of the Jerusalem Council (chapter 15) was **written and decided** (v.25). This is a reaffirmation of the apostolic decree in 15:19,20.” (New Spirit Filled Life Bible)]

“In advising Paul to perform a ceremony of the Jewish ritual, James assured him that no compromise in the matter of the grounds of Gentile salvation was implied (v. 25).

(26-40) “Paul’s action did not save him from the enmity of the non-Christian Jews (vv. 27-31). Certain ones who had heard him preach in Asia Minor (v. 27), recognized him and immediately stirred up the population against him. But for the intervention of the Roman soldiers Paul would have been killed.

[“Apparently Paul’s course of action satisfied the Jewish Christians, but it aroused the enmity of a group of unbelieving **Jew from Asia** who had come to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of Pentecost.” (Wycliffe)]

[“**Trophimus an Ephesian**. (v. 29) Paul had brought several Gentile Christians with him to Jerusalem from various cities (Acts 20:4), presumably as evidence to the brethren of the power of the gospel among the Gentiles (Acts 21:19,20). Evidently when some of the Jews from Ephesus recognized Trophimus with Paul in the city, they jumped to the conclusion that he was also with Paul in the inner court of the temple. Jew, with the approval of the Romans, had labeled this a capital crime.

“*Hebrew tongue*. Paul had impressed the Roman soldiers with his ability in the Greek language, but the Jewish throng was accustomed to speaking in Aramaic. This is probably what is meant by the ‘Hebrew tongue’ AV—that is, the tongue commonly spoken by the Hebrews.” (*The Defender’s Study Bible*)]

[“(v.37) A chief captain (Greek *chiliarch*) was a Roman tribune. There were six of them in a legion of 6000 men. (*Scofield*)]

Chapter 22

(1-2) Paul knew how to gain and hold people’s attention, of course the Holy Spirit was guiding his words, but Paul had a part to play as well. This is important for us too, we must know how to gain and hold people’s attention if we are to be excellent communicators of God’s Word. Here we notice he spoke in a language that they could identify with. Jesus did the same in His ministry, He used the common Greek, it seems most of the time.

(3) **Paul put himself in their shoes in presenting his message so he says, ‘just as you all are today.’**

(4) He put his message in a logical order and used reason as well as illustrations. How many of us have ‘suffered’ through messages that had no illustrations? **Did Jesus do this to His audiences? No, He would not speak to them without an illustration (story that they could relate to in real life).** Someone has said, a message without illustrations is like a house without windows.

When we go to people with the Gospel we should use the language form that they can identify with best. This is one reason I use the New King James Version of the Bible for preaching and teaching. Let’s not be like those church men of the Middle Ages who insisted on the use of the Latin instead of a language that the common people could understand. Paul used his own testimony, and told about what God had done in his own personal life, and we can do this as well when we speak to others about Christ. When we witness to the unsaved we should emphasize what God has done for us and what He can do for them.

“Notice Paul’s defense (22:1-21). He assured them that his present beliefs and life could not be the result of an original difference between himself and his hearers, for he was a true Jew (v. 3), taught by the greatest Jewish teacher [*Gamaliel*] of the day (v. 3), and he was just as zealous for the law, and opposed to the Christians as they were (vv. 4,5). [Consented to the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1), he had been ‘breathing out threatening and slaughter’ (Acts 8:1) against all the followers of Christ. (*Defender’s*)]

[“This begins the second of three Pauline conversion narratives in Acts. The first (9:1-19) was Luke’s account of the event. The second (vv. 6-21) and the third (26:12-18) were told by Paul himself in his public testimony to the Jews and later to the authorities. **Did not hear the voice** seems to contradict 9:7, where Luke records that they did hear the voice. Actually, the verses contain different grammatical constructions, which say the same thing. The companions of Paul’s heard the sound of the voice, but did not discern words with understanding. The description of **Ananias** here is to show how Paul’s conversion and subsequent ministry were compatible with Jewish traditions.” (*New Spirit Filled Life Bible*)]

“Paul then showed what caused his change of belief, and his attitude toward the Christians; namely, a vision of the Lord Himself (vv. 6-16). [**wash away thy sins**. Baptism may symbolize the washing away of one’s sins,

just as it symbolizes death to the old life and rising to a new life (Romans 6:4,5). But just as one does not really die while in the water, neither can physical water wash away moral and spiritual sins. These are the metaphors of baptism. The reality which they speak of is a new life in Christ, with sins forgiven and the assurance of everlasting life, received through faith in Christ as Lord and the regenerating work of the indwelling Spirit of God. Sins really are washed away by regeneration (Titus 3:5).” (*Defender’s*)

(16) As a result of calling on the name of Jesus Christ God’s righteous one, Paul would wash away his sins, and he was to be baptized to show others he was trusting in Christ alone to save him. So washing away of sins goes with calling on Christ’s name, not faith in baptism.

“The reason why he was preaching to the despised Gentiles was that the Lord Himself had sent him (**vv. 17-21**). [**Trance.** “This was probably on the occasion of Paul’s first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion (Acts 9:26ff) (*Scofield*)]

(21-25) Why was it so strange to the Jews that God would be concerned about the Gentiles? This was because they had come to think of themselves as superior to Gentiles. They thought of the Gentiles as sub-human, they thought of them even as like ‘dogs.’ We are not above this type of thinking even today with different ethnic groups other than our own.

Prejudice can lead a person to such lengths that a person could be careless about a person of another nationality than their own. It doesn’t really bother them that these people are dying without Christ, and going into a Christless eternity. **Let us ask Christ to deliver us from this type of prejudice!**

The Jews should have remembered the Gentiles in the Old Testament who were saved like Rahab, the Widow of Zeraphath, Naaman, and countless others who were not mentioned.

[“Paul told of a confirmation of this call given to him through a vision after he had returned to Jerusalem (**9:26**). Since Paul was not concerned to give a complete account of his experience, he omitted all mention of the three years he spent in Arabia (cf. Galatians 1:17,18).

[“He related another aspect of his experience in Jerusalem that Luke did not record in his earlier account. Acts 9 says that Paul was sent away from Jerusalem by the brethren to escape a plot to kill him (Acts 9:28-30). Here Paul tells us that he had left Jerusalem in response to a word from the Lord. While he was praying in the Temple as a faithful Jew, God had warned him in a **trance** that Jerusalem would not receive his message and that he therefore should **get quickly out of Jerusalem.**

[“Paul protested that the Jews knowledge of his earlier zeal and sincerity in persecuting the Christians would convince them of the reality of his conversion. The Lord replied that he should leave Jerusalem, for he would be sent **far away unto the Gentiles.**” (*Wycliffe*)]

One of the reasons I believe the Lord led me to write this commentary of Acts was to show that this is not just some historical book of the early Church history, although it is that too. I believe He led me to write this commentary to show that the book of Acts is an inspired **blueprint** for the Church throughout history and for us today as well. With that in mind I have tried to show the importance of missions, of the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts are also for us in the Church Age today. So, I have tried to show that most everything that

happened in Acts, is happening today in the Church Age.

“Trance— Greek (EKSTASIS) for which see AMAZE, A, No. I, denotes a trance in Acts 10:10; 11:5; 22:17, a condition in which ordinary consciousness and the perception of natural circumstances were withheld, and the soul was susceptible only to the vision imparted by God. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words)

You might think that God doesn’t us trances today as He did in the Old Testament and in the book of Acts, but I believe He does. I had an experience that I would consider a trance, and it happened as Marlene and I with our family were on our way to some missionary training before going overseas. As we were traveling we pulled over to a rest stop on our way through the state of Colorado. There beside my car was a man that the Lord led me to speak to, but as I began to speak it was as though everything around me began to change.

The mountains and clouds were beautiful as before but they took on an appearance way beyond what they had been. Fragrant aromas filled the air, and I was given words to say that were not like I would have normally said them. The words came easily and were right from the heart of God passing through me for this man that God loved in front of me. I shared with this man the Gospel message, and then God through me said in no uncertain terms, ‘Jesus begs you to receive Him as your Savior.’ The man was moved to pray the sinners prayer with me. I do not know for sure, but I sensed there was a pistol in the jockey box of his car, and he was going to commit suicide. But as a result of his conversion we both went rejoicing on our ways.

Here is another example of this in our time:

[“God’s provision for the building of the second home [orphanage in Argentina] is a heart-warming story—a memorial to a young lad and his loving parents. It is a story of tragedy and triumph. We feel it should be told.

“‘Mummie, what do you suppose the children in Africa are doing this morning? Do you suppose the Korean children have enough to eat?’ inquired young Ronnie as he ate the nourishing breakfast prepared by his devoted mother. His interest in missionary lands came quite naturally, for both he and his parents scarcely ever missed a missionary service at the their local church. When the lad began to ask such questions, his mother never quite knew what answers to give him. Often she wondered at her only child’s interest in missions.

“Ronnie was a special gift from the kind Heavenly Father to his Canadian parents who were well along in years. His daddy deeply loved his own boy, but he also loved the other pint-sized neighborhood kids who often gathered on the front veranda to chat and ask questions. Yes, there was a special place in his daddy’s heart, too, for all children.

“Surrounded by love, Ronnie early learned to love the same God that his parents worshipped. A docile child with a sweet spirit, he was not difficult to discipline for his desire was to please the lord. There seemed to be something special about Ronnie, even his unsaved neighbors recognized it: the lonesome, elderly lady whom he always greeted as he passed her veranda, and the corner shopkeeper to whom the lad returned the extra change he had been given mistakenly.

“One day as his mother sat meditating in the park near her home, the glory of the presence of the Lord drew near and her heart was overwhelmed with His beauty and loveliness. She felt new life and strength surging in. Joy

filled her heart and life seemed so worth living.

“Just three days later, the Lord drew near, unannounced, and He tenderly carried away twelve-year-old Ronnie to be with Him. The beautiful gift so sovereignly given, God came to reclaim. Young Ronnie drowned at a supervised private beach where he had been taking swimming lessons.

“Stunned by the suddenness of their loss, shocked and sorrowful beyond measure, perplexed, desperate and questioning, his parents heard the Holy Spirit speak quietly to them through John 12:24, ‘Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.’ Still not understanding why it happened, yet they were somehow comforted. God must have had some reason. God had given and God had taken away, so they blessed and worshipped the Name of their Lord in the midst of their deep sorrow. With abundant tears and broken hearts, they meditated on the ‘much fruit’ that God had promised, wondering how they could co-operate with him to help bring it forth. This little poem became their testimony:

“‘Though our plans and hopes may seem blighted, we will love Him and trust in Him still. For we know all is well that He doeth, and our hearts say ‘amen’ to His will.’

“During the days that followed, as they sought the Lord in prayer, He showed them how to invest their child’s life and his death in the eternal kingdom. With the money saved up for Ronnie’s education, they understood that they should build a home for abandoned and unwanted children on the foreign field. So taking Ronnie’s money, which was almost sacred to them, they built our second children’s home.

“Ronnie’s life is a daily testimony to all who come to visit the homes (of which there are now five). The story of his death and gift has been publicized through television, radio, newspapers and in large public gatherings of unbelievers. As people listen they are strangely moved, for this is a quality of love they have not known before. Ronnie’s story draws them closer to God.

“The boy who loved children in foreign lands, and his mommy and daddy who in their own personal sorrow worshipped and loved the One who had taken away their only son, pointed men heavenward. Instead of yielding to bitterness, self-pity and rebellion, Ronnie’s parents allowed God’s love to flow out through them to others.” (*The Flaming Flame* R. Edward Miller)]

Notice what happened at the mention of the Gentiles (v.22).

“Notice how Paul’s Roman citizenship protected him at this time (22:25). The words ‘I am a Roman citizen,’ uttered in any part of the empire were sufficient to bring protection to the one speaking them. [**a Roman**. This was the second occasion on which the apostle used his rights under Roman citizenship as a defense (see notes on Acts 16:37,38). He had already been beaten several times with rods, imprisoned, and persecuted in various ways. However, the Roman scourge, or flagellum, was almost certain to be permanently crippling or even fatal, so Paul reminded his captors of his rights.” (*Defender’s*)]

[(v. 24) “*that he be flogged*. Not with the rod, as at Philippi (16:22-24), but with the scourge, a merciless instrument of torture. It was legal to use it to force a confession from a slave or alien but never from a Roman citizen. The scourge consisted of a whip of leather thongs with pieces of bone or metal attached to the ends. {like what was used on Jesus} “*they stretched him out*. The Greek word used for tying a person to a post for

whipping...

“Roman citizen. According to Roman law, all Roman citizens were assured exclusion from all degrading forms of punishment: beating with rods, scourging, crucifixion. (v. 28) *pay a big price.* There were three ways to obtain Roman citizenship: (1) receive it as a reward for some outstanding service to Rome; (2) buy it at a considerable price; (3) be born into a family of Roman citizens. How Paul’s father or an earlier ancestor had gained citizenship, no one knows. By 171 B.C. a large number of Jews were citizens of Tarsus, and in the time of Pompey (106-48) some of these could have received Roman citizenship as well Cf. 16:37.” (NIV Study Bible)]

Chapter 23

“Paul was then brought before the Jewish council, and there he declared his innocence (23:1-2). The unjust and cruel action of the high priest in commanding him to be smitten, caused him to break forth into a severe denunciation against him. In the heat of his indignation he forgot the high priest and saw only a tyrannical ruler. [Ananias. High priest A.D. 47-59, son of Nebedaeus. He is not to be confused with the high priest Annas (A.D. 6-15;...). Ananias was noted for cruelty and violence. When the revolt against Rome broke out, he was assassinated by his own people.

“whitewashed wall! Having an attractive exterior but filled with unclean contents, such as tombs holding dead bodies (see Mt. 23:27);...It is a metaphor for a hypocrite.” (NIV Study Bible)]

[“(v.3) *contrary to the law.* Paul had not even been formally charged with any offense, let alone tried and found guilty. *it is written.* Paul had been away from Jerusalem for many years, and could not have known Ananias by sight (Exodus 22:28).” (Defender’s)]

“Though he could not honor the man, he [Paul] honored the office he occupied (v. 5). It is interesting to note that Paul’s denunciation of the high priest was prophetic, for some twelve years later, the latter died a violent death.

[“**Whitewashed wall** means new and clean appearance, but rotten on the inside. Perhaps Paul’s reaction was improper (see v. 5; 1 Peter 2:21-23), but even Jesus defended His legal rights (John 18:21-23). **I did not know ... he was the high priest** may have been spoken in bitter irony, indicating he did not expect to receive justice from the Jewish court.” *New Spirit Filled Life Bible*)]

(6-10)“Seeing that the council was prejudiced against him, and there was no hope of justice and mercy from them, Paul resorted to a stratagem. He knew that the Pharisees and Sadducees were divided on the doctrine of the resurrection.

[(23:8 *“no resurrection.* The sect of the Sadducees professed to be orthodox Jews, believing in the Mosaic laws, but were actually materialists believing in neither bodily nor spiritual resurrection. Nevertheless, they were more powerful politically than the more Biblically oriented Pharisees. **Pharisees.** Paul himself was a convinced Pharisee (Philippians 3:4,5), and still had deep respect for the law (Romans 7:12), though he knew and preached that salvation was altogether by grace (Romans 5:20,21)” (The Defender’s Study Bible).]

“Therefore he appealed to the pharisaic section of the council, and appealed for their clemency on the ground that he was on trial because of the preaching of a doctrine which they themselves accepted.

“This appeal divided the council, and led to Paul’s escape and his protection by the Romans. Later, the discovery of a plot to assassinate Paul led to his being escorted to Caesarea by a company of Roman soldiers. At this town he appeared before the governor, Felix. [**“Felix.** Governor of Judaea and Samaria was once held by Pontius Pilate. The provincial capital was at Caesarea, sixty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Paul, as a Roman citizen, was thus taken to be judged by a Roman governor.” (The defender’s Study Bible)]

Chapter 24

“We shall notice here the accusations brought against Paul and his answers to them (24:1-21). [**“2: *began to accuse him.*** This is mere political puffery; the ‘great quietness’ was a cruelly enforced quietness and the ‘worthy deeds’ included such bloody suppression that Felix was soon to be in serious danger of punishment by Rome for his brutal rule.

[**5: *sect of the Nazarenes.*** This is the only place in the Bible where Christians are called Nazarenes, no doubt to capitalize on the common prejudicial proverb: ‘Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ (John 1:46). In fact, the charges presented by Tertullus were intentionally loaded with prejudicial language—‘pestilent,’ ‘sedition,’ ‘ringleader,’ ‘sect,’ ‘profane’ —intended obviously to prejudice Felix against Paul.” (DEFENDER’S)]

“In this discourse and the one made before Agrippa we shall follow the analysis given by Dr. Stifler. “The accusation was three-fold (vv. 5,6); sedition, ‘a mover of sedition among the Jews’; heresy, ‘a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes’; sacrilege—‘who also hath gone about to profane the temple.’ He disproved the accusation of sedition by showing the time was too short (v.11), that his conduct disproved it (v.12), and that there was no proof of it (v.13). In answer to the charge of heresy, he affirmed his belief in the Jewish scriptures.”

[**“13: *Neither can they prove.*** Paul’s factual answer, and the contrasting emotional diatribes of his opponents, seem typical of modern controversies between creationists and evolutionists, as well as controversies between Christians and anti-Christians in general. The facts of the case completely supported Paul, and Felix would have released him except Felix hoped to receive a bribe from Paul (Acts 24:26) and desired to appease the Jewish leaders (Acts 24:27).

[Similarly, today the facts always support the biblical creationist Christian world view, but financial and political considerations generally favor its opponents. Paul was not guilty of any of their charges or of anything else except believing and teaching the truth of God’s Word.” (DEFENDER’S)] (v.14), and professed to having the same hope as the Jews themselves (vv. 15,16).

[**“15: *resurrection of the dead.*** Paul frequently wrote and preached on the coming resurrection of the ‘just,’ but rarely mentioned the resurrection of the ‘unjust,’ or ‘unjustified.’ His reference to it here (confirming the Old Testament prophecy of Daniel 12:2), particularly since he immediately asserted his own clear conscience (Acts 24:16), may well have pricked the consciences of both Felix and Paul’s Sadducean accusers, none of whom could have looked forward to any such event if it were true.” (Defender’s)]

“That he had not committed sacrilege was evident, for he had brought alms and offerings to his nation (v.17), he was found in the temple purified (v.18), and there were no witnesses present to prove the charge (v.19).

“Notice Felix’s attitude toward Paul in public (vv. 22,23), [“24: **Drusilla**. Drusilla, the third wife of Felix, was very young. As the youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa I, she no doubt was at least somewhat informed concerning her father’s persecution of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:1) and may well have been even more curious than Felix about the Christian faith.” (Defender’s)]

“in private (v. 25) [“25: **Felix trembled**. Felix evidently was under ‘terrified’ conviction as he listened to Paul. ‘Righteousness, temperance and judgment’ were not only being expounded to him by Paul, but also by the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-11). **convenient season**. This ‘convenient season’ never came. ‘Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation’ (2 Corinthians 6:2). (Defender’s)] , and the outcome of the trial (v. 27) [27: “**after two years**. Luke had been with Paul in Jerusalem and again joined him as he was sent to Rome (Acts 21:15; 27:1). He probably used the two years of Paul’s imprisonment in Caesarea to do the research for writing his Gospel and the early chapters of Acts.” (Defender’s)]

Chapter 25

“Paul was then brought before Festus, the new governor (25:1). [“1: **Festus**. Festus served as governor of the province only two years before he died.” (Defender’s)] Seeing that Festus was friendly toward the Jews (25:9), [10: “**at Caesar’s judgment seat**. The Jews had blundered in accusing Paul of sedition and rebellion against the Roman empire. Paul, of course, denied this and there were no witnesses to prove any such charge. Nevertheless, this charge made it a Roman issue rather than one merely of the Jews’ religion, so Paul as a Roman citizen had the right to appeal to the highest tribunal, that is, the emperor (Acts 25:11). (Defender’s)] he availed himself of his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to the emperor (v.11). This took the case completely out of the hands of Festus.

[13: “**Agrippa**. Agrippa was actually Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I, and Bernice was his sister. He had been appointed king of the region around the sea of Galilee, adjacent to the province of Judaea, by the emperor Nero, who had recently acceded to the throne of the empire. 26: **no certain thing to write**. Governor Festus was at a complete loss as to what to report to the emperor. He could find no reason to continue to hold Paul. King Agrippa also could not charge Paul (Acts 26:32), yet the Jews had demanded Paul’s life, and Paul had appealed to Caesar. Festus could not even fathom the significance of the Jews’ complaint, though he seemed at least to understand the facts (Acts 25:19). He was required, in his report, to specify the crimes of which the prisoner was accused, but he could not pinpoint any crimes (Acts 25:27).

[26: **before you**. Agrippa, with his family background and being part Jew himself, knew more about the Jews’ religion than Festus did, and indeed had made considerable study of it on his own (Acts 26:3). Festus therefore hoped Agrippa’s advice could somehow solve his dilemma.” (*The DEFENDER’S Study Bible*)]

Chapter 26

“Notice Paul’s defense before Agrippa (Chapter 26). It is an argument to justify his belief and preaching of the resurrection. This belief, Paul affirms is no crime, for Paul has always been a Pharisee whose prime article of faith has been the same hope (vv. 4-6). His accusers believe this same doctrine and are inconsistent in attacking

him (v. 7). [7: **“twelve tribes.** Paul recognized that representatives from all twelve tribes of Israel were still in Judaea, all still adhering to their ancient religion. There is no suggestion in the New Testament that there were ten lost tribes somewhere else in the world. Israelites indeed were scattered all over the known world, including descendants of those who had been in Assyria (which later had been conquered by Babylon, then by Persia, finally by Greece and Rome).” (Defender’s)]

“Paul did not come of himself to the preaching of the Gospel, for he was formerly opposed to it (vv. 8-12). [8: **“a thing incredible** {thought incredible NKJV} It would be incredible if anyone but God 9or those empowered by him) should claim to raise the dead, for only He is the Creator of life. To Paul, it was both anomalous and sad that the Jews, especially the Pharisees, whose hope was centered in the coming Messiah and the promised resurrection, should now be denying that Jesus had proved He was the messiah by the very fact of His fulfillment of their hope. They believed in the doctrine of the resurrection, especially when the evidence was so strong that many Pharisees (including Paul) already had believed.

[“14: **kick against the pricks (goats).** This somewhat homely expression refers to a harnessed animal trying to kick away the goads restraining him. Evidently, even as Paul had been furiously persecuting the Christians, he had been increasingly smitten in conscience, especially by the remembrance of the demeanor of Stephen when he died, as well as by the willingness of Christians everywhere to suffer and die for their faith, if need be.” (Defender’s)]

“It was a revelation of Jesus that brought him into the ministry (vv. 13-18). It was only because of the Jewish opposition (vv. 19-22). His teaching concerning Christ’s death and resurrection agrees with the teaching of Moses and the prophets (vv. 22, 23). His teaching concerning Christ’s death and resurrection agrees with the teaching of Moses and the prophets (vv. 22,23).

[“:22 *the prophets and Moses.* The Old Testament Scriptures (Luke 24:: 27, 44).

“:23 *the first to rise from the dead.* The first fruits of the dead—to die no more (see 1 Corinthians 15:20; Colossians 1:18). *to the Gentiles.* Cf. Isaiah 49:6.

“:24 *You are out of your mind.* See John 10:20; 1 Corinthians 14:23. The governor felt that Paul’s education and reading of the sacred Scriptures had led him to a mania about prophecy and resurrection.

“:26 *not done in a corner.* This gospel is based on actual events, lived out in historical times and places. The king must himself attest to the truth of what Paul has affirmed.

“:27 *do you believe the prophets?* King Agrippa was faced with a dilemma. If he said ‘Yes,’ Paul would press him to recognize their fulfillment in Jesus; if he said ‘No,’ he would be in trouble with the devout Jews, who accepted the message of the prophets as the very word of God.

“:28 *in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?* His question is an evasion of Paul’s question and an answer to what he anticipates Paul’s next question to be His point is that he will not be persuaded by such a brief statement.

“: *these chains.* Paul was still bound as a prisoner.” (NIV Study Bible)]

[“Paul’s gospel, according to C.H. Dodd, can be summarized as follows:

1. Prophecies are fulfilled, and the new age is inaugurated by the coming of Christ.
2. Jesus was born of the seed of David.

3. He died according to the Scriptures to deliver us out of the present evil age.
4. He was buried.
5. He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.
6. He is exalted at the right hand of God, as Son of God and Lord of the quick [living] and dead.
7. He will come again as Judge and Savior.

“...First, the early church preached a Person. Their message was unapologetically Christ-centered. They dwelt not so much on Jesus’ life and public ministry; but rather on His death and resurrection.

“Second, Michael Green holds that the infant church proclaimed the gift of forgiveness, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the gift of adoption and reconciliation...

Third, the first-century church looked for a positive response on the part of its hearers. The apostles were anything but shy in asking people to decide then and there, for or against Jesus Christ. These early preachers declared all people must do three things in the light of the gospel:

“They must repent. This stands first. They must exercise faith. A continuing life of faith is called for, but it must begin by a ‘leap of faith.’ Moreover, true faith must be viewed as inseparable from repentance. They must be baptized. This act of obedience serves as the seal on God’s offer of forgiveness and the essence of one’s overt response to that offer in repentance and faith.

More recently, in his helpful book *A Faith to Proclaim*, James Stewart declares the first axiom of evangelism to be that the evangelist must be sure of his message. He then presents what he believes constitutes relevant gospel proclamation. According to Stewart the following five principles must be found in all evangelistic proclamation. An evangelist must proclaim: *The Incarnation. *Forgiveness of sin. *The Cross. *That Christ has been raised from the dead. *Christ Himself. Moreover, the message presented must never be just a cold, conceptualized theology or philosophy. Christianity is the experience of a vital relationship to the living Christ, and the message needs to reflect this vitality.” (*The Evangelist* by Lewis A. Drummond Foreword by John R. W. Stott)]

(All the quotes in this section that are not bracketed are taken from *Part III New Testament Gospels and Acts Through The Bible Book by Book* by Myer Pearlman)

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