



## ACTS 28

## IMPRISONED BUT UNHINDERED: THE GOSPEL EXPANDS FROM ROME

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

- Acts 28:30-31

Acts 28 does not end with a grand conclusion. Former pastor and chaplain of the US Senate, Lloyd Ogilvie, said of Acts 28, “The abrupt ending of Acts leaves us with the challenge and opportunity to allow the Spirit to write the next chapter... today... in and through us.”

In Acts 1, Jesus said, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the remote parts of the earth.” In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit birthed the church in Jerusalem and then filled the city with the witness of Jesus by chapter 5. Then in Acts 8, that witness went to Samaria and then reached a Gentile soldier in chapter 10. By Acts 13, the gospel traveled north to Asia minor. It finally jumped to the continent of Europe in Acts 16, headed further west to Greece in chapter 17, and then went back east to Turkey in chapter 18. The gospel witness finally made it across the Mediterranean Sea to Rome in Acts 28. And there the adventure was just getting started.

For two years, Paul remained in Rome, chained to the wrist of a member of the Praetorian guard, an elite group of soldiers who guarded the emperor and the royal city. During that house arrest, Paul wrote letters to the churches he planted in Ephesus, Colosse, and Philippi, and a letter to his friend, Philemon.

“Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.”

- Philippians 1:12-14

You cannot stop the gospel. It cannot be imprisoned. Jesus who conquered sin and death is not stopped by prison chains. He promised that His church would be built upon His gospel, and the gates of hell would give way in its presence. House arrest becomes a tool in God's hand to reach Jews and Romans, commoners and elite, religious and military leaders.

God is going to fulfill His plan to reach and redeem people from every nation. That is the Gospel-story. What Jesus launched in the Middle East two millennium ago has come to us. It did not start with us, and it does not, must not, end with us. We are caught up in a much larger story. There is no Acts 29 recorded in scripture because the acts of the Holy Spirit are still happening in and through us.