

▼ Headed For Jerusalem; Ready To Die - Part 2 Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday October 10, 2021

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• Read the Passage: Acts 21

After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.

We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'"

When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."

After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality."

The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place." (They had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.)

The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they

dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"

As the soldiers were about to take Paul into the barracks, he asked the commander, "May I say something to you?" "Do you speak Greek?" he replied. "Aren't you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the desert some time ago?"

Paul answered, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no ordinary city. Please let me speak to the people."

Having received the commander's permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the crowd. When they were all silent, he said to them in Aramaic:

▼ Exegetical Idea

- Acts 21:1-16 - Paul heads for Jerusalem despite multiple warnings.
- Acts 21:17-26 - In Jerusalem, the believers welcome Paul, but ask him to "clean up his image".
- Acts 21:27-36 - The plan backfires; Paul is arrested after nearly being killed by a mob.

▼ Sermon's Purpose (what listeners should do)

- Understand the context:
- Have a Game Plan!
- Stay connected.
- Learn From Paul's Experience In Jerusalem.
- Commit your life - Keep walking.

▼ Understand the context:

- ▼ Paul is bringing gifts for the poor among the Jerusalem churches.
 - Romans 15:25-27
 - 2 Corinthians 8 - 9
- ▼ After delivering the gifts to Jerusalem, Paul planned to have the Romans aid him in getting to Spain.
 - Romans 15:23-33
- ▼ Paul is ready to die to complete his mission even though the Holy Spirit has warned him in every city that prison and hardship await him.
 - Acts 20:22-24

▼ Paul is committed to the Whole Will of God.

- Acts 20:25-31

▼ **Have a Game Plan!**

▼ Many Christians have the wrong game plan.

▼ Wrong Plan

- They think the Kingdom of God means heaven.
- They think their role is to be “good enough” to go to heaven.
- They are equipped to attend church, be religious, and participate in in-house church ministries.

▼ The Right Plan

- The Kingdom of God is God’s reign in the lives of his people.
- Our role is to extend the Kingdom by making disciples.
- In order to do this we need to be equipped in several areas.
- The 7 “F”s
- “Get a Grip”.

▼ **Stay connected.**

- Find disciples wherever you go.
- Use your gifts to serve one another.
- ▼ Interpret prophetic words in keeping with the vision God has given you.
 - 1 Kings 13 - A prophet suffers the consequences of disobeying God’s instructions.
 - ▼ Acts 21:1-16 - Paul heads for Jerusalem despite multiple warnings:
 - Acts 21:4 - The disciples in Tyre urge Paul not to go to Jerusalem.
 - Acts 21:10-14 - The Prophet Agabus warns Paul that he will be bound and handed over to the Gentiles.

▼ **Learn From Paul’s Experience in Jerusalem**

- He greets local leaders and shares openly about what God has done through his ministry.
- He faces being misunderstood with humility and grace.
- ▼ Note that Gentiles are still instructed to abstain from:
 - ▼ Idols - Leviticus 19:26-31; Leviticus 20:1-6; Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 4:15-31; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Acts 19:13-20; Romans 1:18-32
 - We are not to worship things that God creates.
 - We are not to worship things that humans create.

- We are not to worship things that our machines create.
- Blood - Genesis 9:1-6; Leviticus 17:10-14
- Strangled animals
- Sexual immorality - Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 22:16; Leviticus 18; Leviticus 20; Deuteronomy 22:13-30; 1 Corinthians 7:1-40
- He cooperates with local leaders.
- **Commit your life - Keep walking.**

▼ Followup

▼ Discussion Questions

- Reflect on Acts 21:17-26. For each question, read the passage and then spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin to respond.
- How have you handled situations like Paul's in the past?
- What situations are you facing now that call for grace and humility?
- Consider the passages on idolatry (astrology, divination, fortune telling, mediums, necromancy, sorcery, other gods, etc.) and sexual immorality. Describe what you understand. Do you have questions?
- What's helpful and not helpful in putting these into practice?
- How can we help one another to be faithful in these areas?



Headed For Jerusalem; Ready To Die

Part 2 – Sunday October 10, 2021



Review

Ladder of Abstraction

Popularized by S. I. Hayakawa in

“Language in Thought and Action
(1938-1941)

10/10/2021





Review

Concrete Language

Physical Fitness:

- You can't achieve it using only words such as: fitness, health, flexibility, strength.
- You must use words such as: reps, squats, presses, push-ups, speed, incline, etc.



Review

Concrete Language

Education

- You can't achieve it using only words such as: education, knowledge, learning, understanding.
- You must use words such as: spell, add, multiply, conjugate, microscope, experiment, essay, verb, noun, translate, 1492, 1620, 1776, George Washington, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King.



Terminology

Consider these terms from “[Following Jesus: Introduction](https://lifechurchboston.org/activities/classes-programs/following-jesus/introduction/)” Lesson 2
(<https://lifechurchboston.org/activities/classes-programs/following-jesus/introduction/>)

Believer – someone who believes in or has faith in Jesus and therefore follows him. In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to much more than simply agreeing with an idea. It implies a level of commitment such that, when given a chance, you will act on the belief. For example, you demonstrate your belief that a chair will support your weight by sitting in it; you demonstrate your belief that an airplane will take you safely to your destination by flying in it.

[John 4:39-41; Acts 2:44-47; Acts 4:31-32; Galatians 6:9-10; James 2:1](#)

Born again – those who believe in Jesus are born again from God’s Spirit. You must be born again to see or enter the Kingdom of God.

[John 3:1-21; 1Peter 1:22-23](#)

Brother – those who follow Jesus are part of a new family and become brothers and sisters to one another.

Matthew 12:46-50; Matthew 23:8; Acts 6:3; Acts 9:28-30; Acts 11:1; Acts 11:29; Acts 15

Christian – means “belonging to Christ” “The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch” – [Acts 11:19-26](#)



Terminology

- **Disciples** – those who are trained by the one they are following.
[Matthew 5:1-2; Acts 6:1-7; Acts 9:1-31; Acts 11:19-26; Acts 18:23](#)
- **Follower of Jesus** – Someone who follows and organizes his/her life around the life of Jesus as revealed in the Bible, especially the four gospels (i.e. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and as revealed by the Holy Spirit.
[Matthew 4:19; Matthew 8:19-22; Matthew 9:9; Matthew 10:37-39; Matthew 16:24-26; Matthew 19:21-22; Matthew 19:27-30; John 1:43; John 12:26; John 21:19-22](#)
- **Saints** – those who are “sanctified”, or set apart for God’s use.
[Romans 1:1-8; Ephesians 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1-2](#)
- **Saved** – those who by following Jesus have been rescued from this world and from God’s wrath.
[Luke 8:12; Luke 8:4-15; John 10:1-9; Acts 2:17-21; Acts 4:8-12; Romans 10:1-13](#)



Picturing Salvation

This is what salvation looks like.

- People who
 - have been captivated by Jesus.
 - follow him in order to learn from him.
 - abandon their past teachers in favor of learning directly from Jesus.
- Jesus
 - Welcomes them regardless of their past social status or degree of spiritual achievement.
 - Considers them to be disciples from the beginning.
 - Treats them with an expectation of success.
- Their attention is focused on Jesus and they are not at all anxious about whether they are “in” or “out”.



Picturing Salvation

With salvation we receive a “superpower” - the ability to distinguish between Jesus and other sources and to pay attention to Jesus.

“I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.” - John 10:1-5 (NIV)

- This is the flip side of the “faith” that is the evidence of salvation.
- What we do with this “superpower” will determine the course of our spiritual life.



Modeling Conversion

What is the normal path to conversion (i.e. becoming a follower)?

- Gospel proclamation (e.g. The Kingdom of God is here)
- Saving faith (includes the “superpower” ability to pay attention to Jesus)
- Acts of commitment (e.g. baptism, “Jesus is Lord”, joining family of believers)
- Discipleship



Modeling Conversion

Let's use Peter's Pentecost sermon as a model:

"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call."

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. - Acts 2:36-42 (NIV)

- Peter: "God has made this Jesus . . . both Lord and Christ."
- People: "What shall we do?"
- Peter: "Repent and be baptized . . ."
- Outcome: Those who accepted the message responded (were baptized) and 3,000 were added to their number.
- Outcome: They devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching . . .



Our Passage – Acts 21 (1 of 5)

Acts 21:1-6 (NIV)

After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.



Our Passage – Acts 21 (2 of 5)

Acts 21:7-16 (NIV)

We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done." After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

10/10/2021



Our Passage – Acts 21 (3 of 5)

Acts 21:17-25 (NIV)

When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: “You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.”



Our Passage – Acts 21 (4 of 5)

Acts 21:26-29 (NIV)

The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, shouting, “Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place.” (They had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.)



Our Passage – Acts 21 (5 of 5)

Acts 21:30-36 (NIV)

The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"



Sermon's Purpose (what you should do)

- Understand the context:
- Have a Game Plan!
- Stay connected
- Learn From Paul's Experience In Jerusalem
- Commit your life - Keep walking



Understand the Context:

Paul is bringing gifts for the poor among the Jerusalem churches.

- Romans 15:25-27
- 2 Corinthians 8 - 9

After delivering the gifts to Jerusalem, Paul planned to have the Romans aid him in getting to Spain.

- Romans 15:23-33

Paul is ready to die to complete his mission even though the Holy Spirit has warned him in every city that prison and hardship await him.

- Acts 20:22-24

Paul is committed to the Whole Will of God.

- Acts 20:25-31



Romans 15:23-33

Paul planned to have the Romans aid him in getting to Spain.

But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to see you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to visit you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings. So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received this fruit, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. Pray that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and together with you be refreshed. The God of peace be with you all. Amen.



Acts 20:22-24

The Holy Spirit has warned Paul in every city that prison and hardship await him. Nevertheless, he is ready to die in order to complete his mission.

“And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.”



Acts 20:25-31

Paul's plan is to teach the whole will of God.

*“Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. **For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God.** Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! **Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.**”*



Have a Game Plan!

Many Christians have the wrong game plan.

- Wrong Plan
 - They think the Kingdom of God means heaven.
 - They think their role is to be “good enough” to go to heaven.
 - They are equipped to attend church, be religious, and participate in in-house church ministries.
- The Right Plan
 - The Kingdom of God is God’s reign in the lives of his people.
 - Our role is to extend the Kingdom by making disciples.
 - In order to do this, we need to be equipped in several areas.
- The 7 “F”s
- “Get a Grip”.



The Seven “F”s

Follow the Message

Family Up

Flow in the Spirit

Face Your Problems

Farm Your Land

Find Your Purpose

Fulfill Your Mission



Get a Grip on the Kingdom of God!

Get Trained!

Get Trained In Discipleship

Get Trained To Explain the Gospel

Get Trained To Share Your Personal Testimony

Get Trained To Do Relational Evangelism

It All Starts With An Experience That Leads To A
Lasting Commitment





Stay connected.

Find disciples wherever you go.

Use your gifts to serve one another

Interpret prophetic words in keeping with the vision God has given you.

- 1Kings 13 (read on your own or in your life group)
 - A prophet travels from Judah to Bethel to pronounce judgement on Bethel.
 - God has given him explicit instruction not to eat or drink or return by the way he came.
 - A prophet from Bethel invites him to stay and eat – falsely claiming that an angel appeared to him to authorize this.
 - The Judean prophet accepts the offer.
 - The Bethel prophet prophesies judgment on the Judean prophet for his disobedience.
- Acts 21:1-16 - Paul heads for Jerusalem despite multiple warnings:
 - Acts 21:4 - The disciples in Tyre urge Paul not to go to Jerusalem.
 - Acts 21:10-14 - The Prophet Agabus warns Paul that he will be bound and handed over to the Gentiles.



Paul In Jerusalem

He greets local leaders and shares openly about what God has done through his ministry.
He faces being misunderstood with humility and grace.

Note that Gentiles must still abstain from:

- Idols - Leviticus 19:26-31; Leviticus 20:1-6; Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 4:15-31; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Acts 19:13-20; Romans 1:18-32
 - We are not to worship things that God creates.
 - We are not to worship things that humans create.
 - We are not to worship things that our machines create.
- Blood - Genesis 9:1-6; Leviticus 17:10-14
- Strangled animals
- Sexual immorality - Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 22:16; Leviticus 18; Leviticus 20; Deuteronomy 22:13-30; 1 Corinthians 7:1-40

He cooperates with local leaders.



Commit your life!

Keep walking.

Follow the plan.

Keep sharing the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Keep making disciples.

Don't let the enemy intimidate you. If you're following Jesus, you're seated in heavenly places with him! – Ephesians 1:15 – 2:10



Discussion Questions

Reflect on Acts 21:17-26. For each question, read the passage and then spend 1 – 2 minutes in silence before you begin to respond.

1. How have you handled situations like Paul's in the past?
2. What situations are you facing now that call for grace and humility?
3. Consider the passages on idolatry (astrology, divination, fortune telling, mediums, necromancy, sorcery, other gods, etc.) and sexual immorality. Describe what you understand. Do you have questions?
4. What's helpful and not helpful in putting these into practice?
5. How can we help one another to be faithful in these areas?