



**Acts – Can I get a Witness?  
Wk. 40 Reactions to the Good News  
By Pastor Jody May 06/25/2023**

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**Acts 13:42-52 ESV**

<sup>42</sup> As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath. <sup>43</sup> And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

<sup>44</sup> The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. <sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. <sup>46</sup> And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. <sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

“ ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles,  
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

<sup>48</sup> And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. <sup>49</sup> And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. <sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. <sup>51</sup> But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. <sup>52</sup> And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

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**[REVIEW/INTRODUCTION]**

Wk. 38 What to Expect when You Embrace Your Call – Some will be open to God’s Word, some will be closed to it, and only a few embrace it = Having proper expectations to stop procrastination.

Wk. 39 What is the message we go into the world with?

**Luke 24:47 ESV**

<sup>47</sup> and that **repentance** for the **forgiveness** of **sins should be proclaimed** in his name to all **nations**, beginning from Jerusalem.



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That is an ongoing mandate *'should be proclaimed'* with the only time limitation being that of Jesus' return.

**Matthew 24: 14 & 27 ESV**

**<sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.**

We have thus established the why as to why study the book of Acts. **To learn about our command to proclaim repentance for the forgiveness of sins for there is an end coming.**

Today that brings us to how people will respond to this message and the shocking result of this is **everyone is not going to like good news (GOSPEL)!?**

- Hooray, we found a way to lift people out of poverty around the world, unleash the restrictions on fossil fuel burning.<sup>1</sup>
- Hooray, we found a way to negate the yearly murder rate of over 26,000 deaths<sup>2</sup>, we overturned Roe vs. Wade and saved over 32,000 babies last year<sup>3</sup>.
- Hooray, we found a way to combat systemic racism in America that treats minorities unequally, through SCOTUS we overturned Affirmative Action empowering the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment and also confirmed you can't infringe on the religious beliefs of independent business owners (like bakers).<sup>4</sup>
- Hooray we found a way to combat the alarming rise in childhood Autism, ADHD, and Food Allergies, we Stop mandating vaccines.<sup>5</sup>
- Hooray, we found a way to get all men to live together in peace, equality, pursuing happiness together, we ACCCEPT one God, through His one Son Jesus as King, and THEN we become the God-fearing country we are called to be.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://energytalkingpoints.com/netzero/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/homicide.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.christianheadlines.com/contributors/milton-quintanilla/report-over-32000-babies-lives-saved-after-roe-v-wade-was-overturned.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2023/jun/29/us-supreme-court-affirmative-action-harvard-unc-ruling>

<sup>5</sup> <https://twitter.com/TheChiefNerd/status/1674266437890744323?s=20>



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**MAIN POINT:** You see good news isn't good news unless God changes the heart first. Today we are going to look at 4 different reactions to the Gospel and what it means for us.

**1. Those that accept the Gospel, we are to keep persuading them of it.**

<sup>42</sup>As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath.

There is a clue here as to those that God might be opening hearts and minds to His Gospel, **they have a desire for it!** There is something special about being a Christian and talking to other people who love the Lord BUT it's altogether even more exhilarating talking to people who are getting that first deep taste of freedom in Christ. You don't have to approach them they approach you! I am praying that you all get a chance to experience that! That is what gives you fuel in your life.

<sup>43</sup>And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas,

These are not necessarily the God-fearers these are Jews and Gentiles that converted to Judaism, devout converts comes for the Greek Word for **Proselyte**, that word is used to describe people converted to Judaism. So, these are people that are uniquely called to the Gospel, through religious experiences for they came looking for a God that saves. Perhaps these were the type of people that came not to religion to make it work for them, but they came because they were ware of a deep emptiness in the soul. The Gospel of repentance for forgiveness has reached them through God's Sovereign hand first calling them to Judaism!

<sup>43</sup>...who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

Please notice, that Barnabas and Paul don't start teaching Systematic Theology courses yet, they just **urged them.**



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Urge - πείθω (*peithō*). vb. **persuade, convince; be persuaded, convinced, believe; trust; obey.** Refers to the **act of persuasion** or to the responses appropriate to being persuaded<sup>6</sup>

The meaning of the word is when you talk with someone, and you keep adding to their joy of what they are discovering. While it seems like urging, they are picking up on an idea and running with it. It is actually persuading by allowing the other person to do the talking. (think of converting from Arminianism/Pelagianism to Calvinism). The best way to lead your family to Christ is to be an encourager, get them to keep processing and thinking.

THEN, people freed by Grace through the Sovereignty of God are all good until they start to rub up on people that like their religion cold, rule-orientated, and with socially ingrained hierarchies. Now watch how those threatened by the Gospel react to this.

**2. Those who reject the Gospel may contradict and revile you because of it.**

<sup>44</sup> The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

That's quite a stirring, isn't it? It took one week for the gospel to spread through this Gentile town. Almost the whole populace comes to church that Sabbath! Listen to how the religious elite respond, **instead of feeling overjoyed** that they came wanting to hear about their God, **they were mad!**?

<sup>45</sup> But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with **jealousy** and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.

It's not just anger but **jealousy**, that is envious anger, the last time Luke used this word was in **Acts 5:17** when the high priest locked up the Apostles, and contemplated killing them, like Jesus.

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<sup>6</sup> Fenslason, A. C. (2014). [Belief](#). D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.



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Any time we don't buy what the political/philosophical/educational/religious elite, what they are putting down for us, it will always cause resentment against those that tell the truth. Listen, we all know by now that through COVID we have been lied to multiple times about where it came from, use of masks, vaccine is the only remedy, and to disagree with the government is to disagree with science. AND anyone that said otherwise was silenced through coercive measures by our government. Even our government though now, has had to bow down to the facts over the last 3 months. The point is anytime someone uses truth, and it threatens the power structure of the moment, it will generate extreme jealousy over those losing power.

In the case of this synagogue though, **just like the Sanhedrin back in Jerusalem**, they are treading on very thin theological ground, and they are looking at damnation right in the face.

**Mark 3:28-29 ESV (Luke 12:10; Matthew 12:22-32)**

<sup>28</sup>"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, <sup>29</sup>but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

These synagogue rulers were in denial of what the Gospel was teaching because of their jealous hearts. The truth had been given and they cared not, but had sold their soul to the devil already, so they could live out their existence feeling religiously superior to the people in this town. **The denial of the HS glorifying the Son and the rejection of Him is the unforgiveable sin – that's blasphemy.** You do not reject the Lordship of Christ and His reign and enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

This story warns us all and helps us to know how to pray for those in power: that they would not reject the revelation of the HS, and their need to repent for forgiveness in Jesus' name. Power is just as blinding as money, as a matter of fact they go hand in hand. Without the Grace of God working in dead hearts transfixed on this world only and what it gives, there would be no hope. So, if and when we encounter jealousy or reviling over giving good truth, there is a third reaction to the Gospel today I want us to take to heart.



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**3. Those that are reviled over the Gospel will become bolder with it.**

<sup>46</sup> And Paul and Barnabas **spoke out boldly**, saying, “It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.  
<sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

“I have made you a light for the Gentiles,  
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”

That quote is from, **Isaiah 49:6**, where the prophet is stating that Jesus would be the one to take the Gospel to the nations because Israel had failed to do so. Paul and Barnabas see that they are now the hands of Jesus, they are demonstrating that judgment has now come to Israel by acting out this Isaiah passage. This is a **sad moment right here in Israel’s history**, this is where we begin to see a repeating pattern in the book of Acts, and throughout the NT. Paul would always go to the synagogues first and offer the gospel out of reverence for the Lord and his people, and very rarely, would any of them come to Jesus.

You see many times the joy of the Gospel, having it in your heart, is amplified because you see how people, even your loved ones will reject it. People can live morally good lives, they can be law-abiding citizens, they can endure suffering, they can be victims of injustice, they can give to charities, and STILL walk right into the gates of Hell and eternal damnation. **It’s sobering, isn’t it?** Being born into the right religion/country/family does not earn you a seat at the table of God. **Pride is still pride in anyone’s heart** and if you don’t think you need Jesus for Salvation you are still wrong and you need GRACE!

Then along with this sobering moment in history one of the great miracles takes place and it fuels Paul and Barnabas for the rest of their lives, for they see the full scope of God’s plan.

**Divine Providence Strikes again:**



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<sup>48</sup> And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were **appointed to eternal life believed.**

<sup>49</sup> And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region.

The results of being bold, the results of obedience to proclaim, the results of having to tell people the hard truth, to being used by God, is that **He may bring to life those He has appointed to do so!**

**Romans 8:29-31**

<sup>29</sup> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup> And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be<sup>[a]</sup> against us?

There is nothing that is quite as great as being on God's rescue team! Yes, while it is disheartening to see those we know turn from God, there is much joy seeing our true family saved!

Fear of rejection can run strong before we step out in faith and be bold, but let me tell you how our Lord handled it, Jesus experienced rejection among His own earthly family.

**Mark 3:21 ESV**

<sup>21</sup> And when his family heard it (the crowds following Him), they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

They thought He was crazy. BUT He didn't let that stop Him for He also knew what His true spiritual family looked like as well. You should hear this, for it may lighten what you feel in your heart if you want to shy away from telling those you care about the whole truth of the Gospel.

**Matthew 12:48-50 ESV**

"Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" (please understand they were standing outside the door, within ear shot) <sup>49</sup> And stretching out his hand



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toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Jesus knew how to look at relationships not just in the **here and now** but in the **there and future**, which is eternal. Because of not trying to keep all His family happy while on earth, **some of His family were saved**, and even some of them had leadership positions in the church. Point is it may not work out how you want it to, but it will always work out how God wants it to, and by doing it His way, some of your family may be saved as well – **BE BOLD!**

Lastly, I want to prepare us for what it looks like, when we are ready to go all the way with the message of the Gospel, even those hostile towards it.

**4. Those who are bold with Gospel may be persecuted and released all to proclaim it again.**

<sup>50</sup> But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.

Well, they done got them run out of town. The Jews were smart, and they went for a lasting resolution against these **spreaders of misinformation**. You see there was a growing female population at the synagogue, women who were married/involved with those in power in the city, and through them put a dampening on Paul and Barnabas. The Jews with their political alliances got what they wanted, a dead religion that made for a nice country club, subservient to the powers that be.

Isn't it something that this little synagogue hundreds of miles away from the temple became just like it. They had no real power and the power they had was from the city rulers which were all for keeping the blue collared man down. They sold themselves back into slavery that day and died without any emancipation. This is a travesty, and it still happens today, doesn't it?

Churches all over this country are selling their freedoms so that they can keep in the good graces of neighbors and those in power. The UMC had 4,000





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churches that disaffiliated this year which only makes up about 6% of the UMC churches in America. Thank God for their bravery and thank God for the men and women in the SBC that were not afraid to disassociate with those churches that would not uphold to the shared credal beliefs of the SBC.

This needs to happen more often. It will, and it may happen at a personal level for you, well what do we do if that happens?

<sup>51</sup>But they shook off the dust from their feet against them and went to Iconium. That is a sign, it's the same thing as saying I wash my hands of this. I am not guilty for what will happen to you. Jesus had taught that they should do this in case you are thinking this is a little harsh.

**Matthew 10:13-15 ESV**

<sup>14</sup>And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup>Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

Again, it is the sign that they have rejected the HS, and their judgment is at hand. People will have to answer for their denial of God's gift of Grace.

There may be some in here today, you have talked to people over and over again to those you love, and you have been spurned. Perhaps it is time for you to move on. Even if we have to, look what God does.

<sup>52</sup>And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

**There is always a remnant...** The disciples that were left in this town, were truly converted, they were filled with joy and with the Spirit. They would be ok, as a matter of fact their ongoing presence in the city would be a constant reminder of what was rejected when Paul and Barnabas were there. They could now embrace their calling and embrace their suffering and they will not get to experience persecution for Christ. What a blessing that is.

**[CHALLENGE]**

**2 Timothy 4:3-4 ESV**



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For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths

Keep encouraging those you are around to live out the Gospel, mainly your family.

Keep praying for the hearts of those that revile you, and that you are given the opportunity to defend the Gospel.

Keep boldly proclaiming the Truth, because God is looking for true believers, not those who add worldly ideologies.

Keep proclaiming till people get sick of it, because only when they get sick of it does it mean they are finally starting to listen to you.

**[PRAYER]**

**[COMMUNION]**

**[BENEDICTION]**

Go in the name of the Father, that has displayed all Truth necessary for Salvation in the Glory of His Son.

Go in the name of the Son, that came and was TRUTH in the flesh, showing the wrath and forgiveness of Sin.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that is responsible for the conversion of the lost and empowers us to be bold with the Truth.