

NOTES



OPENING PRAYER

Father, as we finish the book of Acts together, speak to us through it. Show each of us where our next mission field is, and give us courage to live bold and unhindered. In Jesus' name, Amen.

OPENING QUESTION_(OPTIONAL)

Think of a time something ended for you, like a job, a house move, a season or a team. Did it turn out to be the start of something you didn't expect?



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WORD

Acts 28:23-31, ESV

23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. 24 And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved. 25 And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

26 ““Go to this people, and say,
“You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.”

27 For this people's heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed;
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.’

28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.”

30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, 31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

Supporting Text:

Acts 28:16, ESV

16 And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.

Isaiah 6:9-10, ESV

9 And he said, “Go, and say to this people:
““Keep on hearing,[a] but do not understand;
keep on seeing,[b] but do not perceive.’

10 Make the heart of this people dull,[c]
and their ears heavy,
and blind their eyes;
lest they see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed.”



MAIN REFLECTION POINTS

Acts ends in a rented house in Rome. Paul has survived riots, beatings, prison, shipwreck and a snakebite, and now he is under house arrest with a Roman soldier guarding him around the clock while he waits for Caesar to hear his case. By any worldly measure this is the end of his ministry. He can't travel, he can't plant churches, and he can't control the verdict. Yet Luke shows Paul doing exactly what he did everywhere else in Acts. He welcomes whoever comes, and he spends "from morning till evening" explaining the kingdom and persuading people about Jesus from the Law and the Prophets. The guards rotate through shifts over two years, and every one of them hears the gospel. The system built to contain Paul ends up carrying his message.

The response is mixed. Even after a full day of careful teaching from Scriptures his listeners already honoured, some are convinced and others walk away, arguing among themselves. Paul names the outcome honestly with Isaiah's words about people who hear but don't understand. Then, without bitterness, he turns to the next room: "God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." Disappointment doesn't make him cynical. It moves him on to the next mission field.

The ending is deliberate. Luke never tells us how Paul's trial turns out. In Greek, the last word of the whole book is *akōlytōs*, "unhindered." Paul's fate is left open, but the gospel's advance is not, because Acts was never really about Paul. It is about the risen Jesus and the word of the Lord spreading by the Spirit. That's why Acts has no real ending. It hands the next chapter to whoever reads it next, and that includes us, here in this room, right now.

- Restriction is not retirement. Paul didn't wait for his chains to come off before he started ministering again. Your limitations may be your platform.
- Use the room you're actually in. Paul had no synagogue, no marketplace and no council chamber, only a rented house, and that was enough. Ask God to show you the room you're already in.
- The guard is your audience. The soldier chained to Paul heard the gospel for two years. The people your circumstances keep putting in front of you aren't interruptions. They're your mission field.
- Invest morning till evening. Discipleship takes patient, sustained time, not a quick slogan. Give people real time.

MAIN REFLECTION POINTS

- Mixed response isn't wasted investment. Some believed and some didn't, and Paul's faithfulness was the same either way. Grieve honestly, but don't quit.
- Don't let disappointment turn into cynicism. Paul named what happened and moved straight to the next room. Let go of the outcome and keep going.
- The story isn't finished. Luke leaves the trial unresolved on purpose because the gospel's advance was never about one person's story. Your chapter is part of something bigger than you.
- Bold and unhindered. That's how Acts ends, and it's how we're sent out. Commit to one mission step this week.

Gospel Invitation:

- Surrender the ending. Paul didn't control his verdict. He trusted the One who did. Where are you clinging to control over an outcome? Hand it to Jesus.
- Receive the word yourself. Isaiah warned about people who hear without understanding. If you've been around the gospel for years without responding, today is the day to turn and put your trust in Jesus.
- Let Christ redeem your restriction. Repent of believing your season disqualifies you, and ask Jesus to make your limitation a place where his kingdom comes.

Missional Invitation:

- Name your mission field. Write down one "rented house," a place you're in regularly that you've written off, and one person in it. Pray for them by name every day this week.
- Open your door. Like Paul, who "welcomed all who came," invite one person into your home or your table this week, or to Life Group.
- Take one bold step. Commit to one specific mission step out loud with your group, such as a conversation, an invitation or an offer to pray, and follow up with each other next week.

Memory Verse:

"...proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance."

Acts 28:31, ESV

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What story, moment or character from this whole series through Acts has stayed with you most? Why?
2. Paul was under guard, couldn't travel and didn't know how his trial would end, yet he "welcomed all who came." What stands out to you about how he handled that restriction?
3. What is your "rented house" right now? Maybe it's a season of unemployment, illness, shift work, waiting for a visa, or a full house of kids or ageing parents. How can you navigate this season better?
4. Paul taught "from morning till evening," and some still walked away. Have you invested deeply in someone's faith and seen a mixed or disappointing result? How did it affect you?
5. Paul moved on without bitterness. Where are you most tempted to let disappointment turn into cynicism about people, church or evangelism? What would it look like to keep moving toward the next room?
6. Acts ends with the gospel "unhindered" and the story still open. If the next chapter of Acts were being written through your life this year, what would you want it to say? Where is your next mission field?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you that your word is never chained and that no ending of ours is the end of your mission. Open our eyes to the mission field right in front of us, whether that's our street, our workplace or our home, and make us bold and unhindered. Write the next chapter of Acts through us, here in Brisbane. In Jesus' name, Amen.