

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

As we near the end of the narrative of Acts, we must look for how Luke is choosing to bring this story to a close. In the previous chapter, we see Paul giving a third account of his testimony, emphasizing the sovereignty of God over his salvation and, by virtue, over salvation for all believers. Acts 26 ends with Agrippa proclaiming “this man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar” (26:32) and this chapter begins with Paul being sent to Rome. Ted mentioned that, at the start of this book, Jesus told his disciples that the Holy Spirit would empower them to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Interlaced within this narrative have been speeches (Peter’s sermon in Acts 2, Stephen’s accusations in Acts 7, Peter’s proclamation of Gentile salvation in Acts 10, etc.), and each of those speeches marked a clear movement toward that original Acts 1:8 goal. Here, we see Paul, after giving his testimony, now on the move to the “ends of the earth” -- that is, Rome.

In Acts 27, God’s sovereign hand is clearly at play, given that this storm, under any other circumstances, would have killed the whole crew. However, God had different plans. The Lord intended Paul to get to Rome in order to proclaim the Gospel. In his sermon, Ted focused on the virtues that Paul exhibited during this would-be disaster. Firstly, Paul was trustworthy, as shown in how the leaders treated him. Secondly, Paul had courage because he insisted on going despite the conditions. Thirdly, Paul had patience when he dealt with people who did not see God’s plan coming together. Fourthly, Paul had confidence in God’s plan. Finally, Paul persevered throughout the journey, despite being shipwrecked.

Questions:

- 1) Think back to the virtues listed in Ted’s sermon. In what ways are these important in our own personal witness of Christ?
- 2) What has been the story of Acts up until this point? What have been some of the major points in the narrative? What is the overall message of the book in light of these major points?
- 3) Read Isaiah 49:1-5 and Revelation 7:9-10. What do these passages show us about God’s plan of salvation? What does it say about his sovereignty? How can these truths affect our evangelism?