

Rome – The Road, 12/17/17

Introduction

I'm selectively OCD...

One thing I hate is to get to the end of a movie

We get to the end of the book of Acts and not only does Luke not give us a good ending, he doesn't give us any ending at all.

Two Questions

Why does Luke spend the last 3rd of the book telling us about Paul's journey to Rome?

The short answer – Rome was so strategic to getting the gospel to the ends of the Earth.

Rome was the epicenter of human civilization

Common language – connected the developing world (Greek)/Scripture

Commerce/Trade

Road system

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Why does the book of Acts end without an ending?

Luke just cuts it off (Bro. Jerry Sr.'s preaching)

To tell us something very important

The book of Acts is still being written

King Jesus is still building his kingdom

Three lessons for us from the book of Acts

What does it look like when Jesus plants a church?

What methods will Jesus use to build it?

1. The message of Christ

v. 23, 31

You will be my witnesses

What is the message of Christ?

Acts 13:38-39 Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39 and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

The message is the way that God builds his church...

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

We must be careful and watch out that we not turn to other things.

2. The community of faith

This is what the message of the gospel does, it builds a new community

Community is inevitable. (Gangs, Professional associations) – we were made for community

There is no way that we can understate the power of Christian community in the lives of believers

Look what happened when Paul arrived in Rome

v.14-15 Paul thanked God and took courage

Romans 1:8-12

Acts 2:42-47 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 **And all who believed were together and had all things in common.** 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, **attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes,** they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Not a closed community

When a person who has been adopted discovers they've been adopted...

When my brother Andrew was born

John 10:16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

3. The role of the Holy Spirit

To infuse the Church with the power of God for the mission of God

To be the presence of Christ with us

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Absolute dependence!

Conclusion

As a new Church plant, we chose the book of Acts because we wanted to see what it looked like when Jesus planted the first Church. In God's providence, in many ways, even though we're in our 2nd year, I think we're still at stage 1 as a Church plant, which is ok... I want us to be committed to Christ's pattern for the Church. Let us be whole heartedly committed to Christ and his ways. Let us be committed to his message, under the power of his Spirit, to be used by him in building his new community.

I want to ask you to be fully committed, fully engaged in