

THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW
Christianity In The Making: From Jerusalem To The South Bay
Acts 28

Digging deeper in personal study and reflection.

1. Read Acts 28:1-10. In the aftermath of the great storm and shipwreck of Acts 27, Paul and the crew land safely on shore on the island of Malta. How does God show his providence and protection in these verses? What does the reaction of the locals to Paul being bitten by a snake tell you about their religious beliefs? Despite many being healed there is no record of anyone on the island becoming believers. What do you make of this?
2. Read Acts 28:11-16. Paul finally arrives in Rome fulfilling God's promise to him in Acts 23:11. This journey from Caesarea to Rome has lasted as much as six months. Look back over chapters 27 and 28 and list some of the highlights of this journey.
3. Read Acts 28:17-29. How does this interaction with the local Jewish leaders reflect the totality of Paul's ministry? What strikes you about his explanation of the gospel? How does their response give us a framework for what to expect when we share the gospel? (Note: Verse 29 is not included in many NT manuscripts. The NIV includes it in a footnote. The NASB has it in the text in brackets with an explanatory footnote. The verse reads, "*After he said this, the Jews left, arguing vigorously among themselves*".)
4. Read Acts 28:30-31. How does the book end? Does this strike you as anti-climactic? What does this ending imply?
5. We know that Paul lived on a few more years after his release from this Roman confinement. During this time he wrote 4 books of the New Testament that are often called the Prison Epistles. They are Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. To get a glimpse of Paul's attitude about this period of his life, read the first chapter of Philippians. How would you describe his experience in jail? If you could cultivate this same perspective how might it change the way you view circumstances in your own life?
6. As we have seen, Paul's interaction with the Jews from Rome is a microcosm of his whole ministry. Read Ephesians 2-3. How does Paul describe what God has been doing in sending him (and others) to the Gentiles with the gospel?
7. Paul is able to handle all this because of his deep love of Christ. Read Col. 1:3-20. In these verses Paul gives a remarkable description of the wonder of who Christ is and what he has done? What are some highlights? Take a few minutes and write out your own description of Christ.



For discussion with your small group, an accountability partner, your spouse, or your own reflection.

1. Take time to read through the 12 key passages in Acts. After reading them all, how would you describe the story of Acts in a few sentences?

2. The two passages that perhaps best lay out the blueprint for the whole story of Acts and for the church today are Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:42-47. What do you think it would look like to have a church based on these two passages?
What would be different about our church if we did this? What would be the same?

3. The vision statement for New City Church is: “Celebrating, Cultivating, and Communicating Life in Christ, and Caring for one another.” How do you think this reflects the principles of Acts 1:8 and 2:42-47?

4. Take some time to prayerfully reflect how you can contribute to NCC becoming more like the church we envision being.
What are one or two things you can commit to in order to more fully engage in the life and ministry of NCC?