THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 1ST, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

MALTA (ACTS 28:1–10)

EXTRAORDINARY KINDNESS

After surviving a storm and a shipwreck, Paul and the others arrive on the island of Malta. The islanders welcome them with extraordinary kindness, building a fire to keep them warm in the cold and rain.

- **God can use ordinary people and simple acts of kindness to remind us that He hasn't forgotten us.**

VENOMOUS SNAKE

As Paul gathers firewood, he is bitten by a venomous snake. The islanders assume he's being punished for his sins. However, Paul's experience reminds us that suffering isn't always the result of sin or disobedience.

- **While some suffering results from sinful decisions, not every hardship is God's punishment.**

HUMAN OPINIONS

Paul shakes off the snake and suffers no harm. The islanders go from condemning Paul to praising him. Luke shows us how quickly human opinions can shift.

- One moment, people may criticize us; the next moment, they may praise us. **Our identity must be rooted in who Jesus says we are, not in what others think about us.**

GOD USES PAUL

Paul and his companions are welcomed by Publius. When Paul learns that Publius's father is sick, he prays for him, and God heals him. After this miracle, others on the island come to Paul and are healed as well.

- **God places people in our lives every day who need encouragement, prayer, compassion, or someone willing to listen.**

ROME (ACTS 28:11–16)

PAUL CONTINUES TOWARD ROME

After three months on Malta, Paul finally continues toward Rome. The journey has been filled with delays and difficulties. Yet none of these interruptions prevented God from accomplishing His purpose.

- **Can you trust God's timing, even when His plans seem to be moving slower than you expected?**

PAUL AND HIS NEED FOR COMMUNITY

When Paul arrives in Puteoli, he finds fellow Believers who invite him and his companions to stay for seven days. God continues to provide people who encourage Paul along the way.

- Our culture often celebrates independence and the ability to handle everything. **Needing others isn't a sign of spiritual weakness; it's part of God's design for His church.**

PAUL AND HIS NEED FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

When the Believers in Rome hear that Paul is approaching, they travel to meet him. Luke tells us that when Paul sees them, he thanks God and takes courage.

- Pastors, ministry leaders, parents, and people who appear strong in their faith still experience discouragement. **Everyone needs encouragement.**

PAUL'S FAITHFULNESS TO JESUS

Paul finally reaches Rome but remains a prisoner. **His greatest priority isn't comfort or freedom but faithfulness to Jesus.**

- **The goal of following Jesus isn't to live the easiest life possible but the most faithful life possible.** At the end of our lives, will we hear, "**Well done, good and faithful servant"?**

THE GOSPEL (ACTS 28:17–31)

COMMITMENT TO JESUS

Just three days after arriving in Rome, Paul meets with the Jewish leaders. He explains why he was arrested, makes it clear that he has done nothing wrong, and shares that he is in chains because of his hope in Jesus.

- Even as a prisoner, Paul remains focused on sharing Jesus with others. **Circumstances should not affect our calling.**

CHRIST-CENTERED MESSAGE

The Jewish leaders have heard about the Christian movement and its opposition. They arrange a meeting, and many come to hear Paul. From morning until evening, he uses Scripture to explain the Kingdom of God and show them that Jesus is the Messiah.

- Despite everything Paul has endured, **his message remains centered on Jesus.**

DIFFERENT RESPONSES

After hearing Paul's message, some believe, while others reject it. Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9–10, warning that **people can hear God's Word but fail to understand because their hearts are hardened.**

- Hardened hearts begin with **small moments of resistance and repeated disobedience. But Christ can change any heart.**

THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVERYONE

After some Jewish listeners reject his message, Paul declares that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles. The gospel has spread from Jerusalem to people of different nations and backgrounds, just as Jesus promised in Acts 1:8.

- **The gospel isn't limited to one group of people.**

THE GOSPEL CANNOT BE STOPPED

Acts ends with Paul spending two years under Roman custody, welcoming visitors and boldly sharing Jesus with everyone who comes to him. Throughout Acts, we've seen persecution, imprisonment, and suffering, yet nothing has stopped the message of Jesus. The book of Acts ends, but **the work of Jesus through His Church continues today.**

WHY DO WE FOLLOW JESUS?

- Paul remained faithful despite persecution, imprisonment, and suffering.
- Are you following Jesus because of who He is or because of what you hope He will do for you?
- **Our commitment to Jesus must be rooted in who He is, not only in what He can do for us.**

WHAT'S OUR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL?

- A hardened heart rarely happens overnight. It often begins with small compromises, ignored convictions, and repeated disobedience.
- The danger isn't just rejecting God's Word. It's **becoming comfortable hearing it without obeying it.**
- **God's Word was never meant to simply inform us. It is meant to transform us.**

WILL WE CONTINUE SHARING THE GOSPEL?

- Acts begins with Jesus commissioning His disciples to be his witnesses (Acts 1:8).
- **The same mission has now been entrusted to us. We are called to make Jesus known everywhere we go.**
- We aren't called to simply admire the faithfulness of the early church. We're called to continue their mission.