



BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2026 – WEEK 5

### Road Trip

*What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.*

– Galatians 3:8-9 NLT

- **The “word was spreading**

*Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch **speaking the word to no one except Jews.** – Acts 11:19 ESV*

- This is **not** a reference to the Bible
- The New Testament does not exist
- They are not preaching the Old Testament
- This is the word concerning Jesus

*But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, **preaching the Lord Jesus.** – Acts 11:20 ESV*

**Lord** – kyrios – κύριος

- Lord, master, sovereign
- One who has control over a person
- The title given to God and the Messiah
- Jesus used it of His Father

*Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put **the Lord your God** to the test.'" – Matthew 5:7 ESV*

- He used it of Himself

*"Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." – Matthew 21:2-3 ESV*

- **A declaration of Jesus' deity**

- He was the Son of God
  - He had divine authority
  - He was all-powerful
  - He was the long-awaited Messiah
- When Thomas saw Jesus alive, he said:  
*"My **Lord** and my **God!**"* – John 20:28 ESV
- When Saul preached his first sermon...  
*...he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "**He is the Son of God.**"* – Acts 9:20 ESV
- He taught the Jews in Damascus...  
*...that **Jesus was the Christ.*** – Acts 9:22 ESV
- Those early messages were simple
  - Jesus was the Son of God
  - Who became a man
  - Was crucified
  - But was restored to life
  - And appeared to His followers

***Christ died** for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he **was buried**, that he **was raised** on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he **appeared** to Cephas, then to the twelve.* – 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 ESV

- The "word" had made it to Antioch  
*...a great number who believed **turned to the Lord.*** – Acts 11:21 ESV
  - News got back to Jerusalem
  - They send Barnabas...*a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith...* – Acts 11:24
  - He went to Tarsus to find Saul
  - And they returned to Antioch in Syria  
*For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch **the disciples were first called Christians.*** – Acts 11:26 NLT

**Christians** – *christianos* – Χριστιανός

"those of the party of Christ"

- ~ Christ: Greek for "Messiah"
- ~ Christians were followers of Jesus
- ~ They believed He was the Jewish Messiah
- ~ "Christian" was a disparaging term

*If you are insulted **for the name of Christ**, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you....if anyone **suffers as a Christian**, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God **in that name.*** – 1 Peter 4:14. 16 ESV

- **Things heat up**

- As the gospel spreads...
  - ...“Christians” increase in number
  - ...the Jews hold the disciples responsible
  - ...King Herod targets the disciples
  - ...and makes examples of them

*About that time King Herod Agrippa began to persecute some believers in the church. **He had the apostle James (John’s brother) killed with a sword.** When Herod saw how much this pleased the Jewish people, **he also arrested Peter.** – Acts 12:1-3 NLT*

- Peter is imprisoned
  - Herod plans to execute him
  - But God had other plans
  - And He delivers Peter

*And after Herod searched for him and did not find him, he examined the sentries and ordered that they should be put to death. – Acts 12:19 ESV*

- **In the eye of the storm**

- While all this was going on...
  - ...Saul and Barnabas were in Jerusalem
  - ...delivering financial aid to the church
  - ...in preparation for a pending famine
- They heard about the death of James
  - ...and the imprisonment of Peter
- But they returned to Antioch

*And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark. – Acts 12:25 ESV*

- **There’s work to be done**

- Peter has been set free from prison
- But he is not the one who is sent
  - ...*the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”* – Acts 13:2 NLT

- What was “the work” they were to do?
  - ...Spread the gospel?
  - ...Make disciples?
  - ...Plant churches?
  - ...Help people get to heaven?
  - ...Tell them how to have eternal life?

- What had Jesus told Paul?
  - “I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you*

*from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you, to open **their** eyes, so that **they** may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that **they** may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” – Acts 26:18-25 ESV*

- **The first missionary journey**

- Paul and Barnabas were sent as a team
  - ...to a specific region
  - ...to a targeted audience: Gentiles
  - ...and with a clear mission mandate

*For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “**I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.**” – Acts 13:47 ESV*

- Paul quotes from Isaiah 49
  - A passage about the “Lord’s Servant”
  - It’s a Messianic prophecy

*I am honored in the eyes of the Lord, and my God has become my strength—he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; **I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.**” – Isaiah 49:5-6 ESV*

*So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. **When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.** – Acts 13:4 ESV*

- What happened to the prophecy?
  - They were to be a light to the Gentiles
  - Why did they go to the Jews?
  - This would become a pattern for Paul
    - ...they went on...to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day **they went into the synagogue and sat down.** – Acts 13:14 ESV

*Now at Iconium **they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.** – Acts 14:1 ESV*

- Remember what the prophecy said:
  - “You will do more than **restore the people of Israel to me.** I will make you **a light to the Gentiles, and you will bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.**” – Isaiah 49:6 NLT

- Paul’s message was distinctly “Jewish”
  - Jesus was a Jew
  - He belonged to the tribe of Judah

- He was a descendant of David
- He was the Jewish Messiah
- And the King of the Jews
  
- It was a mixed audience
  - Jews and “God-fearers”
  - God-fearers were Gentile converts to Judaism who...
    - ...attended synagogue
    - ...worshiped Yahweh
    - ...agreed to observe Jewish customs
    - ...but remained uncircumcised
  - They were “enlightened” pagans
    - Monotheistic rather than polytheistic
    - Drawn to Judaism’s morals and ethics
    - Familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures
    - Eager to learn
    - Receptive to the truth
  
- But Paul had a love for the Jews as well
 

*My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them. They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God’s adopted children. God revealed his glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them his law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping him and receiving his wonderful promises. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. **And he is God**, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. – Romans 9:1-5 NLT*

  - This was Paul’s primary message
  - To the Jews and the God-fearers
  - At the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia, he said:
 

*“Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it.” – Acts 13:16-17 ESV*

    - He put up with them – vs 18
    - He destroyed the Canaanites – vs 19
    - He gave them the land – vs 19
    - He provided judges – vs 20
    - He let them have a king (Saul) – vs 21
    - He gave them a better king (David) – vs 22
    - He provided a Savior – vs 23

*Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, **as he promised.** – Acts 13:23 ESV*

*“And behold, you [Mary] will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called **the Son of the Most High**. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and **of his kingdom there will be no end.**” – Luke 1:31-33 ESV*

*And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, **“You are my Son, today I have begotten you.”**” – Acts 13:32-33 ESV*

- We focus on **what** Jesus came to bring:
  - Forgiveness
  - A restored relationship with God
  - Eternal life
- Paul focused on **who** made it possible:
  - The sinless Son of God

*We have come to bring you the Good News that you should turn from these worthless things and **turn to the living God**, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them. – Acts 14:15 NLT*
- This message got Paul...

...misunderstood	...labeled as a troublemaker
...misrepresented	...railroaded out of town
...mistaken as a god	...and violently stoned by his own people

*They stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking he was dead. But as the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he left with Barnabas for Derbe. After preaching the Good News in Derbe and making many disciples, Paul and Barnabas returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, where they strengthened the believers. They encouraged them to continue in the faith, reminding them that we must suffer many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God.*

- **Discussion Questions:**

Why is Jesus' identity (who He is) so vital to appreciating His mission (what He did)?

Read Philippians 2:1-11. Why did Paul stress Jesus' attitude toward His status as God's Son, and what lessons can we take away from it?

Why did Paul want everyone to know Jesus was both Lord and Savior (see Rev. 5:11-13)?



A MESSAGE OF HUMILITY AND  
HOPE FROM THE LIFE OF PAUL

# THE *CHIEF* OF SINNERS

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SPRING SERIES 2026 – WEEK 6 HOMEWORK

## WEEK 6 – On the road again

On this second missionary trip, Paul and Barnabas part ways, and Paul travels with Timothy and Silas. While in Corinth, Paul writes his two letters to the believers in Thessalonica. On this trip, Paul begins to experience increasing hostility to his message and ends up in prison in Philippi. In this lesson, we want to examine Paul's ongoing attempt to share the good news with his fellow Jews.

- Read through pages 121-164 of the PDF containing Ken's Devotional™ on the Book of Acts.
- Acts 15 contains a recap of Paul and Barnabas' trip to Jerusalem, where they were forced to defend their ministry among the Gentiles. According to the opening verses, what was the primary conflict between Paul, Barnabas, and their accusers?
- To get a better idea of what was going on, read Galatians 2. This letter was written to a new congregation Paul and Barnabas started during their first missionary journey. How does Paul explain the situation?

Galatians 2:11-14 reveals a conflict between Paul and Peter. What was Paul's problem with his fellow apostle?

- Back in Acts 15:12-21, Paul's explanation of their ministry to the Gentiles resulted in a decision. What was it?

- Acts 16 contains the first part of Paul's second missionary trip. As you read through this chapter, look for any verses or phrases that illustrate that God was sovereignly behind the scenes, orchestrating every step of Paul's journey. Verses 6, 8, and 9 are prime examples.
- In Acts 17:1-9, Paul runs into trouble. What was the cause of his conflict with the Thessalonian Jews? What riled them up and what Paul and Silas have to do?

According to verse 10-15, how did the Jews in Berea respond to Paul's message?

Verses 16-33 contain Paul's ministry in Athens. Summarize what happened.

How does Paul explain Yahweh to those who believed in false gods?

- In Acts 18:1-17, Paul finds himself in Corinth. Verse 11 states that Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half. What motivated him to spend such a long time in this pagan city?

In verses 1-6, Paul has a strong reaction to the Jewish opposition he faced. Describe how he responded to their rejection of the message that Jesus was the Christ.

According to verses 12-17, how did the Jews continue their assault on Paul's ministry?

How do you see the sovereign hand of God in all that took place during this period of Paul's life?