

New Testament History, Literature, and Theology  
Session 19: Concluding John and Introducing Acts  
By Dr. Ted Hildebrandt

**A. Review of John and the Glory of Christ [00:00-4:48]**

Good afternoon. We've done a couple lectures on the book of John, and last time in John we were going over character portrayals. Character portrayals of major characters: Nicodemus, Nathaniel, the woman at the well, and then we finished up with Thomas. Thomas is often known as "doubting Thomas" and I tried to show that there were different aspects of Thomas that were courageous and inquisitive. To label him as just "doubting Thomas" you miss a lot of his character. Dr. Hunt, at Gordon College, is producing a book on the characters of the book of John, and it's going to be about a 600 page book, apparently, and some of the leading scholars in the world describe the various characters in John and how they interact intertextually in the book of John. So John is sensitive. We called him before, "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and he seems to be sensitive and picks up the things on a personal level with these persons. Now we just want to take a few minutes, and finish up the book of John and then move over to the book of Acts. Right now, let's just finish up John.

So we talked about Thomas, and what I'd like to do is, next, is to introduce some of the themes that John deals with. One of the themes that he deals with is this notion of glory. The Greek word for glory is *doxa*. And *doxa*, you recognize it from the *doxa* in doxology. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise him all creatures here below, praise him above ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Many of us have sung the doxology in church. *Doxa*, basically means "praise" or "glory." So this notion of glory here, in the book, John uses this term. John 1:14, he says, "we have seen his glory, as of the only begotten son of God." "We have seen his glory." So he uses this term "glory" in referring to Jesus. Then over in chapter 17, verses 22 and 24, John picks up this theme again. He says, and let me just start back up with verse 21. He says that "all

of them may be one, Father just as you are in me, and I am in you.”

Now as soon as I say John chapter 17, what comes to mind? John 17 is the great high priestly prayer of Jesus where he's praying to his Father and you've got a whole chapter of Jesus prayer. You want to study prayer it's a wonderful chapter to study on prayer. It is Jesus' high priestly prayer to his father. He says “I want them to be as one Father, just as you are in me, and I am in you.” And then down to John 17:22, “I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.” So this oneness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, this Father/Son oneness has been given to the church, “that they may be one as we are one.” It's kind of interesting when you reflect on the fragmentation of the church. But there's a great statement here that the church be one, and that reflects the glory of the father and the son, and their unity. Down to verse 24. “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory. The glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” So Jesus says one of the things that is going to bring him joy is to have his followers see the glory that God has given him before the foundation of the world. Jesus remembered that and he highlights that in his prayer to his father. So glory is a big theme in the book of John, this *doxa*, glory. Another thing we beheld his glory, there, we just went over. In the Cana, wedding feast, at Cana, when he makes water into wine, it says it revealed his glory. So this theme of glory is picked up at Lazarus' death again. The glory is shown there. Then glory is manifested through love and particularly the oneness as the Father and Son are one, and that's what we just read in chapter 17 verse 22. So glory is a big theme in the book of John.

### **B. John, the Synoptic Supplement: No childhood stories, Genealogy, or temptation [4:48-10:44]**

And now next what I'd like to cover next is what we call--the book of John is written much later than the synoptic gospels. Most New Testament scholars debate over this, but accept Markan priority. So you have Mark kind of coming first, 50s, 60s, and Matthew and Luke being dependent on Mark, and then we looked at the Q source that

was shared by Matthew and Luke but not in Mark, and that Q source is a hypothetical source but basically Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the synoptic gospels, they're all rather early. John seems to be written much later. So it seems to some that John is a supplement to the synoptic gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John comes later and so he's aware of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. What he does is says, "Okay, they told you this about Jesus, they've given you what's in your left eye. Now I'm going to give you a different perspective from the right eye so you can get a three dimensional Jesus here. So what he does is, as we noted before, he gives 92% unique material to him. 92% is totally unique that we have nowhere else. Only 8% are things like the feeding of the 5000, which is shared with all four Gospels, but 92% is different in John. So John is considered a synoptic supplement. He supplements what these other guys, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are writing. So John is a synoptic supplement.

Now let me just illustrate this with several points here. For example, John has no childhood stories of Jesus, he has no record of Jesus going to Bethlehem, no record of Herod and the magi or the wise men, no record of killing of the infants in Bethlehem, no record of the shepherds coming in from the fields as Luke has, no records of him being 12 years old and him being left behind in the temple area and reasoning with the leaders of the temple. John has none of this. None of the childhood stories are there. John starts out, "in the beginning was the Word [the *logos*] and the Word was with God and the Word was God." So John takes a more cosmic view of Christ and therefore reflects a kind of a high theology, a very developed thought about Jesus and his cosmic importance so it's as if Matthew and Luke recorded the history from Joseph's perspective, from Mary's perspective, so that's been covered, so I'm going to look at Jesus in a different way. And so John then has no childhood stories of Jesus. Zero. Another thing, he has no genealogy. Matthew has Joseph's genealogy, Luke has Mary's genealogy, and so you've got the two genealogies of Christ and you have no genealogy in the book of John. So John says, "Okay, they've taken care of that, I don't have to do that, there's no temptation of Christ being driven out in the wilderness, Satan's out there, where he's out there fasting forty days and forty nights. Satan comes, and you know, "turn these stones into

bread,” “jump off the pinnacle of the temple, his angels will bear you up,” and then he shows them all the kingdoms of the world. All of these I will give you if you bow down and worship me.” None of that, the temptation of Christ by Satan, which is in Matthew 4, none of that occurs in the book of John. The temptation of Christ in the wilderness is not there at all. Zero.

There is no Sermon on the Mount. Now the Sermon on the Mount is huge. Luke records the Sermon on the Mount, various forms, but in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount is huge. It's a three chapter sermon of Jesus. John does not recount the Sermon on the Mount at all. So it's kind of interesting you don't get these. Do you remember how we said in Matthew, there were these elaborate long discourses? So you have the Sermon on the Mount, you had the Olivet Discourse, you had the Sending of the Twelve, you had the Parables of the kingdom in Matthew 13. John doesn't do the discourse thing, these long sermons of Jesus. John doesn't do that. He seems to do more, like we pointed out earlier, this interaction between people where Jesus, comes up and he meets Nathaniel. “I saw you, before Philip called you under the fig tree.” And more of that type of thing. John has the interaction of people rather than long discourses that Matthew is so good at. So in John there is no Sermon on the Mount at all; there are no parables. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all of them have parables of the Sower and the Sheep and Goats. The parable of the talents, and all sorts of parables that are highlighted in both and Luke giving us a different set of parables with the Samaritan, the parable of the Good Samaritan, Lazarus and Dives, and the Prodigal Son. The parables that we get in Matthew are somewhat different than what we get in Luke. And amongst all those parables, and there are tons of them in Matthew and Luke, and Mark has some as well, from all those parables, none of them are in the book of John. Zero. So that's very interesting that Jesus' teaching in parabolic ways is picked up by the other three whereas John, he goes a different way with that than the parables, no parables there. Judean ministry, most of the other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, focus on Jesus when Jesus is in Galilee, and so you've got Jesus going out walking on the water, they're fishing, cast your nets on the other side, and they catch fish. Jesus teaches them beside the Sea of Galilee. All that focusing, Sea

of Galilee, Galilean ministry, and Jesus going up and going to a synagogue of Nazareth and them almost throwing him off a cliff there are not found in John--all that those Galilean stories. John focuses mostly on when Jesus comes into Judea. So there's a very Judean type of focus here, when Jesus is coming up or back from Jerusalem and Judea.

### **C. John's focus on the Passion Week [10:44-12:45]**

In John there's also very much a focus on the passion week of Christ. It's kind of interesting when you see how much of John is occupied with this passion week of Christ, much of the gospel of John focuses on the last week of Christ. The last week of Christ is a huge percentage of the book of John focuses on the Passion week.

Some people mention Mel Gibson's movie on it, called "The Passion," which is an interesting portrayal, and probably fairly realistic on the violence actually, not an overstatement at all. What took place when a person was beaten before especially Jesus and the descriptions that are given, with the soldiers mocking him. Often times the Jews, they always did something like 39 lashes, not 40 lashes because if it went to 40 and you killed the person, it was bad, so they would always back off a little bit. But it showed you that they beat you within an inch of your life. So the descriptions of the passion week and the agony of Jesus is described in the book of John more than anywhere else. He focuses on the Judean Ministry, Jerusalem, and then he focuses on this last week of Christ, and not just the last week, the last day of Christ's life. You'll notice from John 13 to John 19, six chapters, toward the end of the book, that's a huge chunk. There are six chapters. Big chunk there, all on the last day of Christ's life, and going to gethsemane, the arrest and trial, Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial and all those things. Just on the last day of Christ, which is interesting because you've got the whole book of John is what, 21 chapters there, and you've got six of those chapters on the last day of Christ, so it is very focused.

### **D. Jesus Teaches Through "I am" Statements [12:45-15:55]**

Now. We've mentioned that where the gospel of John takes place largely in Judea, and so there's a very Judean focus as opposed to a Galilean ministry. Here's something I

think that's interesting and that is that Jesus doesn't teach in parables but he does teach, and this is unique to John, John has Jesus teaching, it's not in parables, the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which grows to big plant. No, that's not how John does it. John uses what are called the "I am" statements. The *ego eimi*, are "I am" statements. So you get seven of these "I am" statements sprinkled through and then Jesus develops what he means by these "I am" statements. So, for example, let me just list a few of these "I am" statements. Again, Jesus is not teaching in parables. There are no parables in John. But he teaches through these "I am" statements. "I am the bread of life," in chapter 6:35. In 8:12, "I am the light of the world." In 10 a very famous one, "I am the gate." And then also in 10, "I am," and for this one, there are many pictures that describe this: "I am the good shepherd." It portrays Jesus as the good shepherd who takes care of his sheep. I am the good shepherd. Here is one that's famous, it comes during the Lazarus story: Lazarus. "I am the resurrection." I am the resurrection. Then here's one that you all are familiar with because we did this in memory verse, "I am the way the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father but by me." This is a very strong statement by Jesus. It is a very exclusivistic statement. Our culture has trouble with anything that's exclusivistic. But "I am the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father but by me," Jesus said, John 14:6. You all memorized that. "I am the vine, you are the branches," chapter 15:5. So these various "I am" statements, "I am the bread of life," "I'm the light," various statements that Jesus said "I am" and I don't think you can miss this too. I hear an Old Testament echo in that.

Now, I'm not saying he's quoting the Old Testament here, but I hear this echo from the burning bush and Moses and Exodus 3:14. "I am that I am." Jesus uses this *ego eimi*, in Greek, "I am," and even some of the times of Pharisees, really react when Jesus says "I am." I think it hearkens back to this most sacred name of God, Jehovah, or Yahweh, I am that I am, coming back from the burning bush. Some of those kind of overtones, or just this kind of echoing of Scripture there I believe is found here.

### **E. The Holy Spirit and the Father/Son Relationship [15:55-18:22]**

Now, another thing that John does is that he describes the coming of the Holy Spirit. I'm going to talk more about the coming of the Holy Spirit, when we get into the book of Acts, and some of the ramifications of that, but the coming of the Holy Spirit, he describes as the coming that Jesus says he's going to leave, and that the Father's going to send the Spirit. I'll use the King James Version, and I will use the King James Version because my head was wired in King James when I was a young person. "I'll send the comforter." And so this comforter, the Greek is *paraclete*. *Para* –*para* like a para-church organization is one that comes alongside the *clete* means basically "called." So *paraclete* is "one called alongside." So the one is called alongside, and now I hate doing etymology and actually context trumps etymology, or the history of a word. You need to understand the word usage and context rather than its etymology, its history. But when you break it apart it can give us background.

"The one called alongside," but who is that? It turns out the *paraclete*--but what does that word mean? When you find it out it means something it is more like a lawyer. One who's called alongside is a defense attorney, or maybe, another way to say it would be, and better yet, would be "an advocate." In other words, the Holy Spirit's going to come as an advocate for us to the Father. So the Holy Spirit is this *paraclete*. The actual meaning of that word is not comforter, I think that kind of misses it. It's more of an idea of an advocate, a defense attorney, one who comes alongside to help you. It's often used in a legal type of context. So the Father/Son relationship we mentioned, John chapter 17 is the great high priestly prayer of Christ. So you see the Son praying to the Father, and this intimacy. It's a beautiful prayer there, and you get to see into the heart of Jesus, as he prays to the Father, and he prays for us and says, I want them to see my glory that I had with you before the foundation of the world, that they may be one, like we are one, and that kind of thing. It is just a wonderful prayer there. This is the high priestly prayer of Jesus. Here you have the Father and the Son where the Son is praying to the Father in this intimate discussion between the Father and the Son. It's just beautiful. It's one of those incredible prayers in Scripture.

## F. Common Phrases of Joh: Truly, *Agape* [love], and *logos* [word] [18:22-22:44]

Now, we'll kind of finish this out with some of John's characteristic words. Whenever I teach Greek which is every year here at Gordon College, I always have them read 1 John, then we usually go over to John and Revelation and I want them to get used to Johannine vocabulary. And it's very interesting, John seems to repeat these formulaic words that he says. Indeed if I said to you, some of you know King James Version very well, "Verily, verily," the "verily, verily I say unto you," you know, the verily verily's come from the book of John. It means "amen, amen; truly I say unto you," and that "truly, truly I say unto you," that comes from John. It's one of his formulas that he picks up, and John has these key words. John uses key words and phrases and these kind of like literary little chunks of formula that reflect possibly, some oral ways that the word of God came down to us, where these phrases would be stereotype phrases used in oral ways of remembering things and carrying them down when there wasn't necessarily things written down. So John picks up these stereotypical formulas and uses this "verily, verily" or "truly, truly I say unto you."

He is the beloved disciple, so he picks up largely on this word *agape* [love]. And so in 1 John especially, you get this but you also get it in the gospel. Most people are aware that in Greek there's several words for love, as opposed to Hebrew, where Hebrew has one word for love. Greek has *agape* [self-sacrificial], *phileo*, brotherly love, *storge* and *eros*. *Eros* is more passionate love. I think sometimes people have separated those. They have separated *agape* and *eros* and *phileo* too far. I think there is some overlap in those words that I think you've got to be real careful with those four words for love. Everybody's trying to see the differences but there does seem to be overlap and that's why they're all translated "love" at one point but love obviously has different meanings. So John uses this word *agape*, though, and it's a big word for him, and it's self-sacrificial kind of love and it's really important.

"In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word [*logos*] was with God and the Word [*logos*] was God." *Logos* means "word." John then labels Christ as this *logos*. People try to read into that and probably correctly so, this *logos* is the kind of cosmic



force, the organizing principle of the universe and has this cosmic order versus cosmic chaos idea. You've got in a lot of ancient Near Eastern religious structures in which you've got this battle between order and chaos. So Jesus is called the *logos*, the Word of God. I think also, there is a kind of double entendre or triple entendre thing with the *logos*, the word of God: the expression of the person, and the personal communication of God in flesh and the revelation itself. Maybe that's probably the better way of saying it. The revelation of God comes from the Word of God the *logos*.

These are some of John's favorite words, and he uses them over and over again. He really repeats a lot of the words and he does this with little tweaks. He tweaks them, almost like we've just had a lecture by Dr. Graeme Bird here at Gordon, almost he takes these stereotypical formulas and he tweaks them. And so it's almost like a jazz player that does a little or has a little arpeggio that he does, and he does this and he takes a song that everyone recognizes and he does this little trilly things, and he tacks that on. John does that, he takes these little stereotypical formulas and then he varies them a little bit and you can see it's kind of like a jazz player, he's playing the same song over and over again, but he's tweaking it each time making it a little different for the readers.

### **G. Rich Contrasts and the Disciple whom Jesus Loved [22:44-25:07]**

Lastly John is rich in contrasts. Light and darkness is a big thing in John. Again, later on, in the second century you're going to get more of this Gnosticism, and there's going to be more of this big contrast between light and darkness. So some see some proto-gnostic kind of response, where John, he picks up this light and darkness contrast. By the way, we even use light and darkness in terms of modern things, I just saw this picture of Darth Vader. And you've got the forces of light and the lightsabers and things like that. So you have this struggle between light and darkness and it's even present in some of Lucas' movies, Star Wars, that have been so famous. So, John picks up on that light and darkness motif.

So, and then lastly, I just wanted to finish Jesus, when this disciple writes this book, he realizes that he is one, he is the disciple whom Jesus loved. So it's kind of neat

to get a perspective of Jesus from one whom Jesus valued so much. He identifies himself as: I am the one that Jesus loved; and that was the basis for how he viewed himself. It should be in some senses how we view ourselves. Whereas a lot of people in life ask: what is love? Everybody's trying to suck love from everybody else and trying to get other people to love me kind of thing. As a Christian we realize that we set the greatest demonstration of love, he gave his life on our behalf. Therefore we are loved and we don't have to suck love from other people, from other places. But rather we can be ones, who like Christ, give love to others, because our cup is full and running over. Because we are loved by Christ and therefore we are full and we can love other people without necessarily trying to get something back. I'm going to love you without getting love back. We can live selflessly rather than selfishly. Rather than narcissism, that's focused on ourselves, that we can be other-centered. So, anyway, John is the disciple whom Jesus loved in the book of John.

#### **H. Shifting to Acts [25:07-28:57]**

And now we are about ready to make a huge shift. So far in this course we spent a good bit of the course talking about Jesus. That's partially my bias, I can't get away from it. Whenever I move from Old Testament studies to New Testament studies, I really want to focus on Jesus and getting a good sense of Jesus, his teaching, his ministry, how Jesus interacted with people. It tells of how Jesus interacted with his Father, how Jesus interacted with Satan, how Jesus interacted with his enemies. You get to watch Jesus in all these difference scenarios. That's why we've spent so long in the New Testament focused on Jesus, I think Jesus is the focus and therefore I want to spend a good deal of time on the Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the Gospels, the Synoptic Gospels plus John.

But now, Jesus has died, he's risen again, he's broken out of the tomb, and now we're going to shift over to the book of Acts. Acts, with Acts, everything changes. With Acts, it's no longer Jesus in a sense of Jesus living and walking beside a Sea of Galilee and the church and the spreading of the gospel. Actually, the book of Acts, you get to see

the Abrahamic covenant. Remember the covenant with Abraham, where God promised him as we do in our Bible-robics thing, the land, the seed and that his descendants would be a blessing to all the earth. And now you get to see how that blessing is going to be fulfilled in Jesus and his twelve disciples--and how that's going to spread through the whole world. The book of Acts, then, is going to describe that kind of explosion of the disciples going out from Jerusalem. Jesus he's going to rise from the dead, we call that the resurrection, and the third day he came back to life he rose. Then about forty days later, as he's with his disciples, and various people see him, and his twelve disciples see him, and the women see him. By the way, that's a really important point, Dr.

Hugenberger made down at Park Street Church down on Easter. Who were the first ones who see Jesus after he's raised from the dead? Who are the first ones to testify? Who stood as witnesses of the resurrection? It's these women, Mary and the women. The women then, are the first "apostles," or sent ones. It's the women who go and tell the apostles, he's gone, he's risen. And Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and these others. It's the women and it's interesting in that culture a woman was not allowed to be a witness in the court generally, and so a woman's testimony was invalidated. Yet the gospel, if you were writing the gospel, trying to validate the resurrection, you would have had men tell the story, but what the Scripture does is, it has the women telling the stories which is not the way you would have validated the resurrection of the dead in those times. This just shows that the scriptures are giving us true truth, that the scriptures are giving us factual history, this is what actually happened. It's not that they making up, it's not what they're spinning this way or that way, they're describing true truths, what actually happened. So the women's testimony comes up first even though that would be contrary to the culture, and little things like that keep popping up that indicate that this isn't spun truth, that they're just telling history, what actually happened. Now they don't tell all of what happened and we see that in the book of Acts.

## **I. Introduction to Acts and It's Canonical Importance [28:57-33:26]**

So now we're switching over the book of Acts, and you have Jesus dies on the

cross, three days later he rises from the dead, he's with his disciples, he appears to these women, he appears to two people going on the Emmaus Road, he's seen by 500 people all at one time, he's seen by eleven disciples all at one time. He's seen by multiple groups and multiple groups in different places too. He doesn't always appear in the same place. He's on the road to Emmaus, outside of Jerusalem, he's seen in many, many different contexts by many, many different people and finally 500 people see him. Then you have what is called the "ascension." You have what is called the "resurrection," which is the rising from the dead. The ascension is after about 40 days. Jesus goes up on a cloud and flies away. He leaves from, guess where? The Mount of Olives. And some of you have gone on the Get Lost in Jerusalem program know that if you go up to the top of the Mount of Olives and if you go to the top there's a chapel and the chapel is called the Chapel of the Ascension. It's got Jesus' footprint where he took off into heaven. Now, you can buy that, the guy wants some money to see it and things like that so it's largely bogus, of course, but Jesus did go up from the Mount of Olives. It says when he comes back he's going to come back to the Mount of Olives the same way you see him go. And so a lot of people want to be buried on the Mount of Olives because that's where Jesus is going to come back to. So, let's jump over to the book of Acts.

Now the book of Acts, like we said it's a major shift. The book of Acts is basically the church going forth, these are simplistic phrases, but the book of Acts, Acts of the Apostles, as it's called. What do we have here? The book of Acts is key to understanding the rest of the Bible, the rest of the New Testament. What we have is Matthew, Mark, Luke and John telling us about the life of Jesus and the book of Acts basically gives us the history, we're going to have some epistles like Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. Acts is going to provide the history that underlies the reasons why these epistles were written. If you look at the lectures by Dr. Dave Mathewson, which are superb, he keeps coming back and each one of the epistles, what was the occasion of the epistle, what was the precipitating problem that caused the apostle Paul or James or whoever to write? In other words what was the precipitating problem that caused them to write? And how does the epistle answer that problem? The

book of Acts will give you the history that's under the apostles. So, to be honest, we spend a lot of time going through the book of Acts. So I think Acts provides us historical framework for the epistles and so it behooves us to learn Acts fairly well. When we hit the epistles we're going to learn it fairly well. What was the historical situation in life behind the epistles? So, canonically when you go to study Acts gives you this history underlying these other epistles.

Now, let's discuss one more thing on this important of the book of Acts. Some of Paul's epistles like his Pastoral Epistles will come after Acts and so it seems like Paul, at the end we're going to see this that the book of Acts ends with Paul in a prison in Rome. Then it ends, to be honest, very abruptly. The book of Acts ends abruptly, we're never told what happened to the apostle Paul. As it ends, he's going into the court before Caesar. We don't know what became of that, the book of Acts stops at that point. Then we have some 2 Timothy and some other letters that Paul wrote that seem to come from after that trial in front of Caesar. So there are some Pastoral Epistles and, of course, the book of Revelation, we realize it's written by John much later, and it's closing out the canon around 98 AD or thereabouts.

### **J. Structure of the Book of Acts: Expanding the Gospel [33:26-36:03]**

Now let's look at the structure of the book of Acts. The key verse of the book of Acts is Acts 1:8. And this verse again, we've memorized this for this course, but Acts 1:8, it gives you the whole flow and structure of the book, I think in one nutshell: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you." So the Holy Spirit is going to be a big theme. By the way do you remember back in the book of Luke? What was one of Luke's big themes? Luke was before Pentecost, this is back with Jesus. Luke picked up on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was there when Mary's babe leaped in her womb, when she's talking to Zacharias and Elizabeth and the Spirit comes on various people in those early people in the book of Luke. Luke also, then, picks up the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. Luke seems to be the writer that picks up on the Holy Spirit a lot. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my

witnesses” and now these witnesses, and it describes this geographical movement, in Jerusalem [the center], to Judea, spreading out to the tribal area of Judea, Samaria, going out to the Samaritans and to the ends of the earth. And so this, I think describes the fulfilling of the Abrahamic covenant, that Abraham would be a blessing to all the earth. The Abrahamic covenant is back from Genesis 12 and other places back in Genesis. So we’ve got Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria chapters, and these are chapters, Jerusalem and Judea are chapters 1-7 of Acts, Judea to Samaria, chapters 8-12, and to the outermost parts of the world, largely this section is all Paul in his three missionary journeys, chapter 13-28. So in chapters 13-28, we’re going to have Paul going on three missionary journeys. After the three missionary journeys of the apostle Paul, Paul is going to get imprisoned at Jerusalem and then basically after those three missionary journeys, he has two year imprisonment in Palestine [Caesarea]. He’s then going to be shipped off to Rome and then you’re going to have this long voyage to Rome and the ship crashed and finally he’s going to make it up to Rome. It will end there. The book will end here with Paul imprisoned in Rome. So that’s kind of the macrostructure of the book.

#### **K. Alternate Structure: A Missionary and Their Field [36:03-43:11]**

Now here’s another way to look at it, here’s another way to look at the structure. Here’s a missionary, here’s a mission field, you have got the base of the chapters down there where it occurs. Now first of all, we have Peter and Stephen. In the early chapters of the book of Acts which are dominated by Peter, largely. Peter and Stephen, there’s a huge chapter on Stephen, Stephen’s stoning in chapter 7, and chapter 6 is the introduction with Stephen. Here you’ve got Judea, largely Peter and Stephen which Judea the focus. The base of operation is Jerusalem, it’s very Jerusalem centric and what’s going to happen in the early church is there’s going to be persecution. So, in Jerusalem there’s going to be this persecution, there’s going to be persecution. James, was the brother of John, the son of Zebedee. So you’ve got John’s brother, James is going to be one of the early church martyrs, he’s going to die early, Stephen is going to be one of the early martyrs. Stephen will be stoned to death, and give this wonderful long Old Testament sermon, with its

beautiful description of the Old Testament. The only problem is it was cut short because the people got so upset with him that they just started picking up stones and killed him. By the way, Stephen's great speech there in this long beautiful chapter is an exposition of Old Testament. Then, Paul is there and Paul sees this and so Paul witnesses the death of Stephen. There is a very lengthy description there probably narrated by Paul and what he saw. In chapters 8-12, you've got Barnabas and Philip. Philip goes with this Ethiopian eunuch in chapter 8 of Acts and he's going to go out and meet this Ethiopian eunuch and the guy's going to come out and say, "Hey, I don't know what I'm reading," and he's going to come out and an angel comes and takes Philip and flies him out there. This kind of evangelism, the angel takes him out there and says, "Go talk to that guy." So he goes up and talks to this Ethiopian eunuch and explains to him scriptures. He tells him about Jesus and he's reading Isaiah and he says, "What's happening here?" And so you've got this great kind of Isaiah/Jesus connection with Philip. He's interesting also, because he's got four prophesying daughters. So it's very interesting you've got in the Old Testament, you guys remember when we dealt Deborah and Barack in what was it, Judges 4 and 5, and you had Deborah and Barak and Deborah then was a leader of Israel, she was a prophetess, and she was a judge. She was also married to this guy named Lapidoth and so she was a married woman who was a prophetess and a judge and the text says she was leading Israel at the time. You remember she was leading Israel with Jabin and Hazor at the time. And what happens is you also have Huldah in the time of Jeremiah, who was a prophetess in the Old Testament, and now you say that was Old Testament, Old Testament had prophets, Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel and they also had prophetesses. In the book of Acts, Philip has four prophesying daughters. Now they didn't write any Scripture that we know of, but what they did was they gave God's word to God's people. They spoke God's word to God's people. Philip had four prophesying daughters that'll come later, in the church there's a big debate about women's role in the church and whatever you like or don't like about that you've got to account for, Philip and his four prophesying daughters that are described as prophetesses. They have God's word just like how Huldah did in the Old Testament and the way Deborah did.

Barnabas is a great guy, apparently he was a tall fellow and Barnabas means *bar* means “son of,” *nabas* means “consolation.” So Barnabas means “son of consolation.” So Barnabas is an encourager, and even here at Gordon we have Barnabas groups and what do Barnabas groups do? They’re for encouraging and that kind of thing. So Barnabas is going to be a great encourager when Paul goes on his First Missionary Journey and it’s going to be Barnabas who goes with him. And Barnabas is accepted by the church. Paul was a little bit of an outsider. I mean, you can imagine, Paul was killing Christians and then Paul comes back and he claims to be an apostle and he wants go out on a missionary journey. So Barnabas eases Paul into the community and Barnabas is that kind of person. Judea and Samaria and some things spread out to Judea in chapter 8-12, and then the last section here is Paul. The book of Acts focuses largely on Paul and you’ve got this shift away from Peter, Stephen, Barnabas and those guys and you’ve got a shift to Paul. There’s really a Pauline focus. Paul takes the gospel to Turkey, and he does a one missionary journey and he does a missionary journey in Turkey central, on the Second Missionary Journey he goes through Turkey and goes over to Macedonia and down into Greece, to Athens, to Corinth, to Philippi, to Thessalonica and all those places you remember from just the books of the Bible.

Then on his Third Missionary Journey he beelines it over to Ephesus and spends three years at Ephesus. And then after his Third Missionary Journey he’s going to collect money for the poor people in Jerusalem. There is a famine in Jerusalem and so he is collecting money from the people largely from Greece and Turkey and then he goes back to Jerusalem with this money to help with the famine in Jerusalem and that is when Paul is put in prison at the end there. So, there are three missionary journeys of the apostle Paul--one, two, three missionary journeys. Then he goes back to Jerusalem and gets thrown in jail when he returns. It is kind of ironic isn’t it? Here he is bringing money in Jerusalem to help the poor to Jerusalem and that is when he gets captured and thrown in jail. You’d think they would be grateful and say, “This guy is bringing money to help our people.”

The missionary base on all of Paul’s missionary journeys shifts from Jerusalem up



to Antioch in Syria. So Antioch is in Syria and the base of operations shifts north because there was persecution in Jerusalem and so the base of operations shifts up to Antioch. Paul's missionary journeys in Acts 13-28 will all start from Antioch in Syria. So that is kind of the structure of the book and the broad sweep of the book of Acts.

#### **L. Omissions in the Book of Acts [43:11-49:33]**

How did he select materials that are written here? It's interesting here that there are many omissions in the book of Acts. Many say Acts is a history of the early church. But the truth is that Acts is not a comprehensive history of the early church. So, for example, some of the omissions that are really pretty obvious are in Galatians 1:17 after Paul, on the Damascus Road, Paul goes out on the Damascus Road and Christ appears to appears to him and blinds him and he falls off his horse, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me." Paul is down, "who are you?" "I'm Jesus the one you are persecuting." So Paul accepts Christ on the road to Damascus. He goes to Damascus and then for three years, Galatians 1:17 tells us, Paul went to Arabia, not back to Jerusalem, not to Antioch. He went to Arabia and apparently hung out there for three years after his conversion. So you've got massive time here in Paul's life that is not even recorded. The book of Acts says zero about this, but we pick it up from Galatians. So what I'm trying to suggest here is that the book of Acts is not a comprehensive history there are things that are omitted and one of those is Paul's three years. It's totally silent about his time in Arabia.

What happens to Mark and Barnabas on the Second Missionary Journey of the apostle Paul. On the First Missionary Journey, John Mark and Barnabas go with Paul. As the Second Missionary Journey was beginning there is such a rift over John Mark. We've talked about this when we did the book of Mark. Between Paul and John Mark there was a rift. Barnabas, who is John Mark's uncle, takes him and goes back to Cyprus and Paul takes Silas and they go off on the Second Missionary Journey through Turkey and then up over into Macedonia and then down into Greece. But Barnabas and John Mark didn't go. They went on their own missionary journey back to Cyprus instead. What's very interesting is after the First Missionary Journey where John Mark and Barnabas are going

with Paul. The Second Missionary Journey these guys fall off the map. You don't hear much about Barnabas and John Mark. They're gone. So it doesn't tell us all things. What happened to those two guys we don't know.

The other twelve apostles, you've got Acts of the Apostles but does it really tell us about acts of the apostles. It tells us about Peter early but once you hit chapter 13 and on it's all about Paul and his three missionary journeys and getting thrown into prison. What happened to the other twelve apostles? Well, you say, Philip got flown in and had to minister to this Ethiopian eunuch. But what happened to Philip after that? You don't hear anything. Philip is gone.

One that is interesting to me is Thomas. We don't hear anything about Thomas. We talked about Thomas from the book of John. It turns out Thomas apparently went into India. If you go to India, even until this day, there are all these Thomistic churches yet it is not recorded in the book of Acts. There is zero on Thomas. Thomas goes off to India and apparently spreads the gospel over there. There are churches planted there that identify with Thomas. So it's very interesting that the book of Acts does not tell us what happened to many of the twelve apostles.

Matthias, they take all this time in Acts chapters one and two there to select the twelfth apostle to replace Judas. What ever happened to Matthias? We don't know what happened to him. What happened to Barthomew and some of the other disciples we just don't know. James we know. James, the son of Zebedee, brother of John, was killed early, but there are many of the other apostles we don't know anything about.

What happened to John? John hangs out with Peter in the early chapters John and Peter are together "silver and gold have I none" and they get this crippled guy to get up but what happens with to John in Acts. John falls off the map. There is quite a bit about Peter. There are even several speeches that Peter gives but what about John, almost nothing. So we pick that up other places in church history and we pick it up from other places in the New Testament.

All I'm trying to say is the book of Acts does not give us a comprehensive picture of the twelve apostles and them going out and spreading the gospel and telling us what

happened to each of the apostles. We don't know what happened to several of the apostles. We have to pick that up through sources like the early church and Foxe's Books of Martyrs and other records, other places in the canon like in the Book of Revelation where it tells us more about John.

There is a Pauline focus here. But then you've got to ask, go back to Dr. Mathewson's question, why is the book of Acts being written. Is the book of Acts written as a history of the early church. I don't think so. I think there is a more particular purpose. The reason why had to do with the occasion of its writing and that reason then limits the scope of the history that is recorded. I keep coming back to that statement at the end of the book of John. John says, "If I were to record everything Jesus ever did, the whole world couldn't contain all the books that would be written." So what you have is history is always selective. When anybody writes any history even though it is many volumes it is always selective you never get a complete picture. That is part of the nature of history. So then you've got to ask, what are the focusing features of how they picked out which things they decided tell and which things they decided not to tell. There are principles behind that when you write history. Certain things come to mind and certain other things do not.

### **M. Summary Statements in Acts as Dividers [49:33-55:32]**

Now what is interesting, there is a guy called Ben Witherington who has done a tremendous amount of work in the New Testament. He's picked up the summaries in the book of Acts. So he goes through the book of Acts and he notices that there are these summaries that he sees as divisions in the book of Acts. Do you remember when we talked about the book of Genesis last semester that Genesis had these ten *toledoth* statements: this is the account of Adam, this is the account of Seth, this is the account of Noah, and this is the account of Terah. It goes through and it breaks Genesis up with this kind of colophon or this formulaic statement that occurs and breaks things up. So this is kind of an amazing thing. The book of Acts then has these summary statements and what Witherington does is notice how they break up the text.

So, for example, in Acts 2:42, after Pentecost, it says, “they devoted themselves to apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All believers were together and had everything in common.” This is Acts 2:42 and it gives you a summary statement. What Witherington does which is kind of interesting is that these summary statements indicate an end of a source that Luke was using. Now we know that Luke used sources because he tells us that in Luke 1:1-4. Do you remember that? Luke says that he was not an eyewitness. He didn’t probably know Christ personally until the Second Missionary Journey of the apostle Paul when Paul goes to Troas on the Second Missionary Journey when Paul picks up Luke. So Luke says, “I interviewed eyewitnesses” Luke tells us that he interviewed eyewitnesses and that he’s trying to write “an orderly account for you most excellent Theophilus.” So he writes to this Theophilus and he admits this that he’s not an eyewitness. So what happens is he is using different sources. What Witherington does is says that these summary statements indicate a switching in documents. When Luke summarizes it is Luke saying I’m done with that source and he summarizes and gives a little abstract of what that source was about and then he goes on to the next source. It’s like writing a paper and you’ve got 3x5 cards or whatever, in OneNote you’d do it differently, but you’d write things and then you finish one source and you put it away then you summarize at the end and then start on your new source. While he has suggested this, it doesn’t really satisfy me. I don’t think Luke is that mechanical that this is one source and then he is switching to another source.

I do think, however, that it is important to realize that these summaries are dividers. So that you should look in the book of Acts when you come to a summary statement and realize that here is a shift in the narrative here. Something is being closed down and another thing is being opened up. To understand how the literary structure moves is important. This is a method called rhetorical criticism and I think there is some benefit to this of knowing your units. In other words, when does the story begin. In almost all stories you get this kind of a thing where a story will have a certain way to

begin. If I say to you “once upon a time,” you don’t put “once upon a time” at the end of the story, you put that at the beginning of a story. So you say, “Once upon a time” that is how a story begins, it’s a formulaic beginning. Then usually the story begins and you’ve got to introduce all your characters, you’ve got to introduce all the situations and then things move to a climax. Then in the middle of the story or toward the end you’ve got a climax. So you have a beginning, middle and an end. In the end what happens is that many of the problems that the various the characters have are solved. The characters are involved in a situation there is problem of some sort and then the problem will lead to a climax. At the end of the story the problem will resolve itself in some way. So then they will “all lived happily ever after.” Now you don’t start a story with “they all lived happily ever after” that is how you conclude. In a story there are literary units almost with everything there is a beginning, middle and end.

So what it is saying here is with these summary statements this is the way he is concluding a part of his narrative and that tells us then he is moving on to another segment. So, it is very helpful to have these “and they all lived happily ever after” summary statements. Now it is not it is not that trite or formulaic but at least we have these summary statements.

So there was the one in Acts 2:42. Here is the one in Acts 6:7 “So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.” You jump over to Acts 9:31, there is another summary statement: “Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace.” So those are just a couple illustrations of these summary statements and he traces these out as breaking points in the narrative. You should note these as you go through. So summary points, we need to look at those.

## **N. Opposition of the Jews is highlighted [55:32-58:01]**

The book of Acts frequently picks up the opposition of the Jews and really features Jewish opposition to the early church. This opposition is very strong and it’s recorded in great detail. So let me just give you a few examples. Paul himself, who was

himself a Pharisee of the Pharisees as we know from Philippians, studied under Gamaliel one of the four great rabbis of all time; [Akiba, Hillel, Shammai and Gamaliel], a great rabbi known throughout Judaism even until this day. Paul studied under him which showed Paul must have had a sharp mind. But here what we've got in the book of Acts is he picks up on this Jewish opposition even though Paul is Jewish. Acts 13:50 says, "The word of the Lord spread through the whole region, but the Jews incited God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution [Who stirred up persecution? The Jews] against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their region." So you have got this opposition to Paul and Barnabas and their being expelled by the Jews.

Another passage comes down in Acts 13:46, which I believe this is on the First Missionary Journey as well, "As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue." Where did Paul start his ministry when he comes in from out of town? He's traveling and where's his first contact with people? He goes to the synagogue "as was his custom." "And on three Sabbath days he reasoned from the Scriptures. But the Jews were jealous so they rounded up some bad characters from the market place, formed a mob [this is a first flash mob] and started a riot in the city." Who started a riot in the city? The Jews got these bad characters, they didn't like what Paul was saying, he reasoned with them for three weeks in the synagogue and then they rounded up these bad characters, got a mob together and started a riot against Paul.

### **O. Acts Highlighting Jewish Revolts [58:01-62:47]**

So, again, features the Jewish inciting of these riots and inciting these upsurges. Now, same type of thing is found in Acts 22: 23, "As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust in the air, the commander ordered that Paul be taken back into the barracks." In other words, Paul was brought out, he speaks in front of the people, and the people start tearing their clothes and flinging dust in the air. Finally, the Roman soldier who's got control Paul says he's got to take him back because there is another riot. I believe that this one was in Jerusalem; and he directed that he be flogged.

So here Paul is going to be flogged by these Romans because of the riots going on. Then I believe in this context then, Paul drops a little reminder on this Roman soldier saying, “You’re going to flog me? Is it appropriate for you to flog a Roman citizen?” This soldier thought Paul was just a Jewish troublemaker. Paul is a Roman citizen, so you can’t just flog him. So this Roman soldier says, “I don’t mess with Roman citizens.” He says. “I got my citizenship at the cost of an arm and leg so. I appreciate Roman citizenship.” Paul replied, “I was born free. I was born Roman a citizen.” So this guy backs off and Paul does not get flogged at that point. So what I am trying to bring up is, the text seems to highlight this fulfillment of Jewish revolt and these Jews causing rebellion and these Jews beating up Paul illegally by working with bad characters setting up mobs. I think that’s all to put a negative light on the Jewish people and their persecution of Paul.

Now, notice this conflict between the Jews and Paul. I think this has to do with the bigger purpose of the book of Acts. Let me state this now and we will come back to this in a minute. I think what’s going on is that Luke is writing most excellent Theophilus. The most excellent Theophilus is mentioned in Luke 1:1 and he is also mentioned in Acts 1:1. So that Theophilus is a person to whom both books are addressed. He is called “most excellent Theophilus.” So this guy is some sort of government official, he is some sort of a big wig.

So what I think that Luke, this is conjecture on my part but I think it is reasonable. Paul is going to trial in front of Caesar. And so I think Luke is putting these things together saying “Theophilus, can you help us out, most excellent Theophilus? Maybe you swing some weight with Caesar and with some of the people in Rome Paul is not the troublemaker. Paul is not the trouble maker. What happened is these Jews have been making trouble for Paul.” So, basically, it’s an attempt to say Paul is innocent of the charges that he is making riots. He’s innocent of those charges and Luke lays the blame at the feet of the Jewish people who so strongly reacted against Paul.

So why was Acts written? Very likely, Paul is going to face his biggest trial of his life, going before Caesar, and I think Luke is writing this to try to encourage most excellent Theophilus to say “Can you give Paul a hand with his trial that’s upcoming

with Caesar?” and so he presents the data. And that’s why the data of the book of Acts does not tell us what happens to Thomas when Thomas went to India. It does not tell us. It focuses on Paul, because Paul is going to a court case in front of Caesar and Luke is trying to get him to help Paul. I think that is why the focus is so much on Paul. That’s why Barnabas and John Mark drop off. They drop off because the focus is on Paul. “Paul is going to trial most excellent Theophilus, can you help?” So I think that that’s the rationale and then that becomes the focus and the reason why the history is written and so focused on the apostle Paul. It is great to have all this information about Paul and see Paul interact in these different situations because Paul is going to write major books like Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, Thessalonians and Timothy. He’s going to write all these New Testament epistles for us and so now we know the background of the apostle Paul. So it’s helpful canonically for us to understand Paul. But I think rather the book of Acts was written to supply Theophilus with things he needed to help on the defense of Paul before Caesar. So, that’s conjectural somewhat, but I think it’s a reasonable conjecture.

#### **P. Themes in Acts: Prayer [62:47-65:16]**

Now, what are some of the early themes? What are some of the first descriptions of the early church? We’re moving away from Jesus now to the church. So there is a shift from Jesus and his apostles to the apostles and the church. Some of the early themes are prayer. This is a big theme in the early church, this notion of prayer. Acts 1:14 says, “They all joined together constantly in prayer along with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.” This is a very interesting comment there. So they are all joining in prayer with the women, notice the women in there. Luke always picks up on the woman thing. This highlights especially widows and orphans, as we looked at in the book of Luke. Mary the mother of Jesus is still involved in the church and with his brothers Jude and James. Most likely, Jude and James are actually going to write New Testament books. James writes James, James is not the son of Zebedee brother of John.



John's brother James was killed early. The writer James may well have been the brother of Jesus. The same thing is true with Jude. So, that's an interesting contrast isn't it because, earlier, I believe in Mark and in other places, when Jesus' brothers show up they go to take him away and they're coming to take him away. They think he's crazy. It turns out now, after the resurrection, we see Jesus's brothers being involved in the church and apparently converted and believed that Jesus was who he said he was, the son of God and the Messiah.

Chapter 2 verse 42, "also they devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching and to the fellowship to the breaking of bread and to prayer," again the notion of prayer. And then one on this prayer notion from Acts 4:31 says, "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly." So after they prayed the place was shaken, Acts 4:31. So, prayer was a very important part of the early church.

### **Q. Organization of the Early Church—Mosaic Context [65:16-67:59]**

Now another part of the early church, is you've got an organization, the church is an organization. It kind of reminds me of the book of Deuteronomy. Do you remember? In Deuteronomy how there was a shift from Moses. Moses now is realizing, he is going up on Mount Nebo and he is going to die. Moses looks out over the promise land and he cannot go in and he realizes it. So what he does is in Deuteronomy is he sets up the basic institutions of Israel. He tells them, "Yeah, when I'm gone, Moses servant of the Lord is going to die. I am going to die. When you are in the Promised Land there are going to be prophets." The prophets were to speak the word of God. God would put his word in their mouths. If they are false prophets they will say let's go after other gods. Those are false prophets. So he says, "but you will have prophets like me. You will have judges." Moses was also involved in judging the people and the seventy after that. Moses says you're going to have judges. Make sure that those judges don't take a bribe and so he sets up prophets and he sets up judges and he also sets up the Levites. And says the Levites are going to get Levitical cities, they are not going to get an inheritance

like the rest of tribes. They are going to be scattered among Israel. The Levites are going to teach Israel the Torah, the law. Then he goes from the judges and the prophets to the king. In Deuteronomy 17 Moses says, “When you get over there you are going to say, ‘let us have a king like the other nations.’ Okay, if you get a king. It is good for you to have a king, you are going to have king. [David will be a king long after Moses.] Moses says you’re going to have a king, but make sure the king does not rip off the people and make wealth for himself on the backs of his people. You make sure he does not multiply wives and develop harems and you make sure he does not multiply horses and that he does not develop this big military complex. Instead he should trust the Lord. So Moses then describes the kingship, the priesthood, the prophets, and the judges and basically sets up the institutions of Israel because he is going to die and so he sets up these institutions.

In the book of Acts what you’ve got something similar to that. Acts is now moving from Jesus with his twelve apostles, to the church. Now it is moving beyond the apostles and there is a need for some kind of organization. So basically, what you’ve got in the book of Acts is this description of this early organization. I just want to run through, as we do I just want you, want to reflect on some your own denominational connections and just how does your denomination do this church organization thing. So I want to use this cross thing, acrostic ADEP, to kind of run through this for this simple organization in the early church.

## **R. Apostles in the Early Church [67:59-71:28]**

The first group of people were the apostles in the early church. There were twelve apostles. Now, I think we discussed earlier why there were twelve apostles. It’s interesting after, Judas goes out and hanged himself. Judas is gone. They’ve now got eleven apostles. Now you think well why don’t we just go with eleven of us. No, no, there had to be twelve. There had to be twelve and so there were twelve apostles. And we said there was some correlation, I think in the book of John when we were discussing this that they were some correlation between the twelve apostles and the twelve tribes of Israel. So you’ve got in the book of Revelation, you get the pearly gates and Jerusalem

coming down for the twelve tribes of Israel. And there are twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem comes down twelve foundations and twelve apostles. So there is this correlation Jesus said, “You apostles will be judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve apostles will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. So there are twelve apostles and twelve tribes of Israel. You realize there is different ways of numbering the twelve tribes and there are different ways of looking at the twelve apostles. You’ve got Paul coming in and being an apostle. Paul’s an apostle of Jesus Christ too for the Gentiles. He becomes an apostle born out of time kind of at a different way than the other apostles. Do you remember what the two requirements for being an apostle were? That interesting comes up into the book of Acts. There were two requirements when they went to replace Judas. First of all, he has to have been with Jesus from the beginning. He’s had to have seen all of Jesus’ miracles. He’s got to learn the teaching of the parables. He’s got to have seen the: I am the bread of life and I am the good shepherd, the “I am” statements. He had to have sat under the ministry of Jesus. He had to have witnessed from the beginning apparently they were many people who were traveling with Jesus, including a group of woman that who were supporting him. So this guy had to be from the beginning. First thing, he had to have been with Jesus from the beginning. The second requirement was he had to have personally seen the resurrection. He had to have seen the resurrected Lord. So what you have here, then, those two requirements: from the beginning, been with Jesus from the beginning and seen the resurrection.

They picked, then, Matthias as a twelfth apostle and now they’ve got the twelve apostles in place. So the apostles are “sent ones.” This is an interesting the term *apostolos* means “sent one.” Well, *apostelos* means “sent one.” They are ones that are sent out in ministry with a message. But it is interesting in the book of Romans, there is a woman in there called Junias. Paul greets this woman Junias who he labels as an apostle, one who is sent out. So it’s very interesting she is not one of twelve but she is labeled with this “one having been sent.” She’s labeled as an apostle and she is woman in the book in Romans 16. So it’s an interesting thing that term “apostle” applies, to these twelve but then seems to be those that are sent out would be also be called an apostle.

Kind of like there is a capital “A” Apostle, but a small “a” apostle. So there is a difference there. So those are the twelve, Acts 1.

### **S. Deacons in the Early Church [71:28-75:52]**

Deacons what comes up in chapter six? In the chapter six of Acts, the church has an initial problem. The problem is they’ve got Greek widows and they’ve got Hebrew widows. Remember how Luke always picks up on the widows and the only child thing from the book of Luke. When someone is an only child Luke picks up on that. When they were a widow, he picks that up. So then in the book of Acts, here in chapter six there were the Grecian widows who were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. They were sharing all things in common, the Greek women were being overlooked and the Hebrew women were not. So there is this conflict so you can see it is along cultural/ethnic lines. So they setup the deacons then, the deacons as ones to take care of this. So the deacons were a response then, to the need in the church. The Greek women should receive help just like the Hebrew women do. In order to solve that problem, the apostles don’t want to get involved with all that. They needed people to take care of these women and so that they made the deacons. They picked seven. Stephen was one of the first deacons, a man of integrity to handle the situation. It says in chapter six and then in chapter seven, Stephen gives his speech that is when he’s stoned to death. So it is kind of interesting in chapter six Stephen is given this great responsibility of being a deacon in the church. Then, in the next chapter he gives a long speech and they stoned him to death. So, Stephen in those two chapters six and seven are both about Stephen and the deacons. Many of our churches today will have deacon boards. A couple things on that, I grew up initially in a very, very conservative, independent fundamental Baptist church. We always had a deacon board and the deacon board hired the pastor. The deacons run the church. If you are in that type of context, some of that context you’ve got a deacon board and you have a pastor who is hired by the deacon board. The deacon board runs the church that’s some of the how the polity of Baptist churches work. Different churches handle it differently. So you see where the deacons come from. The deacons were

initiated based on a need. The church had a need so they responded with an organization to meet that need. Is it appropriate for churches? Is it appropriate for churches to be involved in soup kitchens and helping the poor? Well, here you see in the book of Acts, the early church was involved in helping the poor. So the deacons come out of the conflict over the Greek widows versus the Hebrew women. There is a very a great history that goes back to the beginning of the church.

The church was supplying the physical needs actually taking care of the physical needs of the church that's one of great things that Doctor Green, here at Gordon College, is one of the leading people in the Salvation Army movement. This Salvation Army does so, so well in training people with jobs skills. And then also taking and allowing goods to flow in to times of need. When 9/11 happened I'll never forget it . When 9/11 happened in the Great Towers in New York City came down. What was one of the first group, that was there? The Red Cross was there saying, "Give us money, give us money. Give us money so we can support them." That was not the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army was not asking for dime they were there. They were distributing blankets and various things to help people immediately. When there are great tragedies in the world who are some of the first people there? It is Salvation Army. They were not asking to raise billions and billions and spending millions of dollars on all these administrators to administer this "aid" so to speak. I have a super high respect for the Salvation Army and the work that they do. It's tremendous. Does it fit with Scripture? It sure does. Acts 6, the deacons and the whole thing there is the distribution of food for the widows.

### **T. Elders in the Early Church [75:52-83:09]**

Now, here is another set of positions and this is--gets a little complicated. This is not a course on church polity/government or church organizational structure. I am going to give the Greek terms not because I want you to learn Greek. I do want you learn Greek but check this out. The elders are called, listen to this word, *presbuteroi*. The elders are *presbuteroi*. Guess what church features elders, as an elder board in a church as

oppose to the deacon board? Who does the elders-- presbuteroi. Can you guess the connection with Presbyterian? Presbyterian churches have a board of elders. So basically it comes from this word *presbuteros*, which is translated "elder."

Now, here is another word that used almost interchangeably. These are synonyms. There are going to be whenever you have synonyms areas of commonness and areas of differences, but this is a second word called "overseers." As presbuteroi would be translated "elders" these overseers translated from *episcopos*. *Episcopos*, what does that sound like? *Episcopos* sounds like Episcopalian. The *episcopos* are Episcopalians run by a board of overseers. These are overseers. So we said these terms seemed to be used somewhat interchangeably. So I don't make a big distinction between these overseers or these *episcopos* and the elders or *presbuteroi*.

Then similarly, is the term "pastor." The term "pastor" actually comes from the Greek *poimen* meaning "shepherd." Shepherd, is rooted back in this notion of shepherd. As a shepherd takes care of his sheep, so does a pastor take care of his people. So a pastor should have a real heart for his people, even as a shepherd has a heart for his sheep. So the term pastor fits in here. A lot of churches will have a board of elders and the chief elder then or a teaching elder. Sometimes they will be parity or equality among the elders. They will be the same but this one will have a special function in that he is considered a teaching elder. Now, other elders will have different functions in the church. The teaching elder would be labeled as pastor at some churches. Some churches have the teaching elders above the deacon board will be more all the same, but he has the special gift of teaching.

So different structures and, again I think the New Testament is not saying you've got to be exactly like this. We see that the structure of the church came out of the needs of the church. When you've got some of these churches today of thousand or two thousand people are you going to have a different structure for two thousand people then when you come to New England where you have a church of twenty five people or you've got a house church of ten people. Is that house church going to have different structure to it say than a church of two thousand? Of course it's going to and so you're

going to adapt the structure based on the need. That was the point of Acts 6. You've got a need and you develop a structure to meet that need. So I think there is a great amount of flexibility built into the polity/government of the church. This is, again, my personal opinion. Different churches, Baptists, will work differently in terms of how they structure, but even within the Baptists the different church structures may depend on the size of the church. They will handle it differently. Presbyterian, as we said they are all equal elders yet there may be a single or multiple teaching elders. And the *episcopos*, the Episcopalians will handle it differently as well. So even within each group there should be variation depending on size and needs of the church. There is allowed to be flexibility in those things.

Now one that we, we needed to talk a little bit here is the notion of prophets and prophetesses. There were prophets in the early church and prophetesses. Prophets, probably the most famous one you are going to see in the books of Acts is Agabus. Agabus is almost like an Elijah figure. He prophesy's about a famine coming into the land sort of like Elijah did. Paul went into Palestine with all of this money to support the poor. During the Third Missionary Journey Paul was collecting money so he, when he goes come back to Jerusalem, he is going to help. There was a famine in Palestine so he was going to help the poor people in Jerusalem. Agabus the prophet goes up and binds Paul with this part of his garment and says, "whoever wears this thing, if you go up to Jerusalem they are going imprison you up there. You are going have big problems. You're going to be thrown in jail up there." So Agabus warns Paul ahead of time and so this prophet told Paul what was coming down the road for him. "Sure enough," Paul says, "I've got to go up there. Sure enough he is thrown in prison. So you have Agabus as a prophet. You also have Philip's prophesying daughters. And in Acts 21:8: "Leaving the next day we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist. One of the Seven..." So Philip the evangelist was one of the seven, which means he is one of the original deacons. He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. So those are the four unmarried daughters, unmarried daughters who prophesied.

So here we have a kind of like a Huldah or Deborah and even Mary. Mary does,

you remember, the great Magnificat that Mary gave in the book of Luke. Where Mary gives the Magnificat “My soul magnifies the Lord,” and Mary praises God and gives Scripture and it is actually recorded in our Scripture. Miriam is maybe the best Old Testament example. Miriam, back in Exodus 15 when they crossed over the Red Sea or the Reed Sea, when they get across the Red Sea, Miriam turns around and gives this song. Miriam also, when in Numbers 12, she is Moses’s older sister, but she is considered a prophetess. God’s says, “I speak to prophets in dreams and visions. But with Moses, I speak face to face.” Miriam gets rebuked at that point. Miriam seems to have been a prophetess. She gives more Scripture; she makes a song and sings songs. This structure then so you do have prophets and prophetesses. Now, this raises a big question and I am not sure to be honest with you that I can solve all of these things but there are some ways and frameworks for thinking about it. You have different levels of prophets. Is this saying that these prophets and prophetesses that they are the ones that are going to write the New Testament?. No, that is not really true. Mathew writes the New Testament, Mark writes the New Testament. Luke writes the New Testament. I don’t know anyone in Mathew, Mark and Luke who was called a prophet other than John the Baptist.

#### **U. Prophets and Their Role in the Old Testament [83:09-86:08]**

In the Old Testament the prophets wrote a lot of the Scripture, but there were also prophets who just spoke God’s word who never wrote God’s word down and were never and never made canonical scripture. One of the students in our class this year mentioned for example Nathan.

Do you remember Nathan came to David and Bathsheba? David has this encounter with Bathsheba he finds out she’s pregnant. David kills Uriah the Hittite. Now David thinks he’s gotten away with it because he covers up the pregnancy with the death of her husband Uriah the Hittite. Then who shows up? Nathan the prophet says, “David let me tell you a story about a guy who had a little sheep and another guy who had hundreds of sheep.” Then he gets to David and he says, “You’re the man. You killed this woman’s poor husband, this man had one wife and you took her when you had a whole



host of them.” Nathan rebukes King David. Now, did Nathan ever write the book of Nathan? No, he didn’t. There were other people in the book that just came to mind from the book of Joshua the book of Jasher. The book of Joshua it says “if you don’t believe me about of these historical things you go look it up in the book of Jasher.” Were prophets running around then like Micaiah or even Elijah and Elisha. But were there books that Elijah and Elisha wrote? Elisha and Elijah did not write books that we know off. There is no book of Elijah. There is a long section in Kings about Elijah and Elisha in 2 Kings but not much. They didn’t write they were oral prophets. So what I wonder is that some of these guys they were prophets and they spoke God’s word. They speak God’s word to God’s people but they weren’t writers of Scripture. So there are different levels from which prophecy happens. Some of them speak God’s word but are not canonically writing kind of prophets. Moses was a prophet of the Lord, a servant of the Lord. Moses actually wrote stuff down. Jeremiah was a prophet of God called from early childhood, before he was born actually. And Jeremiah is going to write the great book of Jeremiah. And Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, these guys are prophets. They were prophets like Hosea, Joel, or Amos. The twelve the prophets of the twelve they were prophets that wrote the word of God. They were other prophets as well. Do you remember when Elisha even using that example? Elisha defeats the four hundred prophets of Baal and runs from God. God says, “Hey, Elijah, Obadiah had hid about a hundred prophets up in the Northern Kingdom.” So they were many prophets besides Elijah at that time but Elijah felt all alone when Jezebel came after him. So, I am saying here that they are other prophets writing prophets that write scripture. Prophets had other functions for communicating God’s word to God’s people, okay.

#### **V. Preserving the New Testament and False Prophets [86:08-90:42]**

And, so, I wonder today then do we still have prophets and things today? And I want to say that I don’t think there are writing of scripture type canonical prophets at this point, the cannon is closed. We’ve got the Bible now. I think it’s important to--and this is a side point on this, but I think it’s a really important one. Did Paul ever see the New

Testament? Did Mathew ever see the New Testament? Did Luke ever see a New Testament? Sid even John writing many years later probably from Ephesus. Did John ever see the New Testament? The answer is, No. These books were written, Paul wrote these letters he wrote to one to Philippi, one to Thessalonica, and one to Corinth. There is letter here and there scattered all over the ancient Near Eastern Mediterranean there.

And so what is happening is those books have to be collected. And it took years for those books to be collected. And so you say, why didn't one church go to the Xerox machine and Xerox it off and send it off to the other church. You couldn't do that. You have this letter, from the apostle Paul are you going to let someone come in and take that letter? No way! So what you are going to do is hand copy that letter and then pass it on to another church that seems to want it. But you are going to keep the one you have. You may try to make deal with them. And say, "Give us the one. I am from Colossae, and you're from Ephesus's let's do some swapping." Again this is not Xeroxing and faxing them or emailing them to you or texting them over. These had to be copied by hand and carried and therefore it took years for this to happen. Paul never saw the New Testament; Paul never saw the New Testament. Paul was dead by the time John was writing the gospel of John and certainly by the time the book of Revelation was written. Paul never saw the book of Revelation he was dead. 68 AD thereabouts and the book was not written until thirty years later. So, all I am saying is that it's a different way of coming at it so then the canon then was collected and established.

Now it is established and we have God's word and therefore it's really important to realize this is God's word. This book is God's word. It's a canon of Scripture and now there may be prophets who speak God's word to God's people. This is I know to be true. This is even in the Scripture we talked about. "All scripture is God breathed," popular doctrine this is what we know is true okay.

So you've got to judge then any prophet that comes, you've got to judge them by the Scriptures. And this becomes really important because, actually, when you go to the Old Testament are there more true prophets or there more false prophets? You go into places like Jeremiah 23 you go back even to Deuteronomy there are warnings about false

prophets. And, by the way, false prophets even do miracles give signs and miracles. So there are false prophets and often times, the false prophets outnumber the true prophets. How do you judge when someone is a true prophet or a false prophet? You've got Scripture. Scripture is the word of God. It's got to agree with previous revelation, if they agree or disagree with previous revelation those guys are false prophets. And so I guess what would I suggest is, be careful. You don't hear much talk about false prophets anymore. What do false prophets say? Prophets say, "Shalom, peace and God's going to bless you." When you look at the Old Testament, the false prophets are always proclaiming peace God's love. What did the true prophets proclaim? Repent sinners. People don't like the message of the true prophets so they are like the one who pats us on the head and tells us good things from God. But more often times the prophets were heralders of judgment and were getting them to try to repent of their sins. So that's another thing you want to put in the back of your head, when somebody is coming off with all this you know peace and love, shalom, peace and love kind of thing, you've got to be really careful with that. That is the message of the false prophets characteristically in the Bible.

But does anybody really care about the Bible anymore? No! We blow that out we want to hear shalom, we want to hear the peace and kindness. I say that with a certain amount of sarcasm in my voice because it's very interesting how our modern culture has actually flipped the roles there. Anyways there's something just put that in the back of your heads, something to think about, prophets and prophetesses. Philip has four prophesying daughters.

### **W. Providing for Physical Needs was not Communism [90:42-95:04]**

They provided for the physical needs of the church and we mention some of the stuff before with the role of the deacons providing for the needs. Let me just make a couple comments on this. Chapter 2 verse 45. "Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as he had needs." So, they sold their possessions, goods gave to any one that had need. And then chapter 4 verses 32-37, "All of the believers were one heart and

one in mind; no one claimed that any of his possession was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. There were no needy persons among them, they shared and had things in common.”

Some people had taken this passage in the book of Acts and tried use it as a basis for Socialism or Communism or something like that. Communism, of course, is a bad phrase, but do socialism. But we probably now sanctify it a little more when we talk about the response to the community. Now there is always a community focus. Indeed, the early church was a community focused, but notice the question. What is the difference between this and--what I have a problem is that people using this material in Acts to support a political system today. I think you've got to be really careful about taking scriptures from back then and trying to endorse some sort of political framework today. Socialism and Communism here it says what? That people came and gave to others who had need. By the way, was that the government forcing to them to do that? Was the government mandating that to happen? No, no, each individual had a choice to make it was their stuff and they could choose to give it or not give it. And so you've got to be real careful about switching and saying that everybody should give and we will demand that they do it. You are taking choice away from the people. By the way, God himself does not take that freedom away. God himself allows people to choose; you can choose Christ or you can reject Christ. The choice is yours and so you've got to be real careful with this. So be careful when someone starts mapping these types of verses over into socialism and communism. We know in most of the situations in communism, almost all that I know of, when communism comes in, they spread the goods around and then what happens? Everybody becomes poor. And then basically millions of people die. Millions of people die. Under Stalin in Russia over 20 million people were slaughtered. And under Mao in China 80 million people were killed. Hitler, everybody says, "Hitler was so bad. Mao makes Hitler look like a seven-year-old. Mao killed over 80 million people in China. And so go to Cuba if you want communism, go to Cuba. Why are people trying to swim towards America? You go into Yugoslavia and you go

into Venezuela and now they have embraced you know socialism/communism under Hugo Chavez. And when you go to the grocery store what happens. The grocery stores are barren now. The people are having trouble with food. Look at North Korea and then tell me about Communism. The people are starving there. They have just lowered the height limit to get into the army because the people have been starved in North Korea so long now you only have to be four foot nine to get into the army. They actually had to lower the height requirement because the people are becoming shorter because there is so much lack of food in North Korea. People, think about this stuff before you go and take the Bible and try to jump into liberation theology which is what a lot of these people support. There is real connection between communism and liberation theology. What they do is try to use religion to support these very evil political frameworks and religion becomes the hand maiden of the politicians and at that point you have real trouble. That's basically what happens there. So, anyways, be careful with this stuff.

#### **X. Ananias, Sapphira, and Modern Philanthropy [95:04-97:56]**

What about Ananias and Sapphira? Ananias and Sapphira come into the early church and say, "Hey, we sold all of our goods." Acts 5 "we sold all of our goods, gave it to the poor and here it is." The apostles respond, "Is this everything you sold that you are giving. He says, "Yeah." The guy drops dead. Ananias is killed dead. His wife comes in and they ask "Did you give all of this stuff to the poor? And so Sapphira is down and God took both of them out. Now, he says, "When you had your goods it was your privilege to do with it whatever you wanted. You could make a choice to do whatever you wanted but you can't lie to God. You can't come and say, 'I am giving all of this.'" It was there choice to do that. So all I am saying that be careful when people start pulling choices away from people saying you've got to do this. This is an obligation and things that you must do. You better put up a bunch of red flags. Christianity, it is with open hands and as a gift of free choice manifesting that the individual from a heart is passionate for Jesus, the desires to give and to help the poor, that's an individual choice. By the way, what country in the world has given more to help around the world than any

other country in the world? You've got people like Bill Gates who pumps billions of dollars into Africa aids and solving some of the problems with aids over there, also malaria which is killing, millions of people and hundreds of thousands of people were dying from malaria. Working on things to mitigate the plight of malaria and these famines and these plagues is wonderful work for people like Gates and others are doing to help the poor because they have wealth and choose to give it. It is not government demanding it. They choose to do it and that philanthropy is a wonderful thing because it comes from a heart, a free heart that chooses to give. And what political/economic model that is from? So these things provide for the physical needs of the early church was involved, but be careful about some of those types of things.

There was unity in the early church. These statements on unity in Acts 2:44. And I don't want to spend a long time on this but the church was gathered together and one place and they were together as one. Let me just read this chapter 2 verse 44. Chapter 2 is a chapter on Pentecost and it says in "all believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods they gave to everyone as they had needs." We had looked at that earlier. Let's move on here to our next slide.

### **Y. What Sources did Luke Use? [97:56-100:12]**

What sources did Luke use? Let's bounce through some of the sources here. And let's go a little bit longer here. Luke was not present, we said, until the Second Missionary Journey of the apostle Paul. So for the first fifteen chapters of Acts, Luke was not there. He was with Paul during the Caesarean Imprisonment and so there is going to be two years in which Luke is in Palestine. My guess is that while he was in Palestine he met with Mary and met with various people and interviewed them in terms of writing the book of Luke and the book of Acts while Paul was in prison in Caesarea along on the coast of Palestine. He may have had a travel diary, as he was traveling with Paul, Paul would tell him of the missionary journeys and he heard the stories from Paul and the stories probably told over and over again in many different ways and times. You

know how I was saying, people tell the same stories lived over thirty, forty years you realize you tell the same stories over and over again, never exactly the same. You do a little jazz and improvisation and depending on the context in how the is story told. Luke then possibly hearing the traveling diary and so he probably himself wrote a traveling diary because he was with Paul on the Second Missionary Journey in Troas over to Philippi. On the Third Missionary Journey, when Paul comes back to Philippi he's again with him.

Stephens's speech in Acts 7 is huge. There is a beautiful message from Stephen there in Acts 7. Why is Acts 7 this huge speech by Stephen? Very likely because Paul was there and Paul this is before Paul's conversation in chapter nine this is in chapter seven, Paul was approving of Stephen's death and so it's very likely that Paul, having witnessed Stephen's sermon, remembered it and probably was going over it in his mind and over and over again. Stephen's has a great, wonderful sermon there and so Luke, very possibly pulled this sermon about Stephen from Paul.

## **Z. Peter's Speeches in Acts and Peters First Epistle [100:12-103:10]**

Peter's speeches, what's interesting is that Luke gets these various speeches. I think there are about nine speeches by Peter. Remember in the book of Mathew we had all these great sermons by Jesus, well in the book of Acts we get these sermons by Peter. What's really interesting, in one of the writers in the article that we read this year for New Testament literature class, there is a comparison between the books of Peter and the speeches of Peter in Luke. So there is a comparison between 1 and 2 Peter and the book of Acts and what you find out is that Luke, apparently, picks up these speeches word for word at some points. In other words, some of the special words that are used in the epistles by Peter also appear in the book of Acts. These are rarer words so it's not dictaphonic. I want to say it's not word for word, that he's quoting the speech because mostly they're probably summaries. But even the summaries do seem to pick up the dictation of the original speaker. I guess that's I want to say. The original speaker has

certain phraseologies that they used and Luke seems to be careful and enough that he actually picks them up. So that when Peter speaks in the books of Acts it reflects the dictation and style of Peter himself. And if you compare 1 Peter 1:2 with Acts 2:23 in Peter at Pentecost he uses this phrase, “for a set purpose and foreknowledge,” That is exactly shared between those two. So it just shows that he is picking up. Similarly the phrase “silver or gold,” do you remember when Peter and John are going to heal the cripple? He says, “silver or gold I have none but such as I have, get out and walk okay that’s silver or gold combination also in 1 Peter 1:18. Now, that’s stunning you know this one would be weaker because silver or gold a lot of people mention silver or gold but it’s very interesting that it occurs in both of Peter’s sermons and Peter’s epistle.

Here is one that’s more complicated, “Judge of the living and the dead.” That phrase is not found very much also in the New Testament and yet it’s in Acts 10:42 in Peter’s sermon and also found in 1 Peter 4:5. So we want to say there are these parallels between, the speeches that are recorded in the book of Acts and the epistles which show us that Luke is being historically accurate. Now, nobody would say--when Peter gives a sermon, most of the sermons we get in the ten or twenty verses something like that along between verses. You realize that it takes one or two minutes. We’ve got a synopsis; we got kind of abstracts, summaries about what those are. But apparently, Luke, even in these summaries picks up the dictation of the person who gave it.

#### **AA. The Parallel of Peter and Paul in Acts [103:10-107:07]**

Here are some more when Peter and Paul are paralleled. Here is an interesting parallel between the early chapters in the book of Acts. You’ve got Peter doing some things and the later chapters you got Paul doing some things. So there is a shift from Peter to Paul. I also wondered what happened to Mary. Peter, Paul and you’ve got this comparison. This is similar by the way, as some you remember from the Old Testament. Do you remember Moses, Joshua and how Moses and Joshua were paralleled there? Moses splits the water at the Red sea; Joshua splits water at the crossing of the Jordan River. Moses holds up his spear and they win the battle. Joshua holds up his spear, his



javelin and they win the battle. Moses approaches an angel and the angel approaches, and Joshua approaches an angel. “Take off your sandals you are on holy ground.” There is a very similar comparison between Moses and Joshua there is transition in leadership, there is a transition in leadership there.

So, too, here there is a transition in leadership. Peter is a big apostle in the early church at Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. Peter and then there is a switching to Paul later in chapter 13 and following in the book of Acts. But you can see they both preach the resurrection. Peter preaches it in chapter 2 verse 22 and Paul in chapter 13 verse 26. They both heal a crippled person. Both Peter and Paul heal a crippled person. This is found in Acts 3:1 for Peter, and Paul in chapter 14 verse 8. They both heal a cripple. Both lay hands on people and the Holy Spirit comes on them. Sorry for abbreviating H.S for Holy Spirit. But Peter does this in chapter 8 verse 17. I believe it’s with the Samaritans there. Paul does it in Acts 19:6, he lays hands and some special people receive the Holy Spirit in Ephesus. We will talk about that later about special healings and resulting in crowds of people. The apostle Peter does special healings in chapter 5 verse 15. And there is a crowd and Paul in chapter 19 verse 12 does a special healing and there is a crowd. In both cases they are put in jail. Peter goes to jail; Paul goes to jail. They pray for Peter; Peter gets out of jail. Paul goes to jail there is singing in the jail and all of the sudden an angel in both cases, releases Peter and Paul. Peter in chapter 12 verse 6. Paul in chapter 16 verse 25. An angel comes and frees Peter from prison and an angel comes and frees Paul from prison. So there is a very similar a parallel between these two guys. In actually it’s interesting here the emphasis on the book.

There are three times the conversion of Paul is mentioned. There are also the three stories of Cornelius’s conversation, Cornelius is going to be our Gentile. Mostly up to this point the church was Jewish. Now, it’s going to switch and be Gentile and it is going to open up for the Gentiles. The olive tree as Dr. Wilson says, is going to be grafted into. Now, with this Gentile branch coming into the stock of the olive tree and there’s three conversions recorded. The story of Cornelius’ conversations is told three times.

Three times Paul is in prison. He goes between the governors and Paul gives these messages three times in front of Felix, Festus and Agrippa. This is in the later chapters in the book of Acts around chapter 24 and there about. Three times, he goes before a Roman governor and defends himself. So you see this kind of rhythm in the book with the repetitions that come up.

### **AB. The Apparent Contradiction of Judas' Death [107:07-110:18]**

Now, this is one is where we will end our discussion for this lecture and I just want to go over this. Some people say there is a contradiction between the book of Acts 1:18 and Mathew 27:5. Acts 1:18 versus Mathew 27:5 and following. Now, here is where--what happened to Judas? This is the question. And they say there is a contradiction between Acts and Mathew as to what happened to Judas. So the Bible contradicts itself therefore the Bible has errors in it. You know people go off like that all the time. Let's look at this. Now, as we said before there can be different witnesses who see the story differently. Can different witnesses record this story differently? When you've got two referees in the same basketball game can they see what happened differently. One guy sees the foul and the other guy is looking at the same place but does not see the foul. So here is what we have in Acts 1:18. It says this is what happened to Judas, "with the reward he got for his wickedness, Judas bought a field." Who bought a field? "Judas bought a field." "There he fell head long, his body burst open and his intestines spilled out and everyone in Jerusalem heard about it." How did Judas die? Judas bought a field; he then fell down and his body burst opened and his guts/intestines came out—a little bit too much information here. That's how Judas died.

Now go back to Mathew. How does Mathew say Judas died? Mathew 27:5, "When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and he returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and elders. 'I have sinned,' Judas said. So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then we went away and hanged himself." So how did Judas die? Judas went away and he hanged himself so that's how he died. "The chief priests picked up the coins and said, 'it is

against the law to put this into treasury, since it's blood money.' So, they decided to use the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why it has been the field of blood to this day".

Now, how did those two narratives differ? In the one Judas buys the field and then Judas falls head long and his stomach bursts out. In the second story, Judas goes back to the high priest and chucks the thirty silver coins at them. And then, he goes out he hangs himself and they take the money and they buy the field.

### **AC. A Possible Solution to the Contradiction [110:18-113:50]**

So which one is right? They seem to contradict. Well, if any of you are creative individuals you realize they are both true. They are just telling a different story when it says Judas buys the field, did he buy the field? Yes, with his thirty coins the Jewish leaders used to go out and buy the field. So whether I go out and go to Sam's Club and I go up there and buy the stuff. Or I give my Visa a card to my son and he goes up to Sam's Club and buys some stuff. Who's buying the stuff well, "hey, it's on my card. I'm buying the stuff." He is the one who actually did it, but it is still I am the one who bought the stuff. So did Judas buy the field? Yes, okay, he did it through the intermediaries of the priests. Now, what about this he hanged himself and killed himself, or his guts burst out when he fell? Most people realize he probably hung himself and that's how he killed himself and then after he's kind of hanging himself he falls down and the rope--in other words, what happens? The birds peck the rope or the rope breaks or something and after he hangs himself he then falls on the rocks and his guts burst open. Basically, you get this sequence of, hanging and then and falling from the hanging and bursting his guts open. So, both can be true.

So this is called harmonizing and some people despise or you're just trying to make harmonizing. The answer is: yes. I trust the Bible, because the Bible has given me a hundred and thousands of data that are true data. So when I see one where there is little bit of the difference here I think, you remember from a week or two ago, when he talked about that woman who was hit by the bus? Woman was hit by the bus she was not killed

and then the other story said no the woman was t-boned in the car and thrown out of the car instantly and which story is true? Well, they were both true. The woman was first hit by the bus. Then in her ride to the hospital the car was hit a second time and she was thrown out and killed immediately. So, actually, both stories were right. I think this is what you have here, in other words just different perspectives. Acts is telling us more the field focus and bursting his guts. Mathew is putting it more in terms of the chief priests and the thirty shekels of silver and being hung. So both stories are true but they're complementary. They're not the same story.

That's why I love about the Bible, the scribes that copied this for thousands of years. They could of said, "O this story is different than this story let's try to harmonize them, let's change the text. They didn't change the text, they let the text stand with the conflicts, and the conflicts they let stand and that just tells me more of the historicity of the scriptures. Scriptures were not fudged on the way through by these scribes. No, they let stand these apparent contradictions and you have to look deeper into the text and that's what we are attempting to do.

So let's take a break there and when we get back we will look at Acts 2 and we will go through some of the book of Acts more specifically.

Transcribed by Kelley Chang-Fong  
Edited by Ben Bowden  
Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt