

**DIG DEEPER - ACTS 15:36-16:4**

**Sermon Title: The Unstoppable Gospel**

*"The Gospel Spreads, Men Disagree, The Gospel spreads anyway"*

## Introduction

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The Book of Acts shows us how the church originated, and the early days of the church. Acts 1:8 helps set the scene for the rest of the book: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to the **ends of the earth**." The book can be split into four parts.

1. Dedication to Theophilus, Christ ascension, Matthias replacing Judas (1:1-26)
2. Witnesses in **Jerusalem** (2:1-8:3)
3. Witnesses in **Judea** and **Samaria** (8:4-12:25)
4. Witnesses to **the ends of the earth** (13:1-28:31)

This book was written by Luke, a physician (Colossians 4:14) and companion to Paul the Apostle (2 Timothy 4:11). It was written to a man named Theophilus (Luke 1:1, Acts 1:3). Although there are various theories around to attempt at knowing who he was, one thing we know for certain is that this book still speaks to the church at large today.

Last week, we read through Acts 15:1-35, showing how the church handled contentions that arose around salvation via Law (of Moses) observance versus salvation through Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In this section, we'll be dealing with the events prior to Paul's second missionary journey to Asia Minor, and Greece. The previous chapters cover the gospel message starting from Jerusalem, to Judea and Samaria. The Gospel was spreading **then**, and is still spreading **now! The Gospel Spreads!**

### Scene 1 & 2: Acts 15:36-41 - Gospel Spreads, Men Disagree

1. What can we learn from the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas?
2. If this hasn't been answered already, would you consider this disagreement to be detrimental towards the gospel message being spread to the **ends of the earth**?
3. From Sunday's Sermon, what do these verses demonstrate what our goal should be after such disputes?
  - 1 Corinthians 9:6
  - 2 Timothy 4:11
  - Colossians 4:10
  - Philemon 1:24
4. Is there anyone that we have had personal disputes with that requires us to move towards reconciliation based on the verses read above?

Any sort of relationship split can be painful, especially in the church. But just to note, John Stott, an anglican priest and theologian, said in his commentary on The Book of Acts (The Message of Acts, page 253) "but this example of God's providence may not be used as an excuse for Christian quarrelling". This is a worthy mention, and we ought to desire and move towards reconciliation, seeking unity in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3).

### **Scene 3: Acts 16:1-4 - The Gospel spreads anyway**

We see Timothy (a believer of good report) join Paul and Silas at Lystra. They go to strengthen the churches, and this is evidence that the gospel didn't stop!

1. What message do you think (Timothys joining of Paul and Silas) bears on the overall message of sharing the gospel?
2. Why did Paul see it fit to circumcise Timothy considering the recent resolution in last week's passage? (Acts 15:1-35)?
3. How do you think this portion of scripture demonstrates to us the heart of delivering the gospel message? (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

In light of the Call to Action section of Sunday's sermon, seeing that we have been invited into participating in what The God of creation is doing in the earth, how would we like to participate?

### **Additional Resources:**

<https://biblehub.com/outline/acts/>

<https://biblehub.com/sum/acts/>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/acts-1-12/>

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/acts-13-28/>