

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study

### “BOLDLY WITHOUT HINDRANCE”

### For discussion or individual study

Before Paul reached Rome, he wrote to the Christians there.

“First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world. God, whom I serve with my whole heart in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God’s will the way may be opened for me to come to you. I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.” (Romans 1:8-11)

In this last section of Acts, we finally get to see Paul in the city he had so longed to visit. And he is indeed striving to impart spiritual gifts to make his listeners strong.

- 1) We have seen throughout the book of Acts how critical preaching is to the growth of the church (see, for example, Acts 2:40-41, 8:12, and 13:44-49).
  - Why is preaching so important to both the growth of the church and the growth of God’s Kingdom?
  - Drawing on what you have learned in our study of Acts, give a brief summary of what constitutes Christian preaching. What is the focus? What are the themes? How and what should pastors preach?
  - If preaching is so critical, what should those of us who are not preachers be doing with regards to preaching?
- 2) In this passage, Paul is described not just as preaching, but also as explaining, declaring, convincing, and teaching. (See vv. 23, 31.)
  - What is involved in all of this? How is it similar to what Jesus did when talking with two of his followers on the road to Emmaus (see Luke 24:13-35)?
  - In 1 Peter 3:15, we are told to always be ready to give “the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” What would you say if someone asked you why you hope in Jesus and his Kingdom?
- 3) Paul did not seek to cause division when he preached (indeed, we know from the book of Romans how great his grief was over the Jews who rejected the Gospel—see Romans 9:1-3). But here and elsewhere when Paul preached, deep division occurred. Why? (See Matthew 10:26-39 as you consider your answer.)
  - Should we expect division to be a common result of faithful preaching? How do we determine when division could (and should) have been avoided?



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: March 21, 2021

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 28:17-31

## Family Dinner Table

In an autobiography published in 1889, missionary John Paton described the Sunday evenings of his childhood. Sunday mornings were spent at church, a four mile walk from their home. Sunday evenings, the family gathered to talk about the sermons they had heard in the morning. Paton’s mother often couldn’t attend the services because of needing to care for a baby or child (she had eleven in all!). So the father would walk back and forth across the floor on Sunday evening, “telling over the substance of the day’s sermons to our dear mother.” Paton added that his father “would entice us to help him recall some idea or other.” Going to church, according to Paton, was a great joy. Discussing the sermons was a great delight.

When the apostle Paul finally arrived in Rome, he preached the Kingdom of God to all who would listen. (See vv. 23, 30-31) Paul was always eager to preach. The Paton family in the 19th century was always eager to listen to preaching.

Do you get excited about getting to hear preaching? Why or why not? How can you become a better listener? And why is preaching so important? Click [here](#) for some ideas.

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Restoration Southside Church

### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Kim and Michael Essenburg,  
supported missionary partners