

God's Story Continued

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[0 : 0 0] 30 this is where we'll start he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him that is to Paul preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness unhindered dr. Russell Moore is the president of the ethics and religious liberty Commission for the Southern Baptist Convention or Southern Baptist Church so we appreciate dr. Moore's and what he does there for the SBC responding to dr.

Russell Moore who was on face the nation this past week Donald Trump tweeted this quote Russell Moore is truly a terrible representative of evangelicals and all of the good they stand for a nasty guy with no heart and quotes I posted my comments about this whole situation on Facebook but here's the best part I want you to watch this two parts of this and work Tyler the sound for the for the video I mean for the thing you know the thing computer is that good to go okay music is paused let's see if I can do this there you go ready Tyler bond if you want to Donald Trump's tweet about you this morning well I thought it was great it's one of the few things that I can agree with Donald

Trump on I am a nasty guy with no heart we sing worse things about ourselves in our hymns on Sunday mornings we're a wretch in need of God's grace and so I agree with that but I think that's the reason why I need forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ here's another one he says that I am a a nasty guy with no heart that's true I'm a nasty guy with no heart which is why I need forgiveness of sins and redemption through the gospel of Jesus Christ isn't that great way to go Dr. Moore I mean he took the opportunity to proclaim the gospel on TV networks where the gospel is despised and mocked I mean what a perfect this is a great segue into our message this morning see if I can get it up here yeah the last message for the book of acts just do it be who you are that God use you to fulfill his mission our title is God's story continues acts 29

God's story continues acts chapter 29 I thought about titling it the story continues but I don't think that's that's true because remember God is the hero hero he's the primary hero of the book of acts and if God is the primary hero of the book of acts he still is the hero in his church and so the challenge gets God's story continues the challenge for us is in our own lives how will we continue the story of the progress of the gospel will we take it to those on our street those we work with our relatives our friends how will God use us to continue his story how will God use me to continue his story and just so you know God will make it happen through the means of a godly faithful gospel driven Jesus focused church whom he powerfully enables in the gospel powerfully enables by the Holy Spirit and if there's a time when our nation needs to hear the hope of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ it's now it's in this election time what an opportunity that's given to us to allow allowing the gospel to shine in our lives

I mean here is an example of today from Dr. Russell Moore taking the opportunity to proclaim the gospel to let the gospel shine in our lives to show how God's grace has changed us to show that God has been so gracious to me let me share with you his grace God has been so kind to me in the gospel let me share with you the kindness of God how he can change others that's Acts 29 as we see here in Acts 28 God's message of salvation had as one writer puts it quote reaches the highest levels of Rome the future of the Jewish nation and the progress of the gospel it's open ended because God's church is still proclaiming the truth of the gospel he's still using us to fulfill his mission we face a task unfinished as we sang and yet it's not without hope we have the hope because

[5 : 54] God is the hero and God's the one who's using us and he's gonna get her done we saw that in the book of Acts I mean this call to all people to embrace God's message it takes us back to months and months ago when we looked at the gospel of Luke do I have it on the screen?

yeah Luke chapter 2 verse 32 Luke chapter 2 verse 32 Luke chapter 2 verse 32 if I can get there there we go Simeon finally sees the baby of the Lord Jesus Christ and he says now your servant can depart and in verse 32 he says a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel where the gospel was for Jews but it's also a light for Gentiles this gospel message is for all and it also takes us back to Luke 24 44 should be through 48 not colon 48 which is what we read just a few moments ago where Jesus says that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem you are witnesses of these things and so we are witnesses we testify and how we testify is that the word of God which is sufficient inerrant and infallible we take this and we are witnesses this is the truth this is the evidence for the truth embrace Christ and all the evidence is to point to Jesus Christ

God, excuse me Jesus commissioned his disciples to proclaim this message of forgiveness to all people and that's us that's where we come in we come in Acts 29 is how God's word is still being proclaimed this is what Jesus said in Luke 24 and it's God's Spirit who directs and enables us to be bold to proclaim this gospel message so the mission is to take the gospel to all the world even to the ends of the earth Acts 1.8 Jesus says but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses excuse me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the remotest part of the earth the challenge in Acts 1.8 is for us to think and consider how we can follow the example of

Acts Gospel proclaimers in our own situations in our own circumstances where has God placed you in your job in your neighborhood with family with friends this little town that little area of the neighborhood this little part of Cottonwood or Jerome or Camp Verde he will have you this is where he is going to use you that's the challenge and we follow Paul's example we follow the example of others in the book of Acts do I have it?

I think I have it yeah, Acts chapter 8 verse 4 Acts chapter 8 verse 4 therefore those who have been scattered went about preaching the word in chapter excuse me in chapter 11 verse 19 through 21 chapter 11 verse 19 so then those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus Antioch speaking the word to no one except the Jews alone but there were some of them men who Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch and spoke to the Greeks also preaching the Lord Jesus and the hand of the Lord was with them and a large number who believed turned to the Lord who were these people?

[10 : 20] I don't know they're not named they're just people like us just normal people normal men and women just proclaiming the gospel see this is simply our DNA as God's people it's just who we are Jesus didn't say you have to do you will be he doesn't command it in Acts chapter 1 verse 8 he just said you are it's not a command it's just what we are it should just be a part as like brushing your teeth every night hopefully you will brush your teeth every night but that's it's just a normal thing that we do we're called to persist and fight in this ministry of gospel proclamation to all people no matter the difference no matter the hostility no matter the opposition it's just who we are let's say you are a soldier in the marines your military commander your commanding officer doesn't come to you and say you know what

I was thinking we got these orders to go to this place what do you guys think about doing this you guys ok with that? nah captain we don't want to do that ok I'll go ok Joe wants to go anybody else?

nah I'm talking to tired that's not how it works right? you guys get your arms off of that couch you get your stuff you pack your gear we're going to Afghanistan we're going to Iraq we're going to Sudan we're going to this place it's just your soldiers it's who you are why do we not think that way as Christians?

I don't have the gift of evangelism I don't have the gift of evangelism I don't have the gift of evangelism yeah when's lunch?

that's how we think that's not my that's your job that's why we do the offering pastor you're the one that does that stuff I'm too busy we just don't get it this is just who we are as a church it's part of our DNA you are a soldier acts shows us that with the coming of God's rule through the Lord Jesus Christ there's forgiveness of sins justification before God and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit for this mission God calls us to fulfill we can fulfill his mission by and through and in his power it can be done just be who you are and this is where Acts 29 comes into play we are Acts 29 and people ask me what Acts 29 is that what's going on with that?

[13 : 36] you're Acts 29 it's you it's us God's mission to proclaim and live this gospel word continues to be fulfilled through us as people we spread it to the entire world members of Cottonwood Bible Church specifically to you it's us, we are Acts 29 the challenge is how how how is God going to continue to use you in what ways will he use you in what ways will you let him use you it should just be who you are so I was thinking through what are some principles that we can pull out in reference to good evangelism from Acts 28 Acts chapters 1 through 28 what have we seen in Acts about good evangelism?

what are good Acts 29 principles from Acts chapters 1 through 28? there's probably more but here's five of them so if you want to write these down something to write down you can write this down five Acts 29 principles from Acts chapters 1 through 28 chapters 1 through 28 number one we can be confident and ready because of God's sovereignty we can be confident and ready because of God's sovereignty what does that mean?

God's sovereignty gives us the confidence and the readiness that we need to proclaim the gospel why? because God is sovereign in election he elected people before the foundation of the world not based on their foreseen faith but based upon his good, righteous, gracious choice he chooses people so we have such assurance in the doctrine of election he's sovereign in changing hearts we can't change people's hearts you can't make someone believe in Jesus but we have the assurance we have the confidence and we can be ready to proclaim the gospel because God is sovereign because he can change people's hearts he's sovereign in our words you might go blah blah blah blah blah blah Jesus died blah blah blah blah blah blah right?

you feel like you've botched things up oh I just messed it up you ever walk away and say why didn't I say that? right? right? yeah? I've done that I did that not this past Friday but the Friday before that in Jerome I went what an idiot you know you could have said this and this and this moron way to go I had a great conversation with myself and you blew it!

praise God he's sovereign and he'll take your botched up messed up you should have said that I could have should have would have said those words and he still brings about the salvation of people look at the book of Acts look at how he did that he's sovereign in election sovereign to change hearts sovereign in our words and sovereign in our suffering and opposition that we face God can use the suffering that you face the suffering that you're facing even today can use that for the glory of his name to show that God is pouring out his grace upon you and give you an opportunity to proclaim the gospel to this person who needs God's grace we can be ready confident because of God's sovereignty principle number 2 we focus on God's rule through the Lord Jesus Christ this is our focus

[17 : 40] Jesus is both Lord and Christ said Peter having lived died and risen from the dead he is the king who rules now he's ruling upon the throne of David now he'll consummate it when he returns yes but he was now calling sinners to repent and trust in him alone for forgiveness of sins and to be justified in the sight of God that's our focus it has to be our focus it must be our focus because that is the essence of Christianity Christianity is not doing good things Christianity is not social justice Christianity is not coming and being a part of some church Christianity centers and focuses upon the Lord Jesus Christ who he is and what he's done that's Christianity and embracing that with your life it's our focus because we understand how much we need God's grace it's so much we needed God to forgive me how much I needed God to justify me how much I deserve God to judge me and yet he's shown his grace see it's in our focus because it's merely an outflow of our loving response to Jesus Christ ourselves and if you're here and you need to respond to the message of grace if you need to do that repent and trust in Jesus you will be held accountable to God because he's our creator he's our creator and we have been are presently and will continue to be lawbreakers he must judge us but yet he's gracious and kind and sending Jesus the eternal son who lived, who died, who rose repent and trust in Jesus alone and you'll be saved that's the gospel that's our focus

God's rule through the Lord Jesus Christ his son third principle we proclaim this message to anyone and everyone Jesus is Lord of all so we proclaim the message to all doesn't matter who all lives matter all lives matter to God because all are called to repent and trust Jesus Christ alone black, white, Asian, Hispanic India, Saudi Arabian, Yemen, Ethiopian all it doesn't matter who because all lives matter to God because all should respond to Christ we can be confident and ready because of God's sovereignty second principle we focus on God's rule through the Lord Jesus Christ third, we proclaim this message to anyone and everyone fourth, this is the reason we are still here people don't worship Jesus worship is ultimate missions is not ultimate worship is missions exist because worship doesn't exist exist people are worshipping themselves something else someone else they must bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ to become worshipers of the one true God worship is ultimate because

Jesus is ultimate this is why we are still here this is why there is missions this is why the guy next to you the person beside you the neighbor, the relative who doesn't know Christ and you are proclaiming the gospel you are telling them you are not a worshiper of Jesus you need to become one that's why there is missions because there is people who do not worship Jesus this is the reason we are still here people need to become worshipers of Jesus and then principle number 5 nothing will hinder the message not prison persecution any type of suffering cancer, sickness, disease not death I will tell you our adversaries the world, the flesh and the devil they will do whatever they can to hinder God using you to fulfill his mission but nothing will hinder his work not sin, not death, not Satan nothing as a matter of fact

God will use your suffering as a matter of fact suffering is used in suffering through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God Acts 14, 22 Paul was strengthening the souls of the disciples encouraging them to continue the faith saying through many tribulations through many trials, through many sufferings we must enter the kingdom of God God will use your suffering to bring about his kingdom to show that God is so gracious giving you grace in the midst of your suffering so you can proclaim that same grace to a person who does not know the Lord Jesus Christ nothing will hinder the message nothing will hinder the message those are the five principles that we can glean from from the book of Acts Acts 29 principles for us and it's clear from Acts that his word will spread amid the opposition because he emboldens his faithful witnesses his faithful witnesses he emboldens us his faithful people know and understand his call to them and they get it done not an obligation although it's true we're obligated to do that but it's deeper than that it's because of his great grace that he's given to us this gospel word is for all because Jesus is Lord of all and this gospel is spreading unhindered because of God's power in fulfillment of his promise made in the Old Testament and despite any resistance

God will continue to move so again, who's the real hero of Acts? God is God's the hero Acts shows how God revealed the gospel word through the Lord Jesus Christ and a faithful church Acts shows how he fulfilled his promise for the gospel word to reach the ends of the earth and as we read here in Acts 28 how the gospel came to Rome we think that this is the end this is merely the beginning this is not the end this is the beginning because after verse 31 of Acts 28 Acts 29 begins it's us it's his people who continue to spread the message it doesn't end it begins because it's God he was the one who created the church to be the vehicle through which he would proclaim a message of hope to this lost evil hurting world that he changes hearts and he saves sinners and remember I said

[25 : 43] God will make it happen the means of a godly faithful gospel driven Jesus focused church whom he powerfully enables you're enabled by the Spirit the Holy Spirit enables you to proclaim this message to live out grace in your life the Spirit enables you it's already there you just gotta move just do it that's been the theme of Acts just do it because the power is already there as God was a hero of Acts he's still the hero of just church too he's gonna move he's gonna use us our ascended Lord is still working by empowering his gospel agents through the Holy Spirit to proclaim and teach the gospel of Jesus boldly and freely we may be persecuted hated imprisoned mocked or killed but God's gospel word will never be bound will never be bound one writer puts it like this

God uses formal and informal missionaries what do I mean? what would be formal missionaries?

I'm a formal missionary and then like a missionary like goes out specifically they go to a specific country that's a formal missionary that's what I'm doing is the formal way full time ministry who are the informal missionaries?

all of you you as members are informal because the formal people can't be everywhere it's you it's you it's us together we are Acts 29 God uses formal and informal missionaries we are all called to be who we are we're all his witnesses in other words God is still actively working through his people just as he did in Acts he gave the mission call and he gave the spirit to empower us I mean look at what he does God directs his church enables his church protects his church expands his church it's all about God that's what he's going to do so he's going to direct us he's going to enable us he's going to protect us and he's going to expand us and the motivation that we're doing this what's motivating us is because he's shown such great grace to us in the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospel there's forgiveness

I'm justified I'm reconciled I'm redeemed I'm loved I'm forgiven there's grace overflowing grace given to me and so that's what's motivating me to proclaim this message to others it's all about God that's Acts 29 so that's all I've got for you there you go let's pray and take a moment if you would pray in your spirit or in your soul for us as a church Cottonwood Bible Church that God would direct us enable us protect us and that he would expand us pray that for us if you would in your soul and your soul for us as a church take a few moments and do that we lift up and praise you

[29 : 49] Lord Jesus Christ and there are people that we have in our minds relatives cousins close friends neighbors co-workers people we see at the store at a restaurant that we know they don't know you our hearts are heavy oh God we pray direct us as your church enable us by the power of your spirit and that enabling power is there let us just do it and just be who you who we are you protect us though they might make us suffer ridicule mock us though we might face disease sickness and otherwise you still protect us because the worst thing they can do is kill us and that is actually the best thing they can do because then we are with you forever direct us enable us protect us and God we also pray you would expand us expand us expand us in the city of Cottonwood expand your church in this small little town expand your church in this small little town expand your church in the Verde Valley expand your church at a good solid

Bible teaching Baptist church be planted in Rome where people would just say wow that's totally a God thing encourage us as your people in the midst of all this that's totally a God thing encourage us as your people in the midst of our pains heartaches in the midst of our difficulties to know that you are sovereign in all these things and you will use us to the glory of your name how amazing how amazing how amazing is your grace if you would at this time ponder and think what we've seen these principles from Acts the book of Acts and after a few moments we'll continue our time of worship through singing through giving excuse me and then singing two more songs and then our closing prayer so ponder for a few moments ponder for a few moments

Thank you.