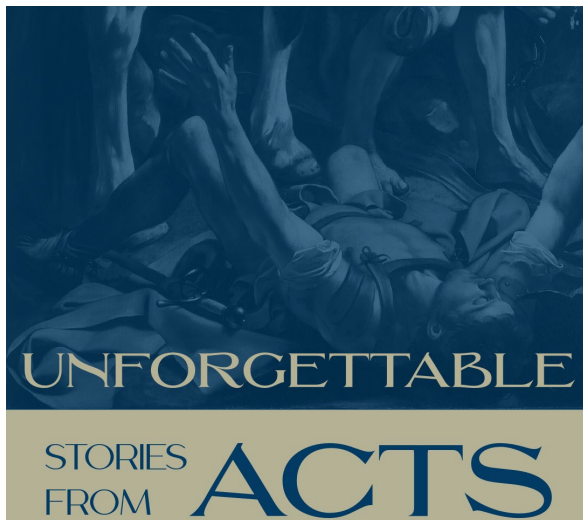


# UNFORGETTABLE: Kingdom of God

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## Acts 28:16-31

**Acts 28:16** When we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

**Acts 28:17** Three days later he called together the local leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, he said to them, “Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors, yet I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. <sup>18</sup> When they had examined me, the Romans wanted to release me, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. <sup>19</sup> But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to the emperor—even though I had no charge to bring against my nation. <sup>20</sup> For this reason therefore I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is for the sake of the hope of Israel that I am bound with

this chain.” <sup>21</sup> They replied, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken anything evil about you. <sup>22</sup> But we would like to hear from you what you think, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.” **Acts 28:23** After they had set a day to meet with him, they came to him at his lodgings in great numbers. From morning until evening he explained the matter to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. <sup>24</sup> Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. <sup>25</sup> So they disagreed with each other; and as they were leaving, Paul made one further statement: “The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah, <sup>26</sup> ‘Go to this people and say, You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.

<sup>27</sup> For this people’s heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn—and I would heal them.’

<sup>28</sup> Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen.” **Acts 28:30** He

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lived there two whole years at his own expense and welcomed all who came to him,<sup>31</sup> proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

## **REFLECT & DISCUSS**

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. In Acts 28:16–28:31, Paul is a prisoner in Rome, and yet he still preaches about the Kingdom of God, day in and day out. Have you ever felt trapped in a situation, trapped in a day in and day out struggle? (This could be anything from a boring job, loneliness, economic hardship, health problems, death of a loved one, and more). What ways did you find it difficult to preserve in your Christian faith, and did that struggle embolden or stifle your Christian faith?
3. What does the Kingdom of God mean to you, and why do you think Paul thought it was important to continue preaching and teaching about this Kingdom, even when he was trapped in prison? (If you need help determining what the Kingdom of God is in Scripture, see: Luke 13:18–21 and Rom 14:17)
4. In Romans 14:17 Paul explains that “the Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, peace, and

joy in the Holy Spirit.” And in Luke 13:18–21 Jesus uses the metaphor of small things growing into larger things. How have you seen small acts of love, righteousness, peace, and joy grow in your life and other people’s lives? What stories do you have of the Kingdom of God growing.

5. Many of us have routines that we follow, day in and day out, and in the final two verses of Acts, it seems that Paul continues his routine of preaching and teaching about the Kingdom of God. In what ways do you build into your daily routines your Christian faith? How do you do simple acts of love, righteousness, peace, and joy in your daily life?

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