

# Acts 13-20 Bible Studies 2024

## St Andrews, Roseville

### Introduction

As you may know, our vision is 'Growing disciples of Jesus through outreach, belonging, and maturity.' This year we are placing an emphasis on the 'outreach' aspect of this vision.

We have labelled 2024 'The year of outreach' not because it is the only year that we will consider the place of evangelism in our Church (how silly!), but because we want to focus on building conviction around Jesus' mission to seek and save people from all nations (Acts 1:8).

Reflecting on the narrative of Acts will help galvanise us around this vision. As we do so in Church, and Small Groups, one to ones, and private devotions, our prayer is that we will **marvel** at how the risen Lord Jesus continues to build his kingdom across the world against all odds and **draw encouragement** to step out in faith and share the gospel, knowing that he is with us to achieve his purposes.

### So far in Acts ...

In Acts 1:1 we learn that Luke's first volume (the gospel of Luke) was about what Jesus 'began' to do and teach, which implies that his second volume (Acts) is about what Jesus *continues* to do and teach. As the risen and enthroned King of all what Jesus continues to do is build his kingdom throughout the world, starting in Jerusalem. "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" (Acts 1:8).

### Structure of Acts

- Jesus ascends and gives the mission (1:1-11)
- Gospel to the Jews in Jerusalem (1:12-6:7)
- Gospel spreads wider to Judea & Samaria (6:8-9:31)
  - o Paul converted and commissioned (ch9)
- Gospel to the Gentiles (9:32-12:25)
  - o Peter convinced re Gentile mission (conversion of Cornelius ch10-11)
- The first Missionary journey (13:1-16:5)
  - o Jerusalem council (15:1-35)
- The second Missionary journey (16:6-18:22)
- The third Missionary journey (18:23-21:16)
- The Arrest, trial & imprisonment of Paul (21:17-28:31)

These studies focus in on Acts 13-20.

## Bible Study 1: Acts 13:1-12

### For Starters

- What are some common things that distract or dissuade us from hearing and following God's word?

### Read Acts 13:1-3

- 'Superficial Christian knowledge leads to superficial evangelism'. Agree?

★ The Church in Antioch was founded in 11:19-21 and quickly grew in maturity as the first main gentile church (not least because of Barnabas's and Paul's year-long bible teaching, 11:26). This new hub of Gentile inclusion was not perceived as a rival threat to Jewish Christian HQ in Jerusalem. In fact, we see a beautiful picture of mutual love, where the Jerusalem church send Barnabas (their best) to strengthen the work in Antioch (11:22), and then the church in Antioch send material blessing to assist their Jewish brothers and sisters enduring a famine in Jerusalem (11:29). By Acts 13 God has raised up prophets and teachers (from diverse backgrounds), inspired worship, fasting, and motivated support for the growing gentile mission. Here they prayerfully commission Barnabas and Saul for this task (known as Paul's first missionary journey). At the end of this journey, they report back to this church at Antioch, telling them "... *all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.*" (14:27). In God's plan the gospel came to Antioch, and then later went from Antioch. There was outreach (people heard the gospel), belonging (different people sensed their home with Christ and each other), and maturity (expressed in devotion, service, and promoting mission). The more the church grew in its alignment with the Lord Jesus purposes, the more they were committed to evangelism.

- How could we be a bit more like the church in Antioch?

### Read Acts 13:4-5

- What is at the heart of what they are commissioned to do? (v5, 7, 12)
- Why does God grow his kingdom by people communicating his word?
- What's your next step in saying something about Jesus with someone in your life who doesn't follow Jesus?

**Read Acts 13:6-12**

- Is there anyone or anything (ideology, culture, media) functioning a bit like Elymas in your life (v8)? I.e. Is there anyone/anything in your life who/that seeks to either subtly or overtly dissuade you from following Jesus? How can we recognise it and what should we do about it?
  
- Is Paul's rebuke something we should emulate? V10-11  
Why/why not, and in what sense?
  
- According to v12 why did the proconsul believe?
  
- Think of those things that distract or dissuade you from following Jesus (as discussed earlier). Why is the good news of Jesus the better story in each case? Or simply 'Why is Jesus better?' Give examples.
  
- Pray for our hearts to discern unhelpful influences, and to know how to minimise or remove threats, and to realise with deep conviction that in Jesus we have the better story!

## Bible Study 2: Acts 13:13-52

### **For Starters**

- How do you view the OT? What is its message?

### **Read 13:16-43**

- What is Paul's conclusion and what steps does he cover to get there?

### **Read 13:16-20**

- What picture of God do you get from 13:16-20? Notice all the things he does

### **Read 13:21-23**

- This section is focussed in on Kingship (Check out 2 Samuel 7:12-14 and Psalm 2 if you want some background info).
- What do we learn about God's promise to David?

### **Read 13:24-29**

- What was John the Baptists key role in salvation history?
- While John the Baptist recognised the coming one ... many didn't. How does God use people's ignorance to save the world? (v27-29). Are they still responsible?
  - o Acts 2:23
  - o Acts 3:14-19
  - o Acts 4:27-28

### **Read 13:30-37**

- What is central to the good news announcement? Why does it matter so much?
- EXTRA: How is Psalm 2 and in particular 2:7 about Jesus' resurrection as claimed in Acts 13:33?

### **Read 13:38-41**

- How is the salvation announced in Jesus (v23, 26) articulated in v38-39?
- You overhear a friend saying, '*Christian religion enslaves people, it doesn't set them free!*' How might you address their concerns?

- What would you say if your Non-Christian friend asked, *'Why would I need God's forgiveness? What's so important about that?'*
  
- V41 warns scoffers not to be close minded to the possibility that God acts in unexpected ways. Even though Jesus is generally well liked by most people, but how might your non-Christian friends criticise him, dismiss him, or express scepticism about him? How would you respond?
  
- What effect does God's word have on the crowd?
  - o V42-43
  
  - o V44-45 (v41)
  
- How does/should 13:46-48 encourage us in our evangelism? (Is49:6)
  
- How are we going as a church community in 'bringing salvation' to the world around us? What is one key thing you know you need to overcome, or work on to share the gospel with people in your life?
  
- Why were the disciples joyful despite the troubles mentioned in v49-51?
  
- Pray that we would be more aligned with God's global salvation plans, and that we would learn what it means to be joyful in the holy spirit despite the trouble God's truth can cause.

## Bible Study 3: Acts 14:1-28

### **For Starters**

- The gospel polarises people. But why? Why can something that is so good, be perceived to be so bad?

### **Read 14:1-7**

- Given 14:1-2, what makes v3 surprising?
  
- What is the purpose of miracles in the Apostles ministry?

### **Read 14:8-10**

- This healing strongly parallels Peter's healing of a crippled man in Ch3:6-10. Why draw the contrast?

### **Read 14:11-18**

- What is the healing a sign of? (14:3, 8:6). What do they misinterpret it as?
  
- Not that it is likely to ever happen BUT if a large crowd threatened to worship you, how would you respond? Be honest!
  
- Read Paul's little speech in V15-17 and try to discern the steps in his logic. Do you find it persuasive at all?
  
- How does Paul seek to show that the biblical worldview is both rational and beautiful?
  
- Why are the idols of our heart 'vain things' v15 (irrational/unreasonable) that don't 'satisfy our hearts' v17? Give examples
  
- How can we encourage people to do what 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 describes?

### **Read 14:19-28**

- What does it mean that 'through many hardships we must enter the Kingdom of God?' And how does knowing this 'strengthen Christians?' (i.e. v22)
  - o Phil 1:29
  - o 2Tim 3:12

- Rom 8:17
- How does being a disciple of Jesus cost you in your day-to-day life (in small or larger ways)? How are the Apostles an encouragement to you?
- How does Jesus make disciples in Roseville, Sydney in 2024? (14:21. Also, 13:12, 48-49, 14:3, 7, 15, 21, 25).
- In what ways can we over complicate evangelism?

★ We don't need to over complicate it. All we need is (a) a Christian to open their mouth and talk about Jesus, and (b) a non-Christian to listen. That's how God makes disciples. Do you believe it is this simple? Simple doesn't mean 'easy' or without cost (v22). *'Faith comes from hearing the message'* Rom10:17.

- In the face of the dividing effect of the gospel, where ought our confidence be in evangelism and why?
  - 13:43
  - 13:48
  - 14:27
- According to 14:26-28, Paul & Barny return from whence they were commissioned (13:1) and sum up what has been happening. What is the point of the whole previous section (13:1-14:28)?
- Has God stopped opening doors? What should our hope, prayer, and expectation be? Col4:3
- What's your next step in connecting with someone so that they might come to hear about Jesus?
- Pray together about these things.

## Bible Study 4: Acts 15:1-31

### For Starters

- “You can’t be a proper Christian unless you ...”
- “It’s sometimes harder to get into the church than the kingdom”. In what sense is this wrong, and in what sense is this right?

### Read 15:1-5

- What are some modern-day examples of this? (v1, v5)
  - o “To be saved you need to put your faith in Jesus and ... “
- Try to put yourself in the shoes of a devout Jewish believer. Why would this demand seem reasonable to you?

★ As the gospel moves from exclusively Jewish to an increasingly Gentile demographic the question of the gospel’s relationship to the Jewish law is raised. As we learn in Romans and Galatians, Paul preached a ‘law free – faith alone’ gospel. This was controversial for Jewish believers since it seemed to disregard the Old Testament heritage. However, Paul is not disrespecting the OT but showing its fulfillment (and so honouring it!). Go back and read Romans 4 or Galatians 3 to see Paul’s reasoning. His basic point is that the promise to bless the world through Abraham’s offspring (ultimately Jesus) was only and always received by faith alone (for Jew and Gentile).

### Read 15:6-18

- We get three perspectives on this matter (Peter, Paul & Barnabas, and lastly James). What key bit of evidence does each testimony provide that God accepts gentiles by faith alone in Christ alone?
  - o Peter (15:6-11, referring to his experience in Acts 10:34-35, 43-47, and 11:15-18)
  - o Paul & Barny (15:12, cf. 14:3, Gal3:5)
  - o James (15:13-18)
- Why exactly does faith alone save?



- According to 1 Peter 3:18 how far does Jesus death bring us? *'For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.'*
- What is at stake if we add conditions to faith in Jesus' work? (Check out Gal1:6-8. Paul writes this in response to people adding law keeping to faith in Christ).
- Despite our belief in 'justification by faith' (being declared right with God by faith in Jesus alone [not our works]), how do we often slip back into judging whether God is 'for us' based on our:
  - o Circumstances
  - o Feelings
  - o Performance/Achievements

**Read 15:19-22**

- If the Gentiles don't have to keep the law to be saved, why are they now being instructed in these ways? (Which they seem happy with v31).
- What does the reason in v21 have to do with the list in v20?
- EXTRA: How is this similar to what we find in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 and Romans 14:1-23?
- Are we prepared to limit our freedom and so not insist on our rights for the sake of others, both believers and nonbelievers?
  - o "While X is not a condition for salvation, I'd be prepared to give up/amend X ... so that (insert person or group) is more comfortable in our fellowship" What's X?
- For next week it would be good to hear 2 different stories of how people came to follow Jesus. Any takers? (See question 1 in next weeks study).
- Praise God for the assurance of salvation we can have by faith in Jesus. Pray that our fellowship would do what leads to peace and mutual edification.

## Bible Study 5: Acts 16:6-40

### For Starters

- Are there 2 people who'd be willing to share their story of how they became Christians ... (keep it short – 3mins each).
  
- Does it seem like God is more likely to save certain types of people? Can you think of someone in your life who you think would never become a Christian?

In response to a vision (16:9-10) Paul & co head to Macedonia to preach the gospel. They come to Philippi, a leading city in that region (16:12). Let's pick it up in 16:13-15 ...

### Read 16:13-15

- What does God do and what does Paul do?
  
- How is Lydia's response to the gospel a model for us?

### Read 16:16-24

- Have you or do you know anyone who has experienced 'new age dark powers?' What view should we have of this type of phenomenon? (Eph 6:10-13).
  
- Why do you think Paul tolerated what she was doing for a few days? Why does he then suddenly rebuke the spirit?
  
- Do you think Christianity is socially and politically subversive? How are Christians in our time and place perceived to be disturbing our city and encouraging disloyalty to the state? (v20)
  
- On what basis might Christians be taken before legal authorities today?

### Read 16:25-34

- What impression does v25 make upon you?
  
- How would the Jailer know to ask his question in v30?
  
- How would you answer a friend who asked you, '*What does it actually mean to believe in the Lord Jesus?*'

- What is the Jailors threefold response to the gospel (v33-34), and how is it similar to Lydia's (v15, 40)? How are they good examples to us? What can we work at in this area?

★ In v35-40 it is interesting that Paul successfully appeals to his Roman legal rights (22:25), even though he's just been accused of undermining Roman law (16:21). It's a happy ending this time, as they escort him out of prison, and he regroups at Lydia's house for encouragement.

- From these 3 different conversion stories (Lydia, the Slave Girl, and the Jailor), what can we learn about the role God plays and the role we (people) play in evangelism? How does this encourage you to think and act?
- What is the difference between *making* and *taking* an opportunity for evangelism? What is required to do both well?
- Pray that God would provide opportunities with someone we know - that we'd spot and take, and that he'd open hearts to receive the message.

## Bible Study 6: Acts 17:1-15

### For Starters

- What is required to have a genuinely open mind to a new belief?

### Read 17:1-9

- As Paul seeks to persuade the Thessalonians that the person of Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament, there are two basic responses. First, some are persuaded and join Paul and Silas (v4). However, some stridently reject the message (v5-6). And while we may consider this Jewish response an over-reaction, why do you think it was justified in their minds?
  
- What is true and false about their claim in v7? In what sense is Jesus a threat to our political and social culture?
  
- What is the gospel according to the North Shore culture of Sydney? How does/should following Jesus challenge our loyalty to this culture? What area of our thinking needs to change?

### Read 17:10-12

- How would you describe the Bereans attitude and approach to hearing this new message? Why is it better?
  
- How does v4 and v12 show us that the gospel is both exclusive and inclusive at the same time?
  - o V4
  - o V12
  - o Why is this significant?
  
- How can we be more consciously like the Bereans? What does this assume about the bible?
  
- How can we encourage our unbelieving friends to be more like the Bereans? What could we say to encourage a more open minded and curious mindset? (Even if they don't yet trust the bible as God's word)

★ Notice how God brought people to faith.

(1) Examining/Reading the word (v11)

(2) Realising its claims are true (v11b)

(3) Belief (v12 '*As a result, many of them believed*').

- "*God's word does God's work*" If this is true, what is stopping us from expressing our confidence in his word to persuade people?
  
- Give thanks for God's powerful word. Pray for our confidence in God to use his word to persuade people.

## Bible Study 7: Acts 17:16-34

### **For Starters**

- What do people find strange about Christianity these days?

### **Read 17:16-21**

- What gives rise to Paul's speech at the Areopagus?
  
- Do we notice various forms of idolatry in our city, and in our own hearts? What impact does it have on us?

### **Read 17:22-34**

- Do you find anything compelling or surprising about Paul's speech?
  
- How does Paul's reasoning establish that ...
  - o God doesn't need us (v24-25)
  
  - o But we need God (v26-29)
  
- Does his conclusion (v29-31) follow from his reasoning? How so?
  
- How does this speech differ to Acts 13:16-41 and why? Can we learn anything about how to communicate the gospel to different types of people?
  
- "It is important to show an interest in your non-Christian friend so that you understand their beliefs and assumptions and can couch the gospel in terms that might resonate with them"
  - o Do you agree, and if so, what sorts of things would help us do this better?
  
- EXTRA: What are the possible benefits & pitfalls of becoming flexible in our presentation of the gospel?

- In v16 Paul was greatly disturbed by the prevalence of idolatry in Athens. This moved him to share the gospel with them. Are we similarly disturbed by the spiritual, ideological, and material idolatry around us? If not, why not? What can we do about it?
  
- If you were asked to explain your 'strange' beliefs in Jesus as risen Lord and saviour how would you begin to address your conversation partner ...
  - If they were a secular minded agnostic?
  
  - If they were 'spiritual but not religious?'
  
  - If they were an adherent of a different religion? (E.g. Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist).
  
- What reactions can we expect as we explain our faith?
  - V32a
  - V32b
  - V34
  
- Pray for opportunities to connect with 1 or 2 people and to communicate the glorious good news about Jesus.

## Bible Study 8: Acts 18:1-28

### For Starters

- What does God use to keep growing his kingdom when times are tough?

### Read 18:1-8

- Why does Paul keep entering Synagogues if he is trying to reach Gentiles?
- What are two interesting things about v7-8?

### Read 18:9-11

- How does v9-11 encourage Paul in the face of hardships?

★ *'Keep on speaking because ... I have many people in this city'* (18:10). That is, people who are yet to believe but will when they hear the gospel! God will use our efforts to save his elect. People are so dead in their sins (Eph2:1) that we need God to choose us before we choose him. Check out these other verses which support this idea:

- Acts 11:18 *When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life."*
- Acts 11:21 *The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.*
- Acts 13:48 *When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honoured the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.*
- Acts 16:14 *One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message*
- Acts 28:27 *When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed.*

Also (1Thes1:4-5, 2Thes2:13-14, 2Tim2:8-10)

- How can this motivate us to keep speaking, sharing, teaching, even when there are setbacks, and we are fearful?



**Read 18:12-17**

- Paul's 18mths of bible teaching is interrupted by an attempt to derail his influence. Why does it fail?
  - o [BTW I am assuming the 'law' mentioned in v13 pertains to the Jewish law (rather than Roman) because of what Gallio says in v15.]

**Read 18:18-28**

- In v23 we have the example of Paul strengthening believers in their walk with God. In v26 we have another example of this in Priscilla & Aquila, who explained the gospel more fully to Apollos (and notice the results in v27-28). God uses us to bring people into his kingdom and to grow them up as citizens of his kingdom. So here is the two-pronged question:
  - o 1- Is there an area of life, thinking, bible etc that you realise you need to be 'strengthened' and grow in?
  - o 2- How can we be a bit more like Paul, Priscilla & Aquila? Can you think of anyone you could help to spiritually develop and how might you go about this?

## Bible Study 9: Acts 19:1-22

### For Starters ...

- How might Christianity make one poorer and richer? In what sense?

### Read 19:1-7

- What is lacking in these disciples?
- What are the clues here regarding WHEN someone receives God's holy spirit?

★ **Speaking in tongues?** Mmm. The New Testament word translated 'tongues' is *glossala* and means languages. So, they are speaking a language inspired by God's spirit. Which language and for what purpose? Good questions! In Acts 2 a wide variety of scattered Jews converge on Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of Pentecost (50 days after Passover) and when the Spirit comes on the Apostles enabling them to speak in tongues, the gathered crowd can hear their own hometown dialects somehow! It seems to be a miracle of speech *and* hearing. But what are they saying in these languages? The only clue we get is, '*we hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own tongues*' (Acts 1:11). They are speaking about God's mighty works, undoubtedly focussed on Jesus recent redeeming work. It is a glimpse of unity around the gospel. Many people from far flung places hearing about what God has just done in and through Jesus. Peter then explains the meaning of it all. He shows how the Old Testament promised an age when God would pour out his spirit on many people (Acts2:17-21, Joel2:28-32), and then shows that the trigger for that age is the enthronement of Jesus in heaven (Acts 2:33 '*Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear*'). The King of the Kingdom has completed his saving work, has just sat down at the right hand of God, and now pours out his salvation blessings by his spirit upon those who put their faith in him. In Acts, tongues often accompany the receiving of the Spirit (but not always). Part of the purpose is to provide an audio-visual witness for the Apostles to confirm that God was embracing an ever widening international community of people (2:11, 8:14-17 implied, 10:44-46, 19:6). So, in Acts the gift of speaking in tongues by the spirit was a sign that (1) The Messiah was enthroned, and the Kingdom was go! (2) The Messiah's kingdom included all people (including Gentiles) by faith alone.

Tongues are also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and whether the phenomenon there was the same as in Acts is unclear (although I'd be

surprised if it wasn't speech celebrating the gospel as in Acts). The clear thing in 1Cor12-14 is that not everyone is promised this gift (12:10, 30), and that it should only be engaged in if an interpreter is present to make the message clear so people can be edified (14:1-5). That's enough for now!

### **Read 19:8-12**

- Why is it often so difficult to persuade people about Jesus? V9.
  
- Is Paul something of an example of what to do in the face of hostile unwillingness to listen?
  - o 18:7
  - o 19:9
  
- How did God grow and testify to his Kingdom at this time?
  - o v8-10
  - o v11-12 (14:3, 5:12, 15)
  
- Should we expect the same ability to perform feats of instant healing? Why/why not? (Mt10:1, 2Cor12:12, Rom15:18-19, Heb2:3-4, Acts 5:12, 15).

★ The miracles performed by Jesus during his earthly ministry were signs of his ability and intention to bring cosmic restoration at the end of time, as the Old Testament promised (Isaiah 29:18, 35:5-6, 61:1). Luke 7:18-23 shows that these deeds were designed to point to Jesus kingly (Messianic) identity and mission. He alone is the one who can reverse the curse of sin and its effects of decay and death and so restore God's intended order. Of course he CAN perform such healings today, and there are enough stories to back this. However, that he 'can' do so is not the same as him promising to do so for every believer (in this age). He did authorise and enable the Apostles to do similar signs in order to provide continuity between his earthly ministry and his heavenly ministry through his appointed eyewitness representatives (Mt10:1, 2Cor12:12, Rom15:18-19, Heb2:3-4, Acts 5:12, 15). The fact that the Apostles are performing similar miracles in Jesus name (indeed 'extraordinary miracles' 19:11) indicates that Jesus is still alive and ruling (as Acts 1:1 implies), that the age of the resurrection has begun in him, and he is giving previews of the future fully restored Kingdom.

**Read 19:13-17**

- Paul's reputation for performing miracles in the name of Jesus spawns a distorted version of his ministry in v13-16. Why would this incident lead to the attitude change in v17?

**Read 19:18-20**

★ This is astonishing! As these new believers grew in their conviction about Jesus supreme authority and worthiness to be worshipped (in part due to v17), they brought the bits of their life that until now they'd held back and laid it all at his feet in an act of costly public confession and repentance! We can't serve two masters (Mt6:24).

- What is our equivalent of book burning? If we repented of our forms of idolatry & God denying sin, what sorts of things would we need to 'burn' (get rid of, give up, change)? How might it cost us financially, socially, etc?
- According to v20 where should we place our confidence to make and grow disciples of Jesus (cf. 19:10).
- As we focus on 'outreach' as a church what should our regular prayer be?
- Where are you up to as you seek to share your life and the gospel with a friend/contact? What's your next step?

## Bible Study 10: Acts 19:23-41

### For Starters

- “The human heart is a factory of idols. Every one of us is, from our mother’s womb, expert in inventing idols.” - John Calvin.
  - o Do you agree?
  
- Can you be a Christian and a Buddhist? Or for that matter a Materialist, a Hedonist, or a New Age practitioner? Why can’t you combine your favourite bits of each religion or ideology or worldview with Jesus?

### Read 19:23-27

- As a result of word (v10) and deed (v11) Jesus is rightly embraced as the only supreme Lord (v17). This has an ongoing impact in the lives of the repentant, with negative social consequences ...
  
- What is Demetrius’ twofold concern? (v27)

### Read 19:28-34 (dramatically!)

- How would you describe this event?

### Read 19:35-41

- How does the City Clerk help restore order?

★ This shows us that not all non-Christian authorities are aggressively anti-Christian. They are not pro either. E.g Gallio in 18:14-16, and Jewish Pharisee Gamaliel in 5:33-39).

- Would you become a Christian (or stay one!) if it cost you considerable wealth to do so? (v19, v27)
  - o *“He is no fool who gives what he can’t keep to gain what he can’t lose” Jim Eliot*
  
- In 19:26 Demetrius rightly observes that Paul has the reputation of saying that *‘gods made by human hands are no gods at all’*. (e.g. 14:15, 17:29). Paul sought to persuade people that worshipping the things of creation were not worth worshipping...

- How can we learn to reason with people that the things they functionally treat as god (worship) are not worthy of worship?
  
- Every idol in our life promises some perceived benefit. Can you identify it? How does it ultimately fail to deliver? Why and how is Jesus better and best?
  
- How does the gospel of Jesus oppose, expose, and replace the false gods of our world?
  
- Pray for perseverance as people look down on us for worshipping Jesus as the supreme and only Lord and Saviour of the world.

## Bible Study 11: Acts 20:18-38

This is an **optional study** since it falls during the school holiday period.

Read Paul's farewell speech in Acts 20:18-38

- How would you describe its overall tone?
- What does he emphasise and why?
- Is Paul talking himself up? Why does he speak of his godliness?  
E.g. (v33-35)
- As staff or volunteer leaders in church ministry, how can we do the twofold command in v28 well?
  - o *Watch yourself*
  - o *And the flock*
- What are we warned of and how can we prepare?
- How many ways does Paul describe his word ministry?
- What is the big take home application (v32)?
- What ought to be centrally important in our church?
- Pray that we'd be more like this.