

Acts 2-9 Series

God Advances in Acts, Part 5

“The Greatest Breakout”

L’Amable Bible Chapel

Nov. 1st, 2026

I. Franck

lamablebiblechapel.com

Introduction

God is advancing…

8 *“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.”*



God is advancing…

In only a few years, the Good News will spread though the Eastern Roman Empire




But First...

Famous Animals of the Bible…

- Donkeys! (142 times) Who can deny it? They carried Abraham and Isaac to Mount Moriah, carried Joseph's treasures to Jacob, carried Moses' family to Egypt, and spoke to Balaam!
- They were the sign used to determine who was the first king of Israel (Saul), accompanied David as next king, and carried prophets
- Donkeys carried Jesus' mother and carried Jesus





Famous Animals of the Bible…

- Lions! (119 times) The Lion of Judah, symbols of strength and majesty, sons of Jacob…
- Solomon decorated the Temple in part with cast lions, as well as his throne. *"On both sides of the seat were armrests, with a lion standing beside each of them. [19] Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any other kingdom."* (2 Chron. 9)
- Lions obeyed God not to attack Daniel!

- One of the most dominant symbols in Revelation: *"Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the **Lion** of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."* (Rev. 5:5)



Famous Animals of the Bible…

- Sheep! (200 times) Sheep & Shepherd—throughout the Bible.
- *"Then we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will praise you forever; from generation to generation we will proclaim your praise."* Psalm 79:13
- "*For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them.*" Ezek. 34:11
- "*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.*" John 10:11

- Lamb (191 times): Perhaps the most powerful Bible symbol: Jesus as the Passover Lamb
- *In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"* Rev. 5:12





Famous Animals of the Bible…

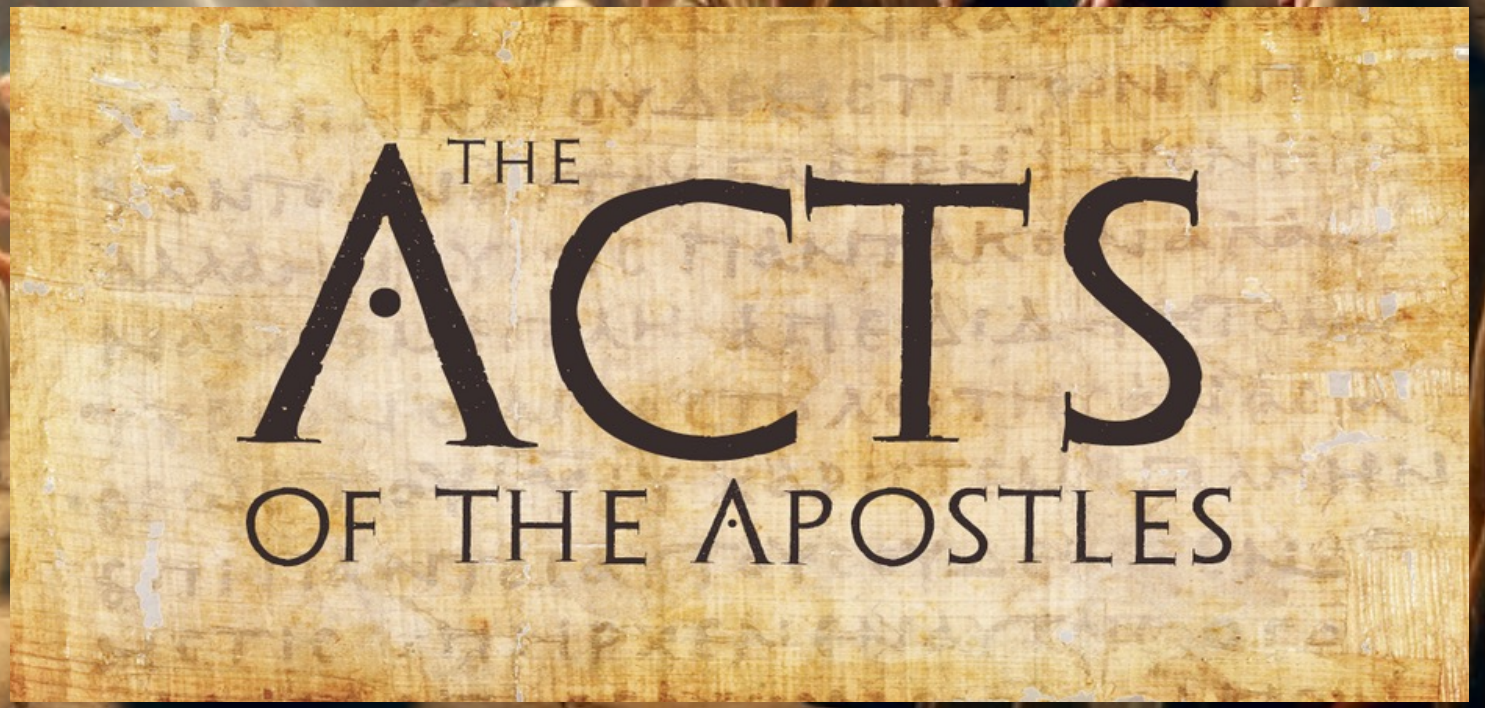


- Many others…camels, doves, whale, goats, dogs, snakes… and deer! About 100 distinct animals or creatures are mentioned, depending on some translations
- Sorry, domestic cats are not mentioned! 🐱

Power…Proclamation…Persecution…Breakout

God advances in Acts with power, and people respond in spite of peril and persecution. The outcome is progress. Today we will see the greatest breakout…





Last time… *Rapid spreading…*

8 [25] After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

- Philip is a Holy Spirit-empowered evangelist who takes the Gospel to Samaria
- Miracles & Conversions follow
- Peter & John arrive, and the Holy Spirit blesses

Saul is a Problem!

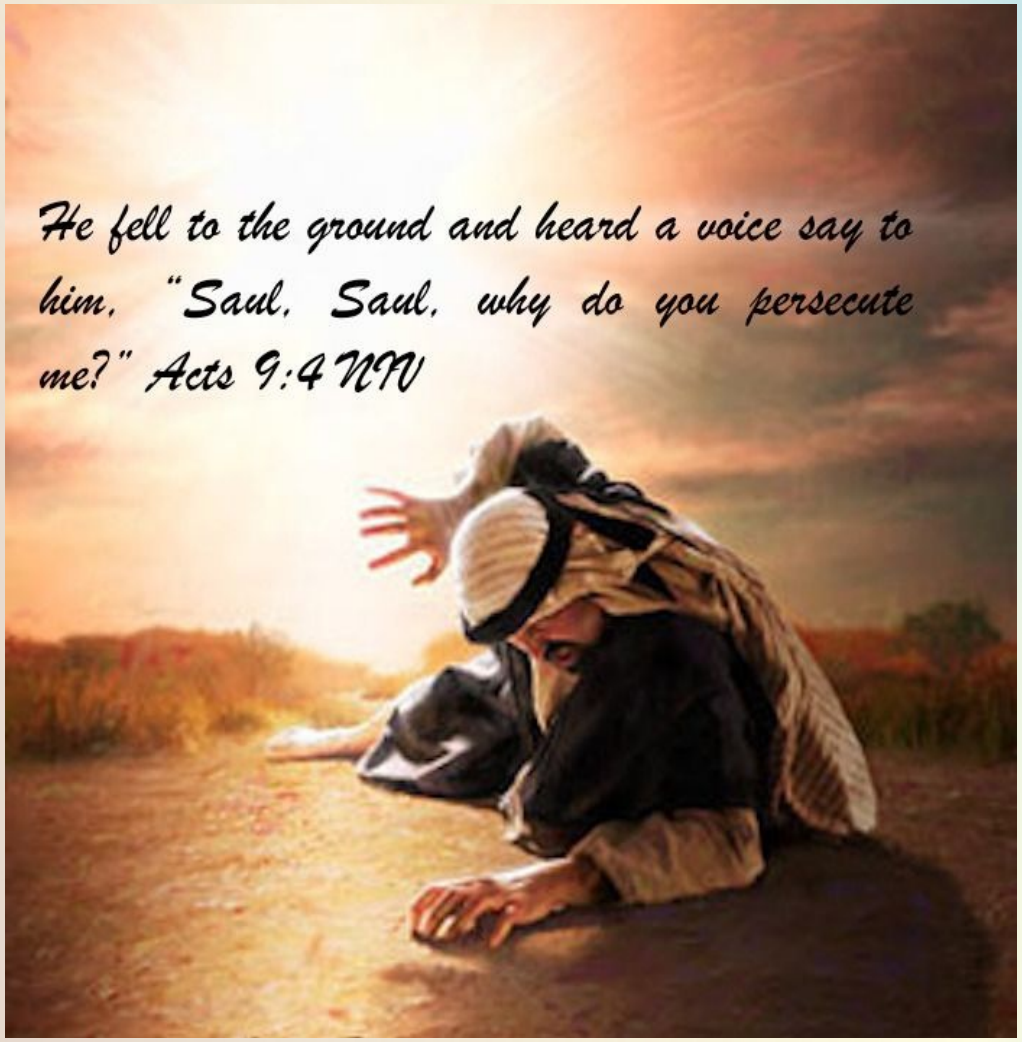
- Saul targets Christians to stamp out “The Way”
- Authorized to spread persecution



“He went to the high priest [2] and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.” Acts 9:2

1. God Confronts!

Acts 9: [33] As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. [4] He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”
[5] “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.
“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.

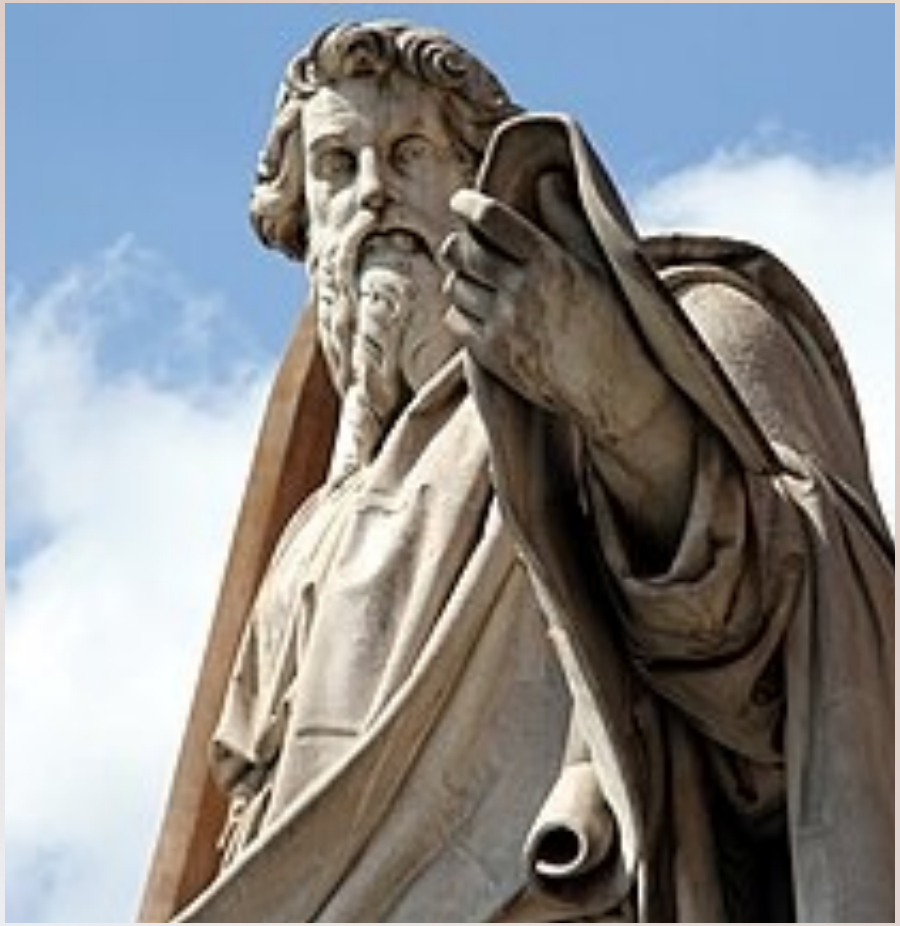


6 “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told
what you must do.”
7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless;
they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8 Saul got
up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he
could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into
Damascus. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not
eat or drink anything.
10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias.
The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!”
“Yes, Lord,” he answered.

[11] The Lord told him, “Go to the
house of Judas on Straight Street and
ask for a man from Tarsus named
Saul, for he is praying. [12] In a vision
he has seen a man named Ananias
come and place his hands on him to
restore his sight.”
[13] “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have
heard many reports about this man
and all the harm he has done to your
holy people in Jerusalem.







14 And he has come here with
authority from the chief priests
to arrest all who call on your
name.”
15 But the Lord said to Ananias,
“Go! This man is my chosen
instrument to proclaim my
name to the Gentiles and their
kings and to the people of Israel.
16 I will show him how much he
must suffer for my name.”

[17] Then Ananias went to the house and
entered it. Placing his hands on Saul,
he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus,
who appeared to you on the road as
you were coming here—has sent me so
that you may see again and be filled
with the Holy Spirit.” [18] Immediately,
something like scales fell from Saul’s
eyes, and he could see again. He got up
and was baptized, [19] and after taking
some food, he regained his strength.

2. God Transforms



Evaluation…

- Faith overcoming doubt
- Saul misguided, Ananias reluctant…
- Multiple visions!
- How did Ananias know about Saul?
- Infilling of the Holy Spirit… *(more later)*



A repeating theme in Acts is the power and infilling of the Holy Spirit to convert and transform…

3. God Directs

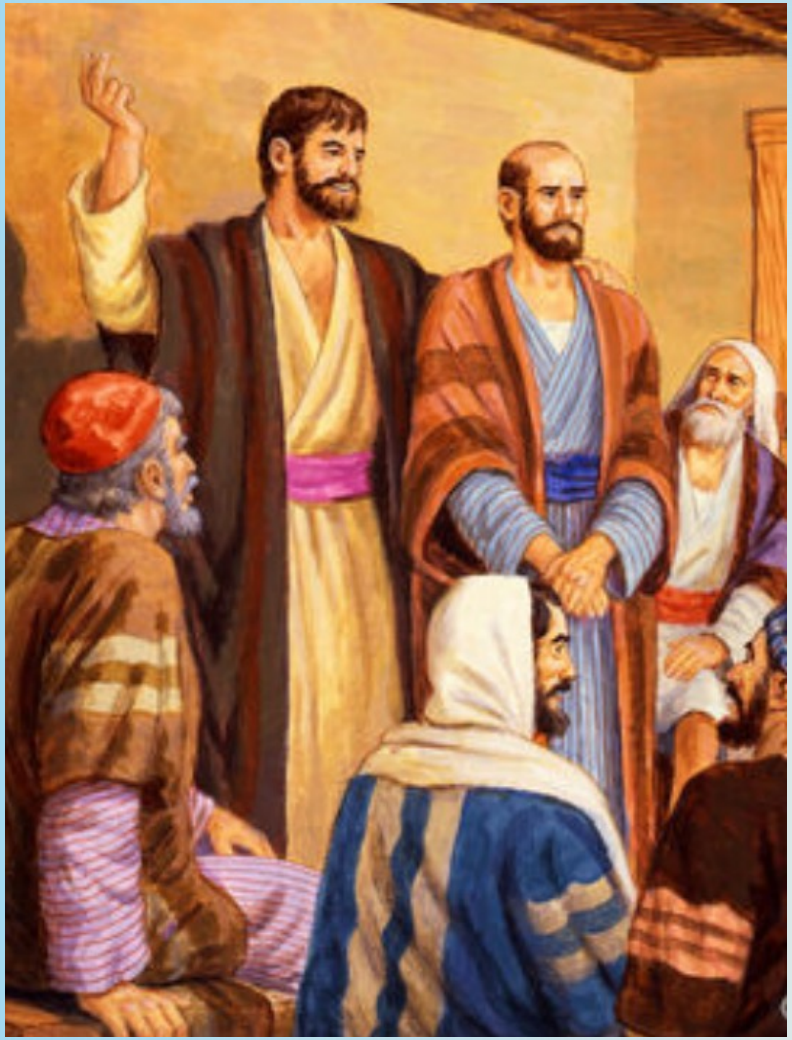


Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. [20] At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. [21] All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”

22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful
and baffled the Jews living in Damascus
by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.
23 After many days had gone by, there
was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill
him, 24 but Saul learned of their plan.
Day and night they kept close watch on
the city gates in order to kill him. 25 But
his followers took him by night and
lowered him in a basket through an
opening in the wall.





[26] When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. [27] But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.

28 So Saul stayed with them and moved
about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly
in the name of the Lord. 29 He talked and
debated with the Hellenistic Jews,[d] but
they tried to kill him. 30 When the believers
learned of this, they took him down to
Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.
31 Then the church throughout Judea,
Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of
peace and was strengthened. Living in the
fear of the Lord and encouraged by the
Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.



Evaluation…

- Paul is now threatened with plots…
- He fearlessly preaches!
- Some doubt and fear, but Barnabas is key
- Paul debates and convinces (some)…
- How God granted relief



Acts 9 reveals the victory which came through the conversion and ministry of Saul the persecutor


ACTS


Black Sea
BITHYNIA
GALATIA
ASIA
Sardis
Antioch
in Pisidia
Iconium
LYCIA
Perga
CILICIA
Tarsus
Rhodes
RHODES
Antioch
SYRIA
CYPRUS
Paphos
Damascus
Caesarea
PALESTINE
Jerusalem
Alexandria
EGYPT
Memphis
ARABIAN
DESERT
Capernaum
Caesarea
Samaria
SAMARIA
Jerusalem
JUDEA
Gaza



Challenge—What is the Application?

- A compulsive enemy can become a great asset!
- God sees the future and knows the possibilities
- Saul is not promised an easy road
- What can God do today in our hearts?
- What can God do today in our community?

Conclusion – Saul is a Miracle!

- There is no parallel in history to Saul
- Paul is raised by God to reconcile a world to Christ…



"…God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:19



Acts shows God advancing

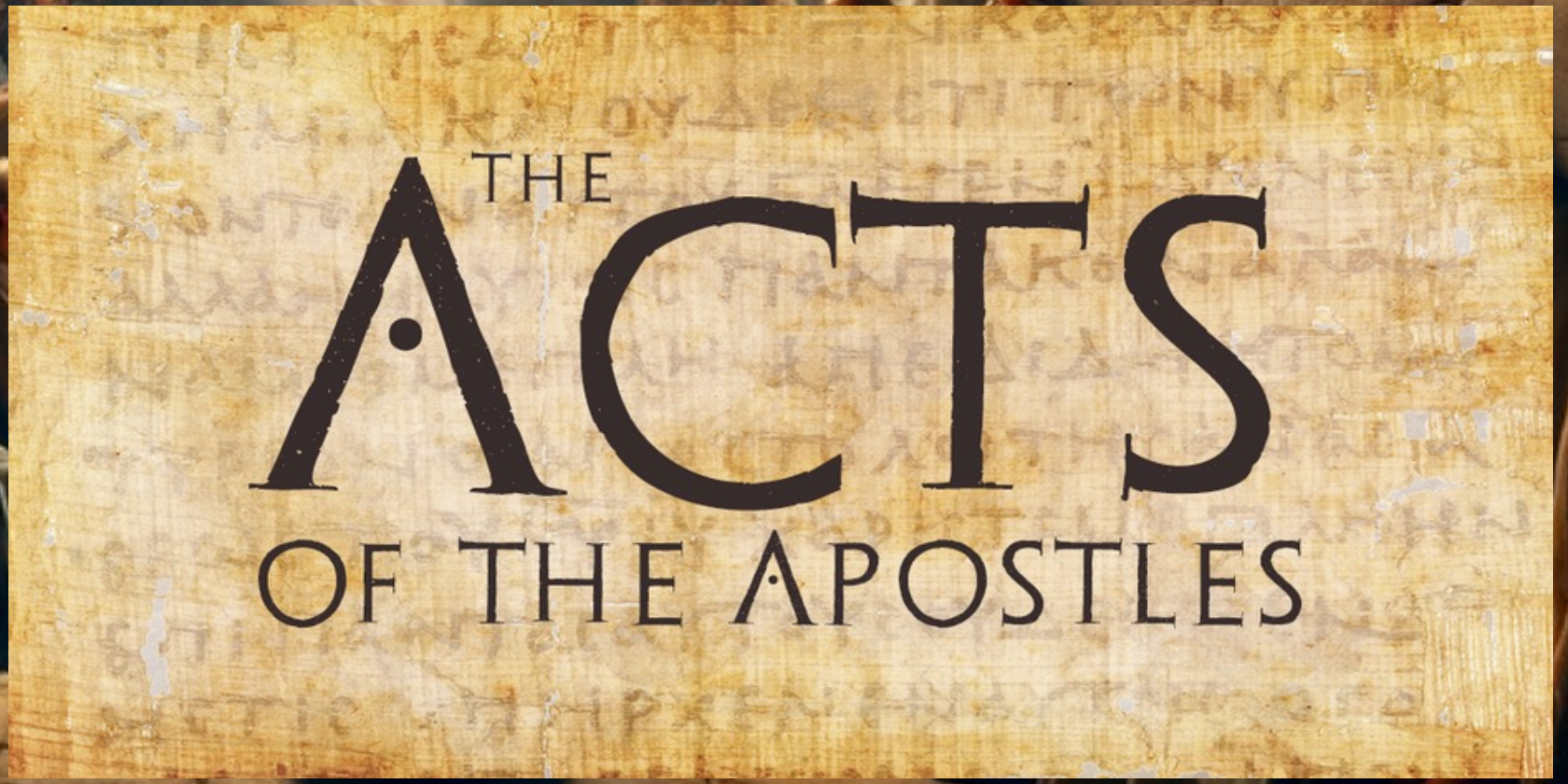
Acts reveals human factors

Acts affirms the Holy Spirit's power

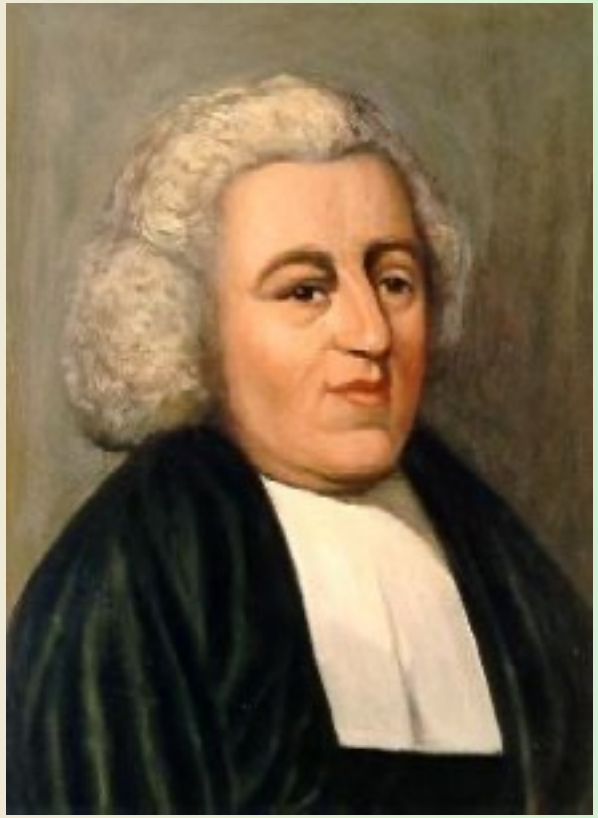
Power…Proclamation…Persecution…

God advances in Acts, and people respond in through peril and persecution. Breakouts spark the progress of the Kingdom





John Newton
1725-1807



...In 1748, during his return voyage to England aboard the ship Greyhound, Newton had a Christian conversion. He awoke to find the ship caught in a severe storm off the coast of County Donegal, Ireland and about to sink. In response, Newton began praying for God's mercy, after which the storm began to die down. After four weeks at sea, the Greyhound made it to port in Lough Swilly. This experience marked the beginning of his conversion to Christianity.

Newton began to read the Bible and other Christian literature. By the time he reached Great Britain, Newton had accepted the doctrines of Christianity. The date was 21 March 1748, an anniversary he marked for the rest of his life. From that point on, Newton avoided profanity, gambling, and drinking. Although he continued to work in the slave trade, Newton had gained sympathy for the slaves during his time in Africa.



Newton later said that his true conversion did not happen until some time later. In 1764, Newton wrote: "I cannot consider myself to have been a believer in the full sense of the word, until a considerable time afterwards."





Some years after, Newton renounced his trade and became a prominent supporter of abolitionism. Now an evangelical, Newton was ordained as a Church of England cleric and served as parish priest at Olney, Buckinghamshire, for two decades and wrote hymns.

In 1788, 34 years after retiring from the slave trade, Newton broke a long silence on the subject with the publication of a forceful pamphlet Thoughts Upon the Slave Trade, in which he described the horrific conditions of the slave ships during the Middle Passage.

Newton apologised for "a confession, which … comes too late … It will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me, that I was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart now shudders." He had copies sent to every MP.

Newton became an ally of William Wilberforce, leader of the Parliamentary campaign to abolish the African slave trade. He lived to see the British passage of the Slave Trade Act 1807, which enacted this event. (*Wikipedia*)



Graphics from Yahoo Images

Scriptures from NIV

Design and content: Ivan Franck
(No AI used in written content)

November 2026

