



The
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

The image features a dark, textured background with stylized, wavy patterns in shades of olive green and brown, resembling flames or smoke. The central text is the title 'The ACTS OF THE APOSTLES'. 'The' is in a light-colored, elegant script font. 'ACTS' is in a large, bold, orange-red sans-serif font, with the 'A' being a stylized flame graphic. 'OF THE APOSTLES' is in a smaller, light-colored, all-caps sans-serif font below 'ACTS'.



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES**

II. The **CONTRAST**

III. The **CHALLENGE**



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES**



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES**

suffering



- 13:50** / ANTIOCH chased out of town by leaders
- 14:6,9** / ICONIUM Jews stir up Gentiles, plot to stone
- 14:19** / LYSTRA Iconium Jews riot and stone Paul
- 15:36** / BARNABUS Paul separates from close friend
- 16:19** / PHILIPPI Seized, flogged, imprisoned
- 17:10** / THESSALONICA Riots, Jason assaulted, sneak out



- 17:14** / BEREA Thessalonican men stir up riot
- 17:32** / ATHENS Taunted as “babbler” by academics
- 18:12** / CORINTH Jews unite, charge Paul in court
- 19:32** / EPHESUS Obstinate crowds riot and shout
- 20:3** / GREECE Jews attempt to kill before sailing
- 21:35** / JERUSALEM Paul is mobbed, beaten at Temple



"To endure the hardship of the cross is not tragedy; it is this suffering which is the fruit of an exclusive allegiance to Jesus Christ."

- **DIETRICH BONHOEFFER**



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES**

sea



13 Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. **14** But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. **15** And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. **16** Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat.



17 After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. **18** Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. **19** And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. **20** When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

ACTS of the APOSTLES | 27:13-44





PSALM 93

the Psalmist personifies Red Sea as a monster defeated by YHWH

DANIEL 7

in a prophecy, world empires are monsters rising from the sea



PSALM 93

the Psalmist personifies Red Sea as a monster defeated by YHWH

DANIEL 7

in a prophecy, world empires are monsters rising from the sea

"Yes, the one true God made the sea just as he had made everything else...but the sea was still seen as a dark force, a power in its own right, from which other dark powers emerged."

- NT WRIGHT



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES** *similarities*



21 Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. **22** Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. **23** For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, **24** and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ **25** So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. **26** But we must run aground on some island.”



27 When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. **28** So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. **29** And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. **30** And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow,



31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.” **32** Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.



LUKE 8 – Jesus Calms the Storm

LUKE 11 – “One Greater than Jonah”



LUKE 8 – Jesus Calms the Storm

LUKE 11 – “One Greater than Jonah”

LUKE 22-24 – Jesus Trial and Crucifixion



LUKE 22-24 – Jesus Trial and Crucifixion

“There are many Christians who have been taught that once they have faith everything ought to flow smoothly. **Acts replies: you have not yet considered what it means to take up the cross.** If the gospel of Jesus the crucified and risen Messiah means anything at all, it means that those who carry the cross will have it branded into their own souls. The storms of life do not mean our journey is futile; they merely mean that Jesus is claiming the world his own, and the powers of the world will do their best to resist.”

- NT WRIGHT



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES** *supplication*



33 As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, “Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing. **34** Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you.” **35** And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.



36 Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves. **37** (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.) **38** And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea. **39** Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore.



The **CIRCUMSTANCES**



PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.



MATTHEW 5:10-11

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



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“Persecution is never the enemy of the church.”

- **ROBERT COLEMAN**



I. The **CIRCUMSTANCES** *shipwreck*



39 Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. 40 So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. 41 But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf. 42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape.



43 But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, **44** and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:25

“three times, I was shipwrecked...”



The **CIRCUMSTANCES**



“Remember, these were Roman soldiers. Killing people is what they did, in cold blood, hot blood, any temperature of blood you care to name. If they didn’t, and if the prisoners got away, it wasn’t just points on their driver’s license; it’s their turn to die.”

- NT WRIGHT



ACTS 27:1,3

They delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named **Julius**...and Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him to his friends to be cared for.



II. The **CONTRAST**



FAITH / FEAR



TO BE LED

An earned or voluntary authority

Rebellion results in mild, proportional consequences

TO BE RULED

A dominating, uncompromising claim

Rebellion results in drastic, existential consequences





...All their fantasies had been realized, yet the reality was still the same. If they were miserable before, they were twice as miserable now, because that giant thing they were striving for, that fame thing that was going to make everything okay, that was going to make their lives bearable, that was going to provide them with personal fulfillment and (ha ha) happiness, had happened. And nothing changed. They were still them. The disillusionment turned them howling and insufferable."

- CYNTHIA HEIMEL, *The Village Voice*



BRYAN STEVENSON





DAVID
BRAINERD



"I could have no freedom in the thought of any other circumstances or business in life. All my desire was the conversion of others, and all my hope was in God. God does not suffer me to please or comfort myself with hopes of seeing friends, returning to my family, and enjoying worldly comforts. I take my rest in his good pleasure."

- **DAVID BRAINERD**



II. The **CONTRAST**

FEAR



1. **FEAR'S** DUALITY

If healthy fear is a thunderstorm, anxiety is a constant, cold drizzle. The first produces green growth, the second mildew.

Fear can be good for us – it gets us out of danger! – but anxiety makes us agitated, nervous and upset. What causes this second, debilitating kind of fear is not a threat to life or safety, **but a threat to our identity.**

- **TIM KELLER**



1. **FEAR'S** DUALITY

EXODUS 10

Moses dreads the thought of humiliating himself in public before Egypt's Pharaoh

PSALM 3

David is terrified not solely by physical danger, but by his soiled reputation as a Father and King

LUKE 22

Peter fearfully disowns his hometown, his closest friends, and the Messiah who changed his life



2. **FEAR'S** INDECENCY

MATTHEW 6

“Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.”

THIS IS A COMMAND



2. **FEAR'S** INDECENCY

Anxiety is a sin, not to be taken lightly or brushed off as common reactions we have to difficult events in a fallen world. We should never accept them as just part of our temperament any more than we would accept any other sin as a part of our habits of character.

- JERRY BRIDGES



2. **FEAR'S** INDECENCY

To be of little faith – and to be anxious about life – means, first of all, that we are mastered by our circumstances instead of mastering them, to be a people governed by life, sitting helplessly under a great cloud of concern about food and drink and clothing....things happen to us, and we are immediately bowled over. That should not happen to the Christian, who can instead rejoice in tribulation.

- **MARTIN LLOYD JONES**



2. **FEAR'S** INDECENCY

MARK 9:23-25

Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, “I believe; help my unbelief!”



3. **FEAR'S** NEGATIVITY

ACTS 21

Paul, on his way back to Jerusalem, is warned over and over again by Christians worried for Paul's safety.



3. **FEAR'S** NEGATIVITY

ACTS 21

Paul, on his way back to Jerusalem, is warned over and over again by Christians worried for Paul's safety.

"Why all this hysteria? Why do you insist on making a scene and making it even harder for me? You're looking at this backward. The issue in Jerusalem is not what they do to me, whether arrest or murder, but what the Master Jesus does through my obedience. Can't you see that?"



3. FEAR'S NEGATIVITY

The screenshot shows the website 'DISCIPLESHIP DEFINED'. The navigation bar includes 'HOME', 'THE DISCIPLESHIP DEFINED BOOK', 'DISCIPLESHIP PRIMER', 'RESOURCES', 'ARTICLES', and 'CONTACT'. The 'Foundations' sidebar lists various topics, with 'The Forsaken Life' highlighted. The main content area is titled 'The Forsaken Life' and includes a quote from Luke 14:33, an introduction, a section on 'The Cost of Being a Christian', and a concluding paragraph.

DISCIPLESHIP DEFINED SEARCH GO

HOME THE DISCIPLESHIP DEFINED BOOK DISCIPLESHIP PRIMER RESOURCES ARTICLES CONTACT

Foundations **The Forsaken Life**

The Gospel
The Meaning of Your Decision to be a Christian
What Defines a Christian Disciple?
Biblical Basis for Discipleship
The Holy Spirit
The Spirit-Filled Life
Renewing Your Mind
Position and Condition
The Forsaken Life
Forgiveness
Prayer
Quiet Times
Fellowship
The Local Church
The Importance of Right Doctrine
Doctrine of Grace
Gray Areas
Eternal Perspective
Raising Our View of God
Tithe
Stewardship of Wealth
Social Concern – Caring for the Poor and Marginalized

The Forsaken Life

[Luke 14:33](#)
In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Introduction
The Forsaken Life – or living in utmost devotion to Christ – is the only legitimate response to the gospel. Unfortunately, modern Western Christianity has almost completely abandoned this concept, as lukewarm commitment to Jesus is the normal mode of operation. It is telling that what is really just biblical Christianity is now called “radical living.”

But for the early church, believing the claims of Christ could not be separated from living the Forsaken Life. The Bible clearly teaches that if a person claims to be a Christian then the assumption is that they have abandoned their life and become a slave to God.¹

- [Luke 14:25-35](#)

The Cost of Being a Christian
Looking at the story in [Luke 14:25-35](#), we see Jesus engage in a severe sifting process. There were large crowds in attendance to hear Jesus teach, and He tells them what it means for people to follow Him: count the cost, love me more than your family, carry your cross, give up everything. The imagery of “carrying your cross” alone indicates to the crowd that following Jesus means you are to be a dead man walking.

Jesus’ mandate of utmost self-denial goes against the mantra of the world where a person’s own life is to be their primary focus. To enter into Christ’s allegiance, you must die to your current way of life. Because of the significance of these qualifications, Jesus does not want the decision to be hasty. He wants all professing Christians to count the cost. The importance of counting the cost is so important that Jesus uses twin parables in [Luke 14:28-32](#) to drive home His point. Jesus wants all of you. He wants to claim *all* your possessions and desires. In the passage, Jesus is clear about the price. Three times between vv. 26-33 Jesus gives the refrain, “...cannot be my disciple.”

The Forsaken Life is the demand. Jesus is asking, “Are you willing to give me your life?” The cost is clear. The requirement is clear. These words condemn half-heartedness; lukewarm devotion has no place in Christianity.

Jesus concludes this passage with an analogy to salt. Salt is valuable when it has the quality of saltiness. In the same way followers of Christ possess particular character natural to true disciple (absolute unselfishness, and self-sacrificing loyalty to Him). If a professing Christian is not willing to display these



II. The **CONTRAST**

FAITH



1. **FAITH's** REASON

HEBREWS 11

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of that which we do not see.

And without faith, it is impossible to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists...

But faith isn't just **COMPATIBLE** with thinking...
faith actually **REQUIRES** and **STIMULATES** deep thinking



1. FAITH'S REASON

“A faith without some doubts is like a human body with no antibodies in it. People who go through life too busy or indifferent to ask the hard questions about why they believe as they do will find themselves defenseless against either the experience of tragedy or the probing questions of a skeptic. A person's faith can collapse almost overnight if she failed over the years to listen patiently to her own doubts, which should only be discarded after long reflection.”

- TIM KELLER



2. FAITH's OBJECT

HEBREWS 11

³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, **were made strong out of weakness**, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. ³⁶ Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

The **CONTRAST**



2. FAITH'S OBJECT

LUKE 8

²³ and as they sailed he fell asleep. And a windstorm came down on the lake, and they were filling with water and were in danger. ²⁴ And they went and woke him, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm. ²⁵ He said to them, “Where is your faith?”



2. FAITH'S OBJECT



The **CONTRAST**



2. FAITH's GIFT

HEBREWS 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith...



3. FAITH'S GIFT

When through the deep waters I call you to go
The rivers of woe shall not overflow
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless
And sanctify to you your deepest distress

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake
I'll never, no never, no never forsake

“How Firm a Foundation”



RULED BY **FEAR**

RULED BY **FAITH**



The **CONTRAST**



RULED BY **FEAR**

Chained to the present

Paralyzes

Breaks down our will

Ignores injustice

Abandons other's needs

Overcome by circumstance

RULED BY **FAITH**

Freed by the past and future

Invigorates

Cultivates lasting perseverance

Confronts injustice

Embraces other's needs

Overcomes any circumstance



TO BE RULED BY **FEAR** IS TO LACK **FAITH**



2. **FEAR'S** INDECENCY

It is God himself who gives us life, and the body in which we live it; and if he has done that we can draw this deduction: that his purpose with respect to us will be fulfilled. God never leaves unfinished any work he has begun; whatever he starts, whatever he has purposed, he will most surely fulfill.

- **MARTIN LLOYD JONES**



EXODUS 10

Moses confronts the world's most powerful empire and frees the Hebrews from centuries of slavery

PSALM 3

David reunites his Kingdom and goes on to write Psalm 23 – “even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.”

LUKE 22

Peter courageously affirms the testimony of Jesus and tells the Gospel story to the Jewish Sanhedrin



III. The **CHALLENGE**



1. recognize
the **INFLUENCE**
of fear

ACTS of the APOSTLES | 9:31-43



CONCLUSION

ACTS of the APOSTLES | 9:31-43



CONCLUSION



2. remember
the **FAITHFULNESS**
of God

ACTS of the APOSTLES | 9:31-43



CONCLUSION



3. return
to **CONFRONT**
your fears



God has not been trying an experiment on my faith or love in order to find out their quality. He knew it already. It was I who didn't. In this trial He makes us occupy the dock, the witness box, and the bench all at once. He always knew that my temple was a house of cards. **His only way of making me realize the fact was to knock it down.**

- CS LEWIS



Wholeheartedness does not equal perfection...we see this in the lives of Jesus disciples, who had given everything up to follow Jesus but still stumbled from time to time. The difference between an unbeliever and a believer, or a traitor and a subject of a King, is not the presence of sin. **Rather, it is a joyful willingness of the true believer, when confronted with a previously unknown idol, to humbly repent, eagerly throw off that distraction, and fix his gaze on Jesus."**

- NATE EGGER



LUKE 13:18-19

¹⁸ He said therefore, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.”



MATTHEW 13:44

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Do you BELIEVE this?



The
ACTS
OF THE APOSTLES

The image features a central graphic of a flame in shades of orange and red. The word "The" is written in a white, cursive font above the flame. The word "ACTS" is written in large, bold, orange block letters, with the flame graphic integrated into the letter "A". Below "ACTS", the words "OF THE APOSTLES" are written in a smaller, white, serif font. The background is a dark, textured brown with stylized, wavy patterns in a lighter brown color, suggesting a landscape or a stylized background.