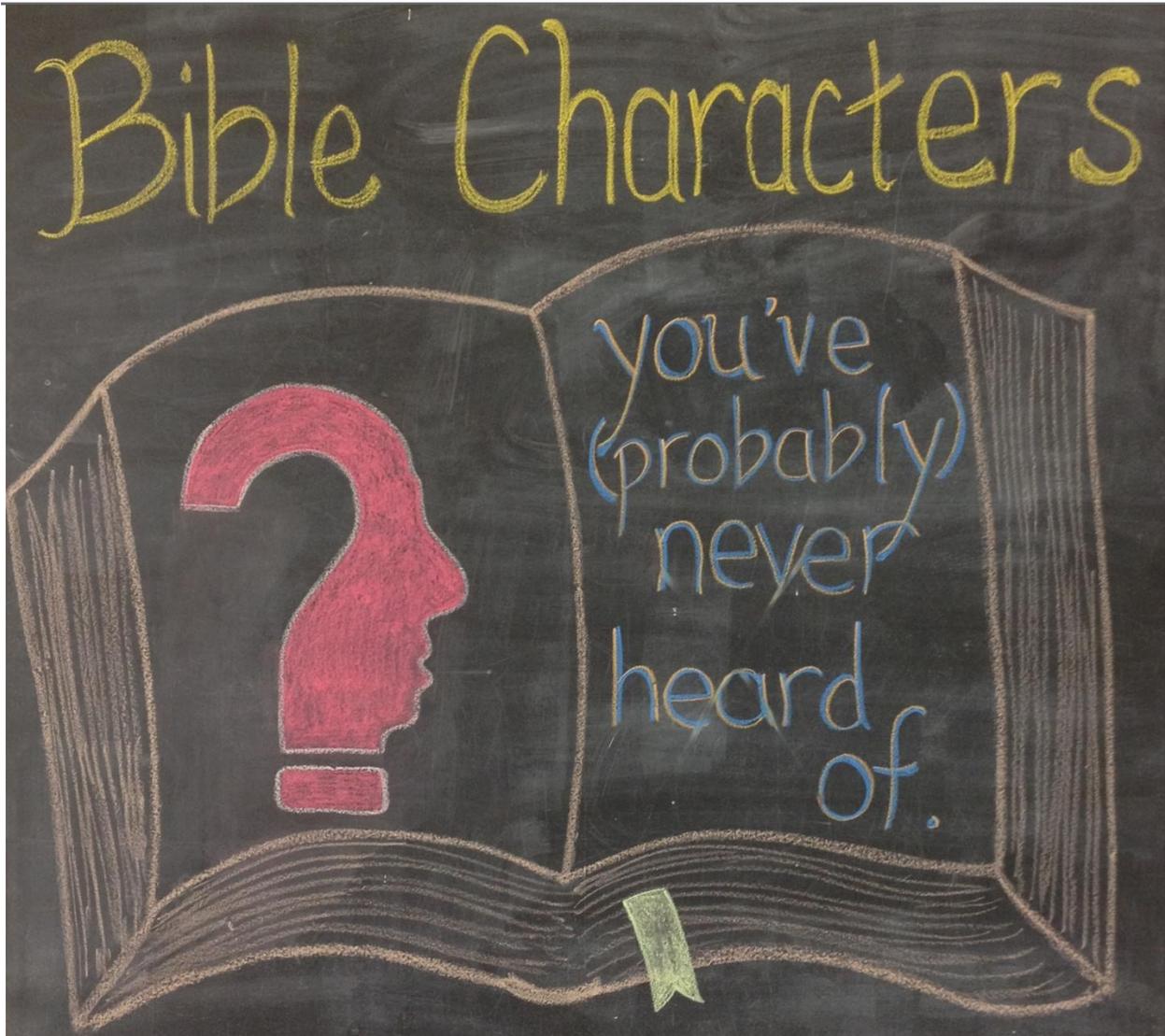


Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of



The artwork above greeted me immediately before teaching the first lesson on April 7, 2013. One of my class members drew it—a great way to encourage her teacher!

This document contains the teacher notes for 5 Sunday school lessons on Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of. There is a [complementary document](#) containing student handouts to be distributed to listeners to aid in retention while teaching this material.

Many thanks to David Barber for teaching lessons in this series and for insuring good audio quality throughout. Is is one of my [Philippians 1:3](#), an Aaron and a Hur ([Exodus 17:12](#)), and our Sunday school class is exceedingly blessed to share in his wisdom.

We claim no infallibility relative to the material presented here. It is, as many have said before, beggars showing other beggars where to find bread.

These teachings are provided free in the spirit of **Matthew 10:8b**.

As errors are found, please let me know so I can correct. The theology expressed here should not be construed as representing the theology of Stuart Heights Baptist Church (especially when I am wrong or when I am being an idiot).

The formatting is as follows:

- **bold green text are quotes from commentators** (several different commentaries are used throughout)
- **bold red text is the Scripture** (NKJV is used unless otherwise noted. Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.)
- **bold blue text are Bible references**
- **bold purple text are questions to consider asking while teaching this material**
- **highlighted, bold, and underlined text in the teacher notes are answers to blanks in the student handouts**
- plain black text are the teachers' comments

The file formats available online are only the PDFs, but if the native Microsoft Word files are needed, I am more than happy to email them. I can be reached at jim314@yahoo.com.

The audio recordings of all five of the teachings themselves are available via our class podcast. Again, many thanks to David Barber for his faithfulness in this area.

I hope these resources assist in a better understanding of the 'minor' Bible characters and how we as New Testament believers see where we fit in to the larger story of redemption. Again, feel free to contact me with questions or feedback.

Grace and peace,

Jim Fleming
Hixson, Tennessee
September 2013

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

Acts 9:36-42: Dorcas (A Life of Service)

Tertullian: Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus.
We do not talk great things, but we live them.

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Acts 9:36-42 (Author = Luke)

Dorcas Restored to Life

36 At Joppa [beautiful; a port city in Israel on the Mediterranean—the only natural harbor on Israel's coast; Jaffa is to Tel Aviv as Hixson is to Chattanooga (next door neighbors)] **there was a certain disciple named Tabitha** [gazelle in Syriac (close to Hebrew)], **which is translated Dorcas** [gazelle in Greek; **Clark: It is not unusual in the East to give the names of beautiful animals to young women**]. **This woman was full** [replete, covered over, full, filled up, lacking nothing in the area of] **of good works** [business, activity, works] **and charitable deeds** [mercy, pity, giving alms, donations to the poor, compassionateness, beneficence, benefaction] **which she did** [these three words are important because these words distinguish Dorcas from many others—**Guzik: Some people are . . . only full of them in their minds and hearts. They don't actually do them. 1 Timothy 2:9-10: in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.** Dorcas **wore** her faith. Ladies, please understand that while you are bombarded with messages about your external appearance on a daily basis, God is supremely more concerned with you wearing your faith and doing good works. Men, did you notice who was not mentioned? Dorcas' husband was not mentioned. She may have been a widow, but her husband may not have been worth mentioning. Encourage your wife to wear her faith.]. **37 But it happened in those days that she became sick** [weak, feeble, without strength, powerless, impotent] **and died** [This flies in the face of all prosperity theologies. Righteous living does **not** guarantee a life free of pain, suffering, poverty, or sickness. Be exceedingly cautious of anyone that espouses such theology.]. **When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room** [the highest part of the house]. **38 And since Lydda** [strife/travail—a town approximately ten miles away] **was near Joppa, and the disciples** [in Joppa] **had heard that Peter was there** [in Lydda], **they sent two men to him, imploring** [calling, summoning, exhorting, entreating, admonishing, encouraging, instructing, inviting, invoking, beseeching] **him not to delay** [hesitate, be slow, delay] **in coming to them** [in Joppa; **Why?** Jim's opinion: The disciples in Joppa wanted Peter to raise Dorcas from the dead. This had never happened before in **Acts**, but these disciples had great faith. **Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible: The disciples generally did not possess miraculous gifts.**]. **39 Then Peter arose and went with**

them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping [sobbing, wailing aloud, mourning, lamenting (there is a different Greek word for quietly crying—this was loud)], **showing exhibiting**, showing] **the tunics** [undergarments, shirts—worn next to the body] **and garments** [cloaks, mantles, robes—the outer or upper garments] **which Dorcas had made while she was with them.** [Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: It was a heart-breaking scene. I can see these widows crying—it hurts to lose a friend. When you die, will there be people looking around going, "What are we going to do now?" _____ is gone!] **40 But Peter put** [cast, ejected (the word has a sense of violence to it); Peter had heard that Elijah did this when he was alone in the room with the Shunammite's son when he raised him from the dead in **2 Kings 4** and Peter saw Jesus do this in **Luke 8** with Jairus' daughter] **them all out** [literally, on the other side of the doors], **and knelt down** [Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible: *The kneeling became the lowly servant, but not the Lord Himself, of whom it is never once recorded that he knelt in the performance of a miracle.*] **and prayed** [Peter knew that he was not the only one in that room.]. **And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise** [stand up]." [Peter had moved from fear at the **cross** to faith at the **corpse**. That is a journey that all of us have to take in our Christian lives—from fear to faith. Peter was convinced that Jesus had triumphed over death and that life triumphs over death.] **And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up** [We have no evidence that Dorcas and Peter had ever met before, so she may not have known who he was. Her last conscious thought may have been focusing on struggled breathing, but now she was healed, whole, and alive!]. **41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up** [raised her up, stood her up—just as Jesus did to Peter's own mother-in-law in **Mark 1**]; **and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented** [stood beside and **exhibited**] **her alive** [Many times we can feel as though our output is what brings glory to God. The reality is that our lives bring glory to God. **Ephesians 2:10: For we are His workmanship** [masterpiece], **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.**]. **42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord** [Dorcas was faithful, Peter was faithful, and God was faithful. He will always do what He is supposed to do.].

Look at your hands. **What have your hands created? Who have your hands served? What do your hands do?** Dorcas was identified by what her hands did. She lived a life of service. Her Christianity affected her—it made a difference in her own life and in the lives of others. **Are Jim's hands making a difference?**

Maybe your acts of service are not done with your hands. Maybe your acts of service are done with your mouth (speaking encouragement or praying), with your ears (listening for opportunities), or with your presence (the ministry of presence). Whatever you use to complete your acts of service, please be active.

This account tells the tale of a **productive** disciple. This account is a picture of what will happen to all productive disciples one day—we will be raised to life to be with those that love us (our brothers and sisters in Christ).

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. **Doing** is important
2. People love people who love tangibly (i.e., faith works, faith works hard, and faith works hard right now)
3. Health ≠ spirituality
4. There is a time for public mourning
5. There is a time for private prayer
6. Don't reinvent the **wheel**
7. There is a time for public rejoicing
8. Jesus still raises from the **dead**
9. Jesus fixes things completely (he was trained to be a carpenter—what does a carpenter do but take one thing and make it into something new?)
10. A good-work-filled **life** brings God glory

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Get busy working
2. Love the body of Christ in visible ways
3. Be **faithful** (Jesus has my health)
4. Mourn with those that mourn
5. Don't ignore personal time with God
6. Copy the examples in the Bible
7. Celebrate the good with the body
8. Tell others about Christ
9. Know that Jesus will fix it **all** one day by making all things new
10. Be an exhibit of God's love, mercy, and grace (and get busy working)

Homework: Read 2 Samuel 6:1-7 (Uzzah)

1 Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. **2** And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. **3** So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. **4** And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. **5** Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. **7** Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God.

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

2 Samuel 6:1-7: Uzzah (A Life of Shock)

Pragmatism and Stanley Kirk Burrell

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): 2 Samuel 6:1-7 (Author = Samuel)

Pragmatism is a practical approach to problems and affairs (read: how most of us live). However, the Scripture should be a Christian's guide for any/all decisions.

What did the ark of the covenant hold? (hint: covenant; the second version of the ten commandments, Aaron's rod that budded, and a small pot of manna)

What did the ark of the covenant symbolize? God's presence on the earth. At the ark in the holy of holies is where God met the high priest of Israel on Yom Kippur every year. The holiest man said the holiest word on the holiest day in the holiest place.

Background: [Exodus 25:10-15](#); [Numbers 4:1-6, 15](#); [7:1-9](#) and J. Vernon McGee

If the ark of the covenant had theme music, what would it be? U Can't Touch This

The ark is not where it was supposed to be. It had been stolen. This is a rescue mission.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

1 Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim [the cherubim are the heavenly creatures on top of the ark]. **3 So they set the ark of God on a new** [new, new thing, fresh] **cart** [cart, wagon, chariot, wheeled vehicle; it is **never** right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right], **and brought it out of the house of Abinadab** [my father is noble/willing—of the tribe of Judah], **which was on the hill; and Uzzah** [eww-ZSA; strength] **and Ahio** [akh-YO; brotherly, fraternal], **the sons of Abinadab, drove** [led, proceeded with, drove, guided] **the new cart** [**Why did Abinadab not drive the ark?** He was probably dead. Perhaps the older son that was charged with care of the ark had also died (see [1 Samuel 7:1](#)). Perhaps oversight of the ark had fallen to Uzzah and Ahio.]. **4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went** [walked] **before the ark. 5 Then David and all the house of Israel played** [laughed, rejoiced, played] **music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir** [cypress, fir, juniper, pine] **wood, on harps** [lyre, harp], **on stringed instruments** [harp, lute, guitar], **on tambourines, on sistrums** [cornet, rattling instrument], **and on cymbals.**

Guzik: The last we saw of the ark of God was when it came back from the land of the Philistines in 1 Samuel 7:1. It sat at the house of Abinadab for some 70 years. David had a great motive—to emphasize the presence and glory of God in Israel.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor [open, flat, barn-like area; **Guzik:** At a threshing floor the whole stalks of wheat are gathered and the *chaff* is separated from the wheat. There was a lot of *chaff* in this production, and God will blow away the chaff at Nachon's threshing floor.], **Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold** [seized, caught, took hold] **of it, for the oxen stumbled** [flung down, jostled, released, shook, stumbled; this was an extremely pragmatic decision that cost Uzzah his **life**]; **Guzik:** Uzzah made a decision in a moment to disregard God's command and do what seemed right to him. Even our decisions made in a moment matter before God. **John Gill:** What may be done may be done with a good intention, as this was, yet that will not excuse the sin. **7 Then the anger** [**nose**, nostril (place of long suffering)] **of the LORD was aroused** [grew hot, flamed, burned, increased] **against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error** [error, fault (the only time this word is used in the Old Testament)]; **and he died there by the ark of God.**

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. **Context** is critical to properly understanding the Bible
2. It is **never** right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right (i.e., the ends do not justify the means)
3. **Coffman: None of God's commandments are trivial; and none of them may be violated with impunity. It would be difficult to imagine any smaller "sin" than that of Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden tree, but from that one little sin, all of the sorrows, wretchedness, bloodshed and misery of all mankind for millenniums of time was the result.**
4. Leaders have a responsibility to get leadership right
5. Laity have a responsibility to check that the leaders are getting it right
6. God seemingly allows a certain amount of disobedience
7. A big **production** does not guarantee God's blessing
8. God will one day separate those that follow Him from those that do not follow Him
9. There are things that make God **angry**

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Always start with the background
2. Seek righteousness
3. Know and obey all God's commands (we are on the hook for all of them)
4. **Pray** for our leaders (nation, state, county, city, schools, church, etc.)
5. Study the Word and double-**check** the leaders
6. Pursue holiness (**How close can I get to God?**)
7. Obey as explicitly as God has described (and always look for the **heart** obedience—this, many times, will keep the obedience from becoming a checklist)
8. Follow Him
9. Know Him

Next week, the rest of the story . . . and another Bible Character You've (Probably) Never Heard Of.

Homework: Read 2 Samuel 6:8-23 (Michal)

8 And David became angry because of the LORD's outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah to this day.

9 David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" 10 So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the City of

David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. **11** The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his household.

12 Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that *belongs* to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. **13** And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep. **14** Then David danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. **15** So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. **17** So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. **18** And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. **19** Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of *meat*, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

21 So David said to Michal, "*It was* before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play *music* before the LORD. **22** And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor."

23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

2 Samuel 6:8-23: Michal (A Life of Sarcasm)

Stanley Kirk Burrell and bitterness

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): 2 Samuel 6:8-23 (Author = Samuel)

Review of last week: the **directions** were not followed and Uzzah died. **Guzik: Much service for the LORD is like this—a new cart, a big production, with strength leading and friendly out front—yet all done without inquiring of God or looking to His will.**

Background on Michal (pronounced me-call and the youngest daughter of Saul)

1 Samuel 18:17-30 Loves David and is given to David as a reward for killing **Goliath**

1 Samuel 19:11-17 Rescues David from Saul by lowering him down through a window and does not see David again for several years

1 Samuel 25:44 Given in marriage by Saul to another man (after David marries others; Solomon learned about marriage from David x 10+)

2 Samuel 3:13-16 David sees her/gets her back years later

Summary: Michal was **wronged** by her father and her husband

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

8 And David became angry [grew hot, flamed, burned, increased] **because of the LORD's outbreak** [breach, break, outbreak, bursting forth, gap] **against Uzzah** [**John Wesley: Men are improper judges of the actions of God**]; **and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah** [break of Uzzah, breach of Uzzah] **to this day** [confusion and **anger** result in not following God's plans].

9 David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" [David was wise to stop and question; he just wanted to bring the ark to Jerusalem. **1 Chronicles 15** is a parallel passage and describes David telling the Levites to do their jobs correctly.] **10 So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the City of David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite** [David was responsible for it being moved]. **11 The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite** [Obed-Edom was a Levite of the house of Kohath, strongly implying that David did, in fact, find the answer to his question—**1 Chronicles 15** tells more about this account and describes David telling the Levites to do their jobs right]] **three months. And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his household.**

12 Now it was told King David, saying, “The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.” [David may have interpreted this as God's blessing to move the ark the right way] **So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David** [at least 10 miles] **with gladness.** **13** And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, **that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep** [this would have left a trail of blood for miles and it would have taken a considerable amount of time and money]. **14** Then David **danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod** [1 **Chronicles 15**: this is what all the **Levites** were wearing—it was not immodest, but simply abnormal for a king]. **15** **So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.**

16 Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter [she is not described as David's wife, but rather as Saul's daughter], **looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart** [this is sad, but understandable]. **17** **So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.** **18** And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. **19** Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. **So all the people departed, everyone to his house** [everyone but Michal had a great day; bitterness can ruin the best of days; **Have you ever been so angry/bitter about something that you missed a great day?**].

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, “How glorious was the king of Israel today [this is sarcasm at its worst], **uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!**” [Guzik: With biting sarcasm, Michal's criticism could have ruined this whole day for David. He might have expected such an attack after such a remarkable day of victory. Spurgeon: Pirates look out for **loaded vessels**. The devil will attack on good days—Windows 7. Spurgeon: **Brother, if any man thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him; for you are worse than he thinks you to be.**]

21 So David said to Michal, “*It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD.* **22** **And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor.**”

23 **Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death** [which is to say, he never slept with her again and they had no real marriage; Guzik: **There is often barrenness in the life and ministry of the overly critical**].

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. **Context** is critical to properly understanding the Bible
2. Assuming knowledge of God is dangerous
3. Confusion and anger result in not following God's plan
4. Worship is for the Lord
5. God's plan for **marriage** is best (faithfulness)
6. Bitterness can ruin the best of days
7. Hateful sarcasm never helps (**Proverbs 18:21a: Death and life are in the power of the tongue**)

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Always start with the background
2. Constantly review (and lead others in reviewing) what the directions are for life
3. Know God's directions
4. Worship in ways that honors the Lord, not in ways that bow down to men
5. Follow God's plan for marriage (1+1=**1**)
6. **Confess** the bitterness
7. Hold my tongue

Homework: Read Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:1-11 (Malchus)

Matthew 26:47-56: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him." 49 Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. 51 And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"

55 In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you

did not seize Me. 56 But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.”

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Mark 14:43-50: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

43 And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely.”

45 As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, “Rabbi, Rabbi!” and kissed Him.

46 Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. 47 And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

50 Then they all forsook Him and fled.

Luke 22:47-53: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. 48 But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

49 When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

51 But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? 53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

John 18:1-11: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. 2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. 3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests

and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. **4** Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

5 They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. **6** Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," **9** that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:1-11: Malchus (A Life of Separation)

Fleshing out the gospel

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Matthew 26:47-56, Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:47-53, John 18:1-11 (Authors = Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John)

Today we look at a beautiful picture of forgiveness, patience, healing, restoration, mercy, and grace.

Matthew 26:47-56: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders [the spiritual and political leadership] of the people.

48 Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss [*phileo*], He is the One; seize Him." 49 Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. [Guzik: Apparently, Jesus was **normal enough in appearance so that it was necessary that Judas specifically identify Him for the sake of those arresting Jesus]**

50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. 51 And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. [Do head wounds bleed much? Would blood have gotten on Malchus' clothes?]

52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword [Peter put his faith in his **sword instead of Jesus. **Godshall: You live and die by the object of your faith.**]. 53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions [the exact value varied over time, but this would have been at minimum tens of thousands] of angels? 54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"**

55 In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. 56 But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." [I love that Jesus preached to them even to the end]

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Mark 14:43-50: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

43 And immediately, while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and the scribes [the scribes are added in this gospel—they were the educated] **and the elders. 44 Now His betrayer** [Judas] **had given them a signal, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely** [‘securely’ is a better translation].”

45 As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, “Rabbi, Rabbi!” and kissed Him.

46 Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him. 47 And one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”

50 Then they all forsook Him and fled.

Luke 22:47-53: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

47 And while He was still speaking, behold, a multitude; and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. 48 But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

49 When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear [Malchus was injured because Malchus was probably out front and was probably laying hands on Jesus.].

51 But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched [fastened, adhered, clung to, attached] **his ear and healed him** [Luke is the doctor and he is the only one of the gospel writers that gives us the details on the medical aspects of this event. **Godshall: Jesus showed Malchus what mercy looked like.** Jesus healed an **enemy** in the midst of a battle. **What kind of man was this?** He is still healing enemies.].

Guzik: With his sword, Peter accomplished very little. He only cut off one ear, and really just made a mess that Jesus had to clean up by healing the severed ear (Luke 22:51). When Peter moved in the power of the world, he only cut off ears. But when he was filled with the Spirit, using the Word of God, Peter pierced hearts for God’s glory (Acts 2:37).

Barclay: Had Jesus not healed Malchus, Peter would have been arrested as well; and there might have been **four crosses at Calvary.**

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him [they put their servant out front, but they were there too—**everyone** eventually comes face-to-face with Jesus], **“Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs? 53 When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour** [As contrasted with Jesus' hour; In the book of **John**, John leads the reader through a series of, 'not yet,' moments related to Jesus' hour. In **John 17**, Jesus tells the Father that, “The hour has come.”], **and the power of darkness.”**

Guzik: The light will shine the brightest in the midst of this darkness.

John 18:1-11: Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron [turbid, dark—the implication is that this brook was muddy and not clear—a proper reaction to enemy advancement should have been crystal clear to the disciples, but it was muddy to them (especially to Peter); **Guzik: He crossed the Brook Kidron, and saw in the full moon of Passover the stream flowing red with sacrificial blood from the temple.**], **where there was a garden** [the first Adam **failed** in the garden, but the second Adam (Jesus) passed the test with flying colors in this garden because Jesus is the true and better Adam], **which He and His disciples entered** [Jesus does not promise us a life of ease, but He does promise us a life **with** Him]. **2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. 3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops** [literally, a cohort: **Lane: In addition to the Temple police, who were Levites, the Sanhedrin had at its disposal auxiliary police or servants of the court who were assigned the task of maintaining public order beyond the Temple precincts. They were authorized to make arrests, lead accused persons to the court, guard prisoners, and carry out sentences imposed by the court. The arresting army in Gethsemane must have consisted of armed court attendants of this kind.**], **and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees** [Jesus had many enemies], **came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?”** [Even at the end, He gives an opportunity]

5 They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them [We either stand with Jesus or we stand with His enemies. There is **no** middle ground.]. **6 Now when He said to them, “I am He** [The **“He”** is in italics meaning it has been added for clarity's sake—Jesus simply said, **“I am.”**], **” they drew back and fell to the ground.** [The military strength of Rome, the religious strength of Judaism, the educational strength of the scribes, and the political strength of the people all fell down at the Name of Names—the Great I AM!]

Guzik: Jesus often shows His majesty in ways that speak of humility and weakness. Jesus was born as a humble baby, yet heralded by angels. He was laid in a manger, yet announced by a star. He submitted to baptism, then heard the Divine voice of approval. He slept when He was exhausted, but awoke to calm the storm. Jesus wept at a grave, then called the dead to life. He submits to arresting troops, then declares His majesty and knocks them over. Jesus died on a cross, but in it He overcame sin and death and Satan.

7 Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” [Jesus had a habit of asking the same question again. I have found that many times He will stand at the door of my heart, knock, and ask the same question repeatedly.]

And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

8 Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way [Guzik: **Take Me, let these go is the same sacrificial love that takes Jesus to the cross for us all. In bearing our judgment for sin, He said the same thing to the Father’s justice.** Great leaders lay down their lives for their followers.],” **9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”**

Guzik: Jesus was not “arrested” at all; He willingly gave Himself up so He could protect His disciples. After all, He could have just kept saying I AM and walked way!

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. [You would strike who was closest, so Malchus may have been out front]

11 So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?” [I sit and pass on so many cups that my Father has passed to me and yet Jesus is the perfect example of accepting God’s will for His life.]

Adam Godshall: The Gospel According to Malchus

One: The Gospel is a plan of God. [These things must be fulfilled]

Two: The Gospel is a call to faith. [Peter, put your sword in its sheath and trust Jesus]

Three: The Gospel is an act of mercy. [Malchus was an enemy and Jesus was merciful]

Four: The Gospel is a power to heal. [Jesus restored Malchus’ ear]

Godshall: Did Malchus resign his post? Did Malchus watch the trials and think, “No, you’ve got it wrong. This guy is about mercy.” Did Malchus follow Him to the cross? We don’t know. . . . What did Malchus think of Jesus? . . . There is a Malchus in all of us. . . . We were Malchus, we were the mob and by His mercy, Jesus saved us!

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. Jesus was not popular
2. It is easy to put faith in something other than Jesus
3. Jesus never quit
4. Our rash actions hurt others
5. Jesus healed His enemies
6. Everyone eventually comes face to face with Jesus
7. God's name is powerful
8. I am the mob and I am **Malchus**

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Don't **worry** about Jesus' popularity
2. Regularly put faith in Jesus
3. Stay focused on Jesus
4. **Slow** down
5. **Arrrggggghhhh** (and do not attack)
6. Be ready
7. Trust His name and not **mine**
8. Let Jesus heal me

Homework: Read Acts 12:1-19 (Rhoda)**Herod's Violence to the Church**

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out *his* hand to harass some from the church. **2** Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. **3** And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was *during* the Days of Unleavened Bread. **4** So when he had arrested him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

Peter Freed from Prison

5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off *his* hands. **8** Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." **9** So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. **10** When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and *from* all the expectation of the Jewish people."

12 So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. **13** And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda came to answer. **14** When she recognized Peter's voice, because of *her* gladness she did not open the gate, but ran in and announced that Peter stood before the gate. **15** But they said to her, "You are beside yourself!" Yet she kept insisting that it was so. So they said, "It is his angel."

16 Now Peter continued knocking; and when they opened *the door* and saw him, they were astonished. **17** But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

18 Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. **19** But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that *they* should be put to death.

And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed *there*.

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

Acts 12:1-19: Rhoda (A Life of Shock)

Knock, knock. Who's there?

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Acts 12:1-19 (Author = Luke)

Herod's Violence to the Church

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass [oppress, afflict, harm, mistreat, embitter, injure, exasperate, hurt, vex] some from the church. **2** Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. **3** And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. **4** So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads [16 total] of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover [yet another politician with plans for God's man around Easter].

Peter Freed from Prison

5 Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant [fervent, continuous, assiduous] prayer was offered to God for him by the church. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him out, that night Peter was sleeping, bound with two chains between two soldiers; and the guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** Now behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, "Arise quickly!" And his chains fell off his hands. **8** Then the angel said to him, "Gird yourself and tie on your sandals"; and so he did. And he said to him, "Put on your garment and follow me." **9** So he went out and followed him, and did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. **10** When they were past the first and the second guard posts, they came to the iron gate that leads to the city, which opened to them of its own accord; and they went out and went down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter had come to himself, he said, "Now I know for certain that the Lord has sent His angel, and has delivered me from the hand of Herod and from all the expectation of the Jewish people."

12 So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary [cbcmidway.org: In Jerusalem, houses were set side by side with their outside walls facing the street. The doors in these walls were kept closed, ensuring the family's privacy and safety. The door had no windows or peepholes. Instead the doorkeeper was expected to recognize the voice of family friends and open the door only for friends.], **the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying** [This implies that Mary was **rich**. The odds were that Peter was not coming back. This would have been an intense prayer meeting.]. **13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a girl named Rhoda** [**rose**—a Gentile name] **came** [she was **working**] **to answer** [she was **prompt**]. **14 When she recognized Peter's voice** [she was **knowledgeable**], **because of her gladness** [she was **happy** (this is most likely the strongest indicator that she was a believer); **Have you ever been delighted in an answered prayer?**] **she did not open the gate** [she was **shocked**/stunned; **Have you ever forgotten to do your job in a moment of shock? Have you ever known something to be true and no one believed you?**], **but ran in** [she was **motivated**] **and announced that Peter stood before the gate** [she was **vocal** about the truth]. **15 But they said to her, "You are beside yourself** [maniacal, raving mad]!" **Yet she kept insisting** [constantly affirming and insisting—the only other time this word is used in the New Testament is in **Luke 22:59**—it is also used to describe someone referring to Peter—but in **Luke** it was referring to Peter's denial that he knew Jesus] **that it was so** [she was persistently **truthful**]. **So they said, "It is his angel."** [Herbert Lockyer: It was a common Jewish belief that every true Israelite had a guardian angel especially assigned to him, who, when he appeared in human form, assumed the likeness of the man whom he protected.]

Ruth Perrin: I think we need to repent and ask God to make us grateful, joyful, spontaneous people who celebrate life, who forget what others might think and tell them how God has answered our prayers and is on our side. I think enthusiasm and joy would draw people to Jesus a lot more effectively than reticence, cynicism and defeatism.

16 Now Peter continued knocking; and when they [not Rhoda] **opened the door and saw him, they were astonished** [probably everyone but Rhoda; **When has God answered a prayer you really didn't expect him to? What was your response?** msdora.hubpages.com: Prayer is preparation for God to include **us**]. **17 But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.**

18 Then, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers about what had become of Peter. 19 But when Herod had searched for him and not found him, he examined the guards and commanded that they should be put to death [16 men].

And he [Peter] **went down from Judea to Caesarea, and stayed there.**

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. "**Little**" things matter
2. Good news must be shared
3. Pausing the "spiritual" to do the "practical" is sometimes necessary
4. "Service" takes many shapes
5. Jesus knows who is serving Him
6. Everybody makes mistakes
7. Everybody has a part to play
8. Everybody is valuable in the kingdom

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Be faithful in the "little" things
2. Persist in sharing good news
3. Don't be so heavenly minded that I'm no **earthly** good
4. Never look down on another's **service**
5. Serve Him with gladness
6. Focus on the important things, not my mistakes
7. Be **faithful**
8. Know my value in the kingdom

Homework: Read Acts 21:15-16 (Mnason)**Paul Urged to Make Peace**

15 And after those days we packed and went up to Jerusalem. 16 Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge.

Bible Characters You've (Probably) Never Heard Of

Acts 21:15-16: Mnason (A Life of Significance)

Tom Bodett and me

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Acts 21:15-16 (Author = Luke)

Context of Acts 21

1-3: Travel (Cos → Rhodes → Patara → Phoenicia—passed Cyprus → Syria → Tyre)

4: Disciples in Tyre (stayed there seven days, encouraged Paul not to go to Jerusalem)

5-6: Sendoff (whole families went out to see them off—possibly because they thought they would never see him again)

7-11: Travel (Tyre → Ptolemais (brothers and sisters for a day) → Caesarea (Phillip the evangelist) → Agabus' prophecy)

12-14: Statement (Paul knows he is going to Jerusalem to be bound and to **die** and he could not be dissuaded)

15: Travel (Caesarea → Jerusalem)

Acts 22: Paul speaks to the Jews and then they target him for elimination

What was going on with Paul

1. We are talking from the book of **Acts**. That means we are:
 - a. Hearing from Luke who is the author
 - b. Talking about the launch of the church (early in church history)
 - c. Watching the expansion of the **gospel** to the Gentiles
2. Paul understood that he was heading to Jerusalem to his death
 - a. Prophecy of Agabus: Paul would be bound and killed
 - b. **Acts 22:** Paul speaks to the Jews and they are patient with his testimony until he brings in the Gentiles. It goes south from there.
 - c. Paul was a Roman citizen, which changed everything concerning what the Jews could do to him

Acts 21:16: Mnason, the person **behind the scenes that was named**

16 Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge.

What we know for sure about Mnason:

1. The disciples from Caesarea stayed with Mnason during Paul's 3rd missionary journey
2. Mnason was from Cyprus
3. "**Early disciple**" = converted early in the history of the church (older man?)
4. Greek word for "reminding" or "**remembrance**"
5. Mnason was **responsible** for Paul while Paul was Mnason's guest
6. Mnason's name is in scripture for all eternity—now we are talking about him

Some things we may surmise

1. Fairly sure he had a home in Jerusalem (could have been in Caesarea)
2. Many assume he was an associate of Barnabas (who was also from Cyprus)
3. Many assume Mnason was a man of **means** since it was a large group that stayed with him (housing, food, safety, any other needs)
4. Virtually nothing else known about him

What I take away from this:

1. Most people in the world are not, and never will be, the people on **stage**. Most people are the people behind the scenes doing the real work of ministry.
 - a. God uses everyday people to do His will and work
 - b. It is not popular to look for accolades in heaven rather than now
2. I think that Mnason was highly regarded and Luke (author of **Acts**) included him here because he was well known and respected in the church. Frankly, we just do not know definitively why he is included. It could have been because:
 - a. Mnason was **faithful** and God chose to include Mnason
 - b. Mnason represents those of us that just do what God has called us to do
 - c. Luke was just being detail oriented
3. God values hospitality
 - a. Mnason took care of Paul (housing, food, safety, any other needs)
 - b. Sometimes, the person on point needs **support**
 - c. **When was the last time you hosted someone in your house that you did not know or was not family?**

Apply (So what is the point?)

1. God uses **regular** people to do His work (Jim: that is the whole point of this series)
2. God values what we do for others
3. God values hospitality

Personalize (Now what do I do?)

1. Do not undervalue your contribution to God's work
2. Look for opportunities to serve others
3. Stay focused on **others**