

# The Church & Her Place in History

Jude 3; Acts (various)  
Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / June 1, 2014

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## The Church...

...is she obsolete or on the move?

Is she a fading fad or a force to be reckoned with?

### Jude 3

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith** which was once for all delivered to the saints.”

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## 6 Texts from the Book of Acts show the Church’s place in History as “the Bearer of the Word of God”

### Acts 6:7

Then the **word of God spread**, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

In Acts 6:1-7, we see the twelve apostles responding to a need that presented itself. However, the end result of their actions was more people coming to faith in Christ by the spreading of the Word of God.

### Acts 9:27-31

<sup>27</sup> ...And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, **and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.**  
<sup>28</sup> So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. <sup>29</sup> **And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists,** <sup>d</sup>but they attempted to kill him. <sup>30</sup> When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.  
<sup>31</sup> **Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.**

Paul was welcome among the disciples—not simply because he had seen the Lord on the road to Damascus; not even because he spoke with Jesus Himself—but because he preached boldly both at Damascus, and continued to do so while with them in Jerusalem. Paul authenticated his change of heart by preaching boldly and, as a result, the churches in the region were multiplied and enjoyed a period of peace.

**Acts 12:23,24** <sup>23</sup> Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. <sup>24</sup> **But the word of God grew and multiplied.**

*“...despite the attacks on the church from the outside, the word of God continued to spread. This was more important than the fact that the persecutor of the church suffered retribution for his deeds. The work of God went on...”*

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Acts of the Apostles: an introduction and commentary*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1980. Print.

**Acts 16:4,5** <sup>4</sup> And as they went through the cities, **they delivered to them the decrees to keep**, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. <sup>5</sup> **So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.**

Paul & Timothy preached the word to the churches in these cities. As a result, they were grew in faith and number.

**Acts 19:20** So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

The result of the believers' confession & repentance (Acts 19:11ff) was more than obedient living by those involved. The Word of God increased and was victorious over evil teaching!

**Acts 28:30,31** <sup>30</sup> Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, <sup>31</sup> **preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ** with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

*“Whatever be the truth, the fate of Paul is secondary to that of the gospel. The final picture is of Paul preaching to the Gentiles the same message which he had preached throughout Acts with boldness and without hindrance. All the emphasis lies on that last phrase. The implication is that the charges against Paul were false and that God backed up his proclamation. Nothing that men can do can stop the progress and ultimate victory of the Gospel.”*

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Acts of the Apostles: an introduction and commentary*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1980. Print.

*“I opposed indulgences and all the papists, but never with force. I simply taught, preached, and wrote God’s Word; otherwise I did nothing. And while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my friends Philip and Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that no prince or emperor ever inflicted such losses upon it. I did nothing; the Word did everything.”*

*~ Martin Luther*