



WOW: Word Of the Week

Unhinderedly
August 28, 2024

In the original language, the last word of the book of Acts has no exact parallel in English. Most Bible translations use two or more words to translate one Greek word—without hindrance, without opposition, no one forbidding, no one stopping. One translation says, freely. The Greeks often emphasized an idea by placing it last in the sentence. Akolutos, unhinderedly. Not a common word, not frequently used. But it does show up in some dictionaries! Our WOW. A great ending to the book of Acts!

This word introduces Acts 29. Acts 29 is what follows Acts 28. The gospel went forth unhinderedly, without hindrance, with absolute freedom. We are living in Acts 29!

When I taught in graduate school, Introduction to Ministry, I asked the students to write ministry autobiographies, to help them be aware of how they had gotten to where they were. I shared a brief example in class, describing a few highlights of my own journey in ministry. Afterward, one of the students approached me. “I have a word to describe your ministry – unhinderedly.”

A ministry of open doors. Perhaps Jan and I walked through some doors with too little hesitation. Perhaps other choices would have been better. God knows. Jan and I have tried to share the good news unhinderedly. Our emphasis has been on telling others about Jesus.... mailing and distributing materials that focused on Jesus, bus programs, Fishers of Men, mission work to bring multitudes to Jesus and plant new churches, community relationships that brought hundreds to Christ—dozens every year, evangelistic ministries, teaching students in the university methods for evangelizing, dedicating ourselves to missions focused on evangelism. The reports we receive show that 1000s are coming to Jesus, being baptized, becoming faithful Christ-followers every year.

Acts 28:31 says the gospel went forth unhinderedly. Unstoppable. (There’s another good word—for a future WOW.) Is the gospel still going forth unhinderedly? Is the gospel still unstoppable? Why or why not?

Some, perhaps many, would answer no. Is the problem the gospel? Or, our world (which may not be that much different than the first-century world)? Time for introspection. Is the problem us? Do we fail to be bold? Do we fall short of unstoppable? Do we self-impose hindrances? Are we timid? Indirect?

This week—a heavy WOW. Sorry. This is not easy listening, light reading. Hear the challenge.

Will you commit with me to prayer and seizing opportunities, open doors? The gospel has not lost its power. The fields are still white unto harvest. Harvest workers are still few. I believe the gospel can go forth unhinderedly.

I want this word to describe my life. Unhinderedly! May God help us.