

Bringing the Gospel Home: A Biblical Examination of Home Evangelism in Acts

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Introduction

In the contemporary milieu, the intentional practice of evangelism by Evangelicals is decreasing. Arguments over the prioritizing of “proclamation vs justice,” “evangelism vs discipleship,” and “old evangelism methods vs new evangelism methods” dominate their attention, resulting in a diminishing of evangelistic activity. Consequently, the Southern Baptist Convention has commissioned an evangelism task force to study ways to reverse the decline of intentional evangelism and baptisms.¹ Most Evangelicals, if not all, would agree that only a spiritual awakening sent by God can reverse this decline in evangelism and, subsequently, the numbers of people baptized. Nevertheless, awaiting God’s intervention for such a reversal does not necessitate that Evangelicals suspend the urgent task of evangelism. Among the correctives Evangelicals must make should be the reconsideration of how to bring the Gospel to homes.² Evangelicals can help accomplish this goal by recovering the philosophy and practice of home evangelism from the New Testament. The New Testament practice of evangelism, both to and in homes, is found predominately in the Lukan writings, suggesting that this particular evangelistic method held a unique interest for Luke. In his dissertation on the form and function of household conversion narratives in Acts, David Matson writes:

In Acts, the church of the Diaspora grows quite literally from “house to house” (*κατ’ οἴκου*, 20:20). Similarly, the disciples in Jerusalem find the house a convenient source of converts: “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ (*κατ’ οἴκον*, 5:42). If the house represents a rich source of evangelistic opportunity in Acts, then the stories of household conversion proper[ly] play a positive role in Luke’s overall scheme of universal salvation.³

Luke's predominate theme of home evangelism in Acts solicits a reexamination of this evangelistic methodological phenomenon by today's scholars and pastors.⁴ This article examines the New Testament practice of home evangelism (specifically evangelism to houses and in households) in Acts in order to determine what its role and use should be among Evangelicals in the modern era.

Examining Home Evangelism in Acts

In order to examine the New Testament practice of *home evangelism* in Acts, at least two areas require observation. First, the general uses of *οἶκος* and *οἰκία* in the New Testament, as well as Luke's use of these terms in Acts' evangelistic contexts, should be considered. Second, the occasions upon which believers in Acts practiced home evangelism and the resulting conversions of entire households should be explored.

Luke's Use of *Οἶκος* and *Οἰκία* in Evangelistic Contexts within Acts

Overwhelmingly, Luke utilizes *οἶκος* and *οἰκία* in describing the location and/or recipients of believers' evangelistic activities. The use of *οἶκος* dates to its use in Mycenaean Greek. Moisés Silva explains that Homer frequently used it to "refer to any kind of dwelling (even the Cyclops' cave, *Od.* 9.478) or a part of it (cf. 19.598, of a room or perhaps a hall), and by metonymy to the goods or material possessions associated with a house (4.318). Later [it] can be applied to a public structure, to a private estate, and to a royal family or dynasty."⁵

In the New Testament *οἶκος* possesses a range of meanings, including "house and/or dwelling," "household and/or family," "descendants," and "property, possessions, and/or estate."⁶ Of its one hundred fifteen occurrences in the New Testament, Luke utilizes it the most. In fact, almost a quarter of the New Testament's uses of *οἶκος* occur in Acts. Ronald D. Runyon notes, "In the Book of Acts, several times the word *οἶκος* means the members of one's household. Many of these instances relate to a situation where evangelism is [being practiced]."⁷ Similar to *οἶκος*, although with a much more narrow range of meaning, *οἰκία* means "a structure used as a dwelling," as well as "the social unit within a dwelling" (i.e., household, family).⁸ The New Testament employs its use ninety times, the vast majority of the time in the Synoptics. Luke uses it only twelve times in Acts.

Silva explains that "[g]enerally speaking, [*οἶκος* and *οἰκία*] have the same semantic range in the New Testament, as well as in secular Greek and the LXX. Their most frequent uses are in the literal sense of 'house' and in the simple extended sense of 'family, household.'"⁹ However, Jürgen Geotzmann claims:

Originally the two words were differentiated in meaning, in that *οἰκία* denoted dwelling place, and *οἶκος* the whole house, the premises, the family property, and even the inhabitants of the house. This original distinction was maintained in Attic law, where *οἶκος* meant the inheritance and *οἰκία* the house itself. Later,

particularly after the LXX, the distinctions were not maintained and the words were used synonymously.¹⁰

The chronology of lexical morphologies aside, the New Testament writers use *οἶκος* and *οἰκία* synonymously. Luke prefers using *οἶκος* in Acts and uses it exclusively in the context of the evangelistic encounters and conversions he records.

Occasions of Home Evangelism in Acts

Matson raises an interesting hermeneutical question for interpreting Luke's treatment of evangelistic proclamations made both at and in homes:

[In t]hat Christ instructs the seventy-two messengers in Luke to preach salvation to households (Luke 10:5-7)...does Jesus' command to evangelize households in Luke provide a pre-established pattern in Acts against which to read the stories of household conversion? Does the household mission of the seventy-two function, at the very least, as a heuristic device for interpreting a certain set of phenomena in Acts [i.e., household conversion narratives]?¹¹

He concludes that “[because] the household comprises a key element in the spread of an ‘unhindered gospel,’ its pattern of evangelization provides the framework for those stories in Acts depicting the gospel’s success in the fullest terms—those termed ‘household conversions.’”¹² Matson seems not to be alone in his thinking. In his discussion of *ξένος*, Gustav Stählin writes:

...[H]ospitality serves the Gospel.... In the days of primitive Christianity the spread of the Gospel took place almost exclusively by word of mouth, and the evangel was carried by wandering messengers who were sustained by the hospitality of the brethren. *Jesus counted on this when He first sent out the disciples, and both in his own work and that of the apostles rested on it....* [For example, in Acts 16:15, 33, as well as other references in his Epistles] *Paul used the system of standing hospitality on behalf of his missionary work, as Jesus had done before him.*¹³

The home evangelizing pattern established by Jesus and His disciples in the Gospels was adopted by both the apostles and the missionary companions in Acts. The scope of this pattern occurred in homes of believers (Acts 27:23-30) and of unbelievers (Acts 10:22-34; 16:31-34). Personal evangelists were welcomed at these homes sometimes as invited (Acts 10:22-24; 16:31-34; 20:20), and likely at other times impromptu guests (Acts 5:24; 20:20). Geotzmann states: “The gospel was preached in [homes].... The conversion of the head of the house brought the whole family into the congregation and—however it is to be understood, into the faith.”¹⁴

The Spirit used these varying circumstances of home evangelism to save the hearers, and in some cases their entire households, to see them baptized, and to have them form newly planted churches in their cities.

The preceding should not be construed as meaning that one person's faith sufficed to save another person—whether spouse or children. As in the case with the Philippian jailer, the gospel was shared with the household following the acceptance by the father. The members of the household believed and were baptized.

Acts 5:42

Upon their release by the Sanhedrin for preaching in Jesus' name (5:40-41), the apostles were determined to preach Jesus just as intently, if not more so, as they had previously. Daily they preached and taught the gospel of Jesus Christ in the temple courts and from house to house (5:42). However, John Polhill asserts that Luke employs a chiasm in v. 42:

- A: In the temple
- B: and in homes
- B: the apostles taught
- A: and preached the gospel.¹⁵

If Polhill is correct, they preached the gospel only in the temple courts, and they exhorted believers only in the house churches.

In a more moderating interpretation between reading the text as a chiasm and reading it at face value, Craig Keener contends:

The semantic ranges of “teaching” and “preaching” overlap, but when combined they surely include the entire range of activity suggested by either. Some scholars distinguish teaching from proclamation, which in Acts tends to be especially deliberative (seeking converts)... “Teaching” (*διδασκαλία*) could sometimes be evangelistic (5:28; 13:12; 17:19);

the verb is evangelistic in 4:2, 18; 5:21, 25, 28, but it refers to instruction in 18:25, probably refers to instruction in 11:26; 15:1, 35; 18:11; 20:20; 21:21, includes instruction in 1:1, *and is unclear in 5:42; 21:28; 28:31*.... Their semantic ranges overlap...to indicate a whole, ...*their appearance together* (Luke 20:1; Acts 5:42; 28:31) *probably implies a full range of activities*.¹⁶

On the whole, New Testament scholars' commentary on this passage aligns with Keener's position, leading to the conclusion that from this event forward the apostles continually utilized houses of believers, and perhaps unbelievers, in order to evangelize nonbelieving friends, family, and members of the community.

Acts 10:1-11:18

In a vision, an angel instructed a God-fearing and benevolent centurion named Cornelius to invite Peter to his home (10:1-6). The next day Peter had a vision of ceremonially unclean animals on a large sheet, but he objected to the Lord's command, "Kill and eat" (10:13). The Lord told Peter not to consider anything unclean that the Lord had made clean (10:15). A delegation of men from Cornelius arrived where Peter was staying, and he accompanied them to Cornelius' home (10:17-23). After exchanging accounts of their visions, Peter preached Jesus to Cornelius and his household. F. F. Bruce describes that in addition to his family, his household included "all who were under his authority—slaves, attendants, and others."¹⁷ All of the people received Peter's word and the Holy Spirit (10:24-48).

God's Spirit prepared Cornelius to hear the Gospel and Peter to preach it. Although a heavenly messenger from God had spoken with Cornelius, salvation did not come to him and his household until Peter came to his house. In 11:13-14, Luke recorded the first of four household conversions in Acts. Had Cornelius come to visit Peter himself instead of inviting Peter to come to his house, fewer people would have received Christ and been baptized. This observation further emphasizes the importance of New Testament believers' practicing home evangelism.

Acts 16:14-15

Through divine direction, Paul and his company arrived in Philippi (16:6-12). On the Sabbath, they encountered some women on the banks of a river (16:13). God opened the heart of Lydia, a God-fearer, who responded to the Gospel Paul preached (16:14). Upon her and her household's baptisms, she urged Paul and his companions to come to her house and lodge (16:15).

Unlike Cornelius, Lydia seems to have invited Paul and his fellow missionaries to her house only after she and her household believed and were baptized. Like Cornelius, however, her entire household (presumably some or all the other women with her at the river) heard the gospel and believed. In what way is Acts 16:14-15 an occurrence of home evangelism? Although Paul did not utilize the geographical location of Lydia's home to evangelize her, he did use her communal home (i.e., her household) in the evangelization event. As Polhill articulates it, "Not only did Lydia share her goods, but she shared her faith as well. As leader of her household, she led them to join her in commitment and baptism."¹⁸

Acts 16:25-34

After their arrests for liberating a demon-possessed slave girl, Paul and Silas found themselves imprisoned and restrained in a Philippian jail (16:16-24). Bound in their chains, they began praying and singing hymns to God (16:25). Their praise prompted a great earthquake that miraculously opened all the prisoners' cell doors and shackles (16:26). The prison jailer awoke and, supposing the prisoners to have

escaped under his supervision, started to commit suicide in an attempt to avoid incurring the Romans' penalty for his dereliction of duty (16:27).

Paul, stating that he and the other prisoners had not escaped, pleaded with the jailer not to harm himself (16:28). The jailer rushed to Paul and Silas and inquired of them how he could be saved. They instructed him and those persons within his household to believe in the Lord Jesus in order to be saved (16:29-32). The jailer treated their wounds. They subsequently baptized him and his entire household (16:33). They all celebrated during a meal because of their newfound belief in God (16:34). Luke's account of this evangelistic encounter refers both to the jailer's home and to his household. Apparently the jailer's home adjoined the prison. That the jailer's household was immediately present when Paul and Silas preached Jesus and salvation¹⁹ suggests they had accompanied him to the cells after the earthquake.²⁰ Concerning the role of the household in their evangelistic strategy, and to some extent the role it plays throughout the New Testament, Keener explains:

Paul and Silas expect that the family will convert with the head of the household, which was usually the case (cf. Acts 10:2), although other members of the household were sometimes converted first (1 Cor. 7:12-16; 1 Pet 3:1). The text is hardly an unconditional guarantee for the conversion of family members (cf. Luke 12:51-53; 14:26; 18:29); rather, in context it implies the expectation (again based on the normal cultural pattern) that the other members will be saved because they also will believe (Acts 16:31). Thus the missionaries proceed to speak to the members of the household (Acts 16:32), who also believe and receive baptism (Acts 16:33-34).²¹

As such, both the home and the household were key concerns and aims for evangelism in the New Testament in general and in Acts specifically.

Acts 18:4-11

Paul experienced Jewish opposition while preaching Jesus as the Messiah in Corinth's synagogue (18:4-6a). Responding more emphatically to this occasion of Jewish resistance than to the previous opposition in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:50-51), Paul "shook out his garments and said to them, 'Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles'" (18:6).²² In a turn of irony, only after Paul went to lodge at the home of Titius Justus (a Gentile God-fearer) did Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, and his household believe in Jesus as the Christ (18:7-8). Upon hearing of the salvation of Crispus and his household, numerous Corinthians believed and were baptized (18:8). Encouraged to continue preaching the gospel by the Lord in a vision, Paul remained in Corinth for a year and a half, and taught God's Word among them (18:9-11).

While in Corinth, Paul proclaimed the Gospel in the synagogue to the Jews, the majority of whom attended with their households. Crispus, the chief of the synagogue, and his household first heard Paul preach Jesus as Messiah together in the synagogue. Luke does not state whether their conversions resulted from hearing Paul preach in the synagogue or from hearing Paul preach to the Gentiles after he turned from the Jews. The omission of a subsequent Gospel presentation, as well as Paul's emphatic decision to turn his evangelization efforts exclusively to the Gentiles, favor the former scenario. Assuming the validity of this assertion, home evangelism in Acts not only incorporated the evangelization of households in places of worship, but also included household conversions occurring at differing times—sometimes immediately (Acts 10:44; 16:15, 34) and at other times delayed.

Acts 20:20-21

In his farewell to the Ephesian church elders in Miletus, Paul delivered a ministry defense and an exhortation (20:17-38). In his defense, Paul appealed to his ministry in Ephesus. He recalled how he had not stopped preaching and teaching them publicly, as well as from house to house. He specifically connected his preaching and teaching to his message of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus (20:20-21).

Traditionally Evangelicals have appealed to these two verses to substantiate the practice of evangelizing unbelievers using door-to-door or house-to-house evangelism. However, both Haenchen and Ben Witherington assert that the activity of preaching and teaching to which Paul refers is in “house churches.”²³ On the other hand, Michael Green contends that Paul's claim “was no idle boast... [H]e had discovered that this house-evangelism was more fruitful than any.”²⁴ Green's interpretation is preferred as Paul tied his preaching and teaching in public and from house to house inextricably with the Gospel witness of repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, in addition to evangelizing in public places, Paul utilized a house-to-house methodology in his practice of evangelism.

Acts 28:23-30

When Paul arrived in Rome, he was permitted to live by himself under the custody of a soldier (28:16). Three days after his arrival, Paul assembled the Jewish leaders to explain to them that his custody by the Romans resulted from his appeal to Caesar (cf. 25:10-12) before Festus (28:17-20). They told Paul that they had not received word about him from the Jews. However, they inquired to learn more about the sect to which he belonged (28:21-22). On another day Paul hosted a large number of them in his quarters. He evangelized them and used the Old Testament in an attempt to persuade them about Jesus (28:23). Over the following two years, he preached and taught Jesus to everyone who came to visit him in his quarters (28:30). The New Testament's final record of Paul's practicing evangelism coincidentally

serves as Luke's last occurrence of home evangelism. The Romans permitted Paul to live under house arrest while he awaited his appeal to Caesar. In 28:23, Luke refers to Paul's quarters as *εἰς τὴν ξενίαν* ("at his lodging place"). However, in 28:30 he uses *ἐν ἰδίῳ μισθώματι* to describe it. Both Witherington and Polhill discuss the various translations of *ἐν ἰδίῳ μισθώματι*, including "at his own expense" (RSV) and "in his own rented house" (NIV),²⁵ "in his own house," and "in his own rented dwelling."²⁶ Instead of using his supervised custody as an excuse not to evangelize, Paul capitalized on the opportunities it provided him to evangelize his guests and, as a consequence, his personal Roman guard. In a way of speaking, this occurrence of home evangelism was a direct contrast of the home evangelism he practiced in Acts 16:25-34. Under arrest in Philippi, he evangelized the jailer and his household in the jailhouse. In Rome under house arrest, he evangelized people who came to visit him, as well as the Roman soldier guarding him. Describing Paul's methodology of home evangelism in Rome, Michael Green explains:

We find Paul making a most interesting use of his 'hired house' in Rome: he was no longer able to go out to preach the gospel, so he invited leading Jews to come to his residence for a full day of talk and discussion. His approach was superb. He took the initiative, and explained the reason for his presence in Rome, before they could produce any garbled accounts that may have reached them from Judaea. He was brief, factual, conciliatory and to the point. He offered them hospitality: he showed his understanding of the Scriptures, his loyalty to the hope of Israel, and his deep conviction that salvation in Jesus was to be found.²⁷

Instead of evangelizing at unbelievers' homes or in the homes of other believers as had been his previous practice, Paul's use of his own residence demonstrated another form of home evangelism in Acts. This particular occurrence of home evangelism resulted in some Jews' being persuaded to believe, although other Jews rejected Paul's message (cf. Acts 28:24).

Conclusion and Practical Application of Home Evangelism

Home evangelism in Acts did not always begin with the home, but it ultimately arrived there. As Michael Green explained, "One of the most important methods of spreading the gospel in antiquity was by the use of homes.... The sheer informality and relaxed atmosphere of the home, not to mention the hospitality which must often have gone with it, all helped to make this form of evangelism particularly successful."²⁸ Home evangelism occurred not only in Jewish homes and households (5:42; 28:23-30), where hospitality was customary, but also in Gentile homes and households (10:1-11:18; 16:14-15, 25-34; 18:4-11; 20:20-21). In Acts, the apostles corporately practiced home evangelism (5:42), as did Peter

(10:1-11:18) and Paul (16:14-15, 25-34; 18:4-11; 20:20-21; 28:23-30) individually.

The practice of home evangelism in Acts took four forms. First, believers practiced home evangelism by visiting unbelievers' homes (10:1-11:18; implied in 5:42; 20:20-21). Second, they evangelized believers' lost friends and family in their homes and/or house churches (28:23-30; implied in 5:42; 20:20-21). Third, home evangelism took place among households in public places (16:25-34), particularly in places of worship (16:14-15; implied in 18:4-11). Last, a believer's own dwelling served as an environment for evangelism (28:23-30).

Two analytical insights emerge from this article's examination of the early church's practice of home evangelism in Acts. First, the early church's practice of home evangelism accentuated the *scope* of its evangelistic aims. The early church urgently and intentionally evangelized as many people as possible, as quickly as possible. By reaching entire households with the Gospel at one time, the early church was able to broaden the extent of its evangelistic efforts.

Second, home evangelism provided the early church with an effective *strategy* by which they could evangelize and assimilate new believers. By evangelizing the homes of unbelieving households, including the friends and extended family of believing households in house churches, new believers had a familial structure in place for them to integrate into existing and emerging churches. This article's findings suggest the following four brief applications for Evangelicals who desire to bring the gospel home through home evangelism:

1. **Home evangelism is not the only way Evangelicals should evangelize, but it certainly is not the only way they should not evangelize.** Because it is a method prescribed by Jesus in Luke (Luke 10:5-7) and practiced by His disciples in Acts (Acts 5:42; 20:20-21), Evangelicals should recover the practice of home evangelism. Otherwise they reject, to some extent, a biblical evangelistic method that God has historically and continues to bless.

Many Evangelicals believe that a home evangelism strategy like door-to-door evangelism no longer works and should be abandoned. However, at the time this article was written, the faculty and students of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, have witnessed at least one person every week, and frequently more than one person, confess saving faith in Jesus as Lord while practicing home evangelism door-to-door and other evangelistic methods since the 2013 fall semester.²⁹ Home evangelism still works if we use it and other evangelistic methodologies in the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. **Evangelical churches employing strategies that include home evangelism can reach greater numbers of people in their communities.** Many Evangelical churches limit the practice of evangelism to the Sunday worship services and periodic evangelistic events they host. However, believers almost always outnumber unbelievers at these venues. In addition, these churches often target individuals rather than households. Some evangelism approaches that can assist churches in reaching greater numbers of people in their communities with the Gospel include personal evangelism in family-oriented environments (i.e., parks, sporting events, and neighborhoods), as well as utilizing a booth for evangelism at town festivals and/or block parties that families attend.

3. **Practicing home evangelism by hosting unbelieving neighbors for a Bible study provides Evangelical churches with the information and structure they can use to follow-up with interested unbelievers and new believers through continued evangelism, ministry, and/or discipleship.** Evangelistic home Bible studies provide unbelievers with venues to dialogue at length about questions they may have concerning the Gospel. In addition the familiarity that occurs at evangelistic home Bible studies and/or fellowships can foster an environment in which unbelievers share needs with the believing hosts. As long as the unbelievers' confidentiality is not violated, this information can be used by churches to minister to unbelievers while also sharing the Gospel with them. Relationships created through this form of home evangelism also foster a greater likelihood that new believers will assimilate into the churches of believing hosts.

4. **When practicing home evangelism at unbelievers' houses or at locations where the entire households are gathered, Evangelicals should intentionally focus on the entire family.** While salvation through Jesus must be accepted individually, the role of individuals' households is often underestimated, even ignored, in contemporary evangelism. The extent to which family members understand and believe the Gospel can either benefit or impede evangelistic effectiveness.

Believers who practice door-to-door evangelism find that a significant number of residents claim to be Christians. When responses to diagnostic spiritual questions indicate the initial respondent is a believer, the personal evangelists should ask if members of the household are present. When unbelievers hear the gospel from persons outside the household, the Gospel witness of their believing relatives is strengthened. At other times, door-to-door evangelists may be the answer to believing household

members' prayers for the salvation of their unbelieving family members. Also, churches that present the Gospel during their worship services and/or at block parties in nearby neighborhoods should intentionally consider ways to offer the Gospel to all the family members in attendance. They should also provide ways that persons who respond positively can share what they have received with other members of their family.

NOTES

1. Diana Chandler, "Personal soul-winning, evangelism task force named," (June 15, 2017), accessed August 12, 2017, <http://www.bpnews.net/49068>. The article states: "The task force is intended to reverse a decline in evangelism among Southern Baptist churches. According to a 2015 report from the North American Mission Board, the 310,000 baptisms in 2013 represented the lowest number among Southern Baptists since 1948."

2. Although door-to-door home evangelism continues to be practiced by a few Evangelicals, many of them have abandoned this method in favor of evangelism in the coffee shops and other venues. See Todd Hertz, "Do Evangelicals Still Go Door-to-Door?" (April 1, 2002), accessed August 5, 2017, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2002/aprilweb-only/4-22-31.0.html?start=2>.

3. David Lertis Matson, "The Form and Function of the Household Conversion Narratives in the Acts of the Apostles" (PhD Diss., Waco: Baylor University, 1994), 2. Agreeing with Robert Allen Black's 1985 Emory University dissertation, "The Conversion Stories in the Acts of the Apostles: A Study of Their Forms and Functions," Matson asserts, "Next to the speeches, the conversion stories may represent the most important formal grouping in Acts, comprising just over one-fourth of its narrative material," 2.

4. Matson concludes that, according to Luke, "household evangelism functions as an important *modus operandi* of the expanding community of Jesus," 277. A few notable sources that also examined the importance of *home*, or *household*, *evangelism* in both the New Testament and the early churches include Donald Wayne Riddle, "Early Christian Hospitality: A Factor in the Gospel Transmission," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 57 (1938): 141-154; Floyd V. Filson, "The Significance of the Early House Churches," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 58 (1939): 105-112; and Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 207-22.

5. Moisés Silva, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), s.v. "οἶκος."

6. Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, ed. and trans. William F. Arndt, F. Wilber Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker [BAGD], 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), s.v. "οἶκος, οὐ, ὄ."

7. Ronald D. Runyon, "Principles and Methods of Household Evangelism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 no 565 (Jan-Mar 1985), 65.

8. BDAG, s.v. "οἰκία, ας, ἡ."

9. Silva, s.v. "οἶκος."

10. Jürgen Geotzmann, "House" in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown, 2:247 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971).

11. Matson, 6-7.
12. *Ibid.*, 63.
13. Emphasis added. Gustav Stählin, “*ξένος*” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed., Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1965), 5:22-23.
14. Goetzmann, “House,” 250.
15. John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary, vol. 31 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 174.
16. Emphasis added. Craig Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 1245.
17. F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 235. Keener expands the description of household when he writes: “A Roman definition of *familia*, in the narrowest sense, included all members directly under the father’s *potestas*, or power (wife, children, sons’ children); more broadly, all relatives through male blood (e.g., brothers’ children); and, most broadly, slaves.” *Acts*, 1745.
18. Polhill, 350.
19. In Acts 16:32, Paul and Silas “spoke the word of the Lord to him *together* with all who were in his house” [All Scripture references are quoted from the NASB, 1995, emphasis added]. Also, Acts 16:34 states “he... rejoiced greatly, having believed in God *with* his whole household” [emphasis added].
20. Keener notes: “Although Luke does not report it, as it is not germane to his point, the jailer likely would have instructed the servants [in his household] to secure the other prisoners again...” *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 2511.
21. *Ibid.*, 2510.
22. Paul’s garment shaking resembles Nehemiah’s garment shaking in Nehemiah 5:13, which served as a judgment upon Jews who would break their covenant with Yahweh.
23. Cf. Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, trans. Basil Blackwell (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 591 and Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 240.
24. Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 218.
25. Cf. Polhill, *Acts*, 546.
26. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 812-813. He seems to prefer “in his own rented dwelling” because “[although] this dwelling was presumably rented at Paul’s own expense... It was a temporary dwelling place, the sort one would take up if one did not expect to be there indefinitely.” *Ibid.*, 813.
27. Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, 218.
28. *Ibid.*, 207.
29. For more information, consult Alex Sibley, “FIRST PERSON: Door-to-door Evangelism Actually Works,” (April 29, 2016), accessed September 9, 2017, <https://swbts.edu/news/everyday-evangelism/first-person-door-door-evangelism-actually-works>.