

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapter 28

Paul's Final Journey

Memory Verse: Acts 28:30,31

“And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”

I. Introduction

- A. Paul is about to arrive at Rome - the capital of the Roman Empire of the day. Caesar *Nero* is emperor, and he does not like Christians. He considers them *deadly enemies* because they are inflexible in their worship.
1. They will not permit the worship of Caesar (or Buddha, or Allah, or Krishna, or money, etc) - only ONE God
 2. They will not permit the inclusion of statues and idols in their worship - didn't want to liven up the church house at all - no need (just like with 1Pet 3:1-6)
 3. They constantly focusing on the negative - people are lost and headed for hell, and need to be born again - first birth was not good enough
 4. They turn the world upside down - won't leave well alone - upset whole communities
- B. Rome is only noted for one thing in both Scripture, and history - **killing Christians** (Acts 12; 18:1,2; the Dark Ages, the Inquisition)
- C. But Paul is not concerned with Rome - only with souls (20:24)
1. He set out to run the race that God had for him (Heb 12:1,2)
 2. And he finishes his course (2 Tim 4:6-8)
- D. Paul has arrived on a small island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea called Melita in the middle of a horrendous storm called Euroclydon that last gone one for several weeks, and had wrecked their sailing ship.

II. Lesson - Paul's Final Journey - Acts 28

- A. **Paul spends the winter in Malta** (28:1-11), and leaves us an example of "_____":
(when your world stops)
1. *Keep the fire going* (28:1-3) - don't get lethargic, and lazy, and allow the cold, and discouragement to catch up with you. Be busy, physically, and spiritually! That fire in you will both warm you, and others around you! Without a fire, you will DIE!
 2. *Never worry about circumstances* (28:3-6)
 - a. Just like with the storm, troubles will come, and "latch" upon you. They all seem to be deadly, and permanent.
 - b. People will always misunderstand what is happening in your life
 - c. Shake off the attack - you can - shake it off by:
 - 1) Pleading Christ's precious blood
 - 2) Pressing on, and finishing the job you have to do - stay in the middle of God's will, and nothing can harm you until it is time to go home!
 - 3) Pray for others - don't worry all about yourself, keep your eyes focused on being a help and blessing to others (28:7).
 3. *Use every opportunity to witness* (28:7-9)
 4. *Watch the Lord meet your every need* (28:10,11; Phlp 4:15-19) AFTER you have been busy meeting other people's needs!
- B. **Paul's Final Journey** (28:11-31)
1. The winter is now past, and Paul and the 276 souls hitch a ride on a passing ship (28:11-15). Within just a few days, he has arrived to the coasts of Italy, and at Puteoli, he seeks out other Christians. When people heard it was the apostle Paul, they came from 50 and 60 miles away to meet him, and hear him preach!
Paul was always encouraged by the presence of Christian brethren (28:14,15). He sought them out - if they don't want you around, then so be it, but seek it out, and be a blessing.
PRINCIPLE: Don't neglect Christian fellowship (Heb 10:25). That is where you will find courage, and encouragement - Be careful, or God may just take Christian fellowship away from you.
 2. Paul arrives in Rome, and is treated quite well (28:16)
 3. Paul gets down to business - even though a prisoner
 - a. *He witnesses to the Jews first* (28:17-27)

- 1) Paul still has hope Israel would turn back to their God. The only hope for Israel, and for this world is the reason why Paul would endure any and all hardships (2Tim 2:8-10).

PRINCIPLE: We ought to never give up on our family.

- 2) Those Jews in Italy had not heard all the latest "gossip" about Paul (28:21)
- 3) The Jews only wanted to hear Paul's "opinion", not WHAT GOD SAID! Modern scholars today only want "relative opinions" that they can judge by their own opinions. They are not interested in "absolute truth" of any kind!
- 4) Paul's cottage is packed to overflowing with interested hearers about this Jesus (28:23; Lk 24:25-27; Acts 17:2,3)
 - a) *Paul opened the Scriptures* (OPEN IT and let people SEE it for themselves, and READ from it clearly) - as he always did!
 - b) *Paul expounded the Scriptures* - step by step worked through the concepts of the Bible, connecting them in the minds of the hearers - this is the job of a preacher
 - c) *Talked about the Kingdom of God* - not the kingdom of heaven, or of Caesar - he wanted them to repent of their sin more than prepare for the millennial kingdom
 - d) *Persuaded them* - urged them, compelled them to choose Christ over their religion, and good works (Lk 14:23; 2 Cor 5:11,20; Col 1:28; 2 Tim 4:2; Jude 22,23)
 - e) *Took the time* (8-10 hours) to go through most of the Old Testament - he and the hearers knew it was THAT important (2 Tim 2:24-26)!
- 5) As is always the case (28:25):
 - a) SOME believed, and SOME believed not - free will
 - b) If people can't agree, then so be it - don't seek unity at any cost - that is ecumenicalism, and it is damnable!
- 6) Paul must make it clear that people who choose the wrong path, have made the **wrong** choice - don't leave it alone as if it doesn't matter (28:25-27)!
 - a) The people's ability to believe has been hindered
 - b) But it was *their own will* that blocked up their hearts - no "predestination"
 - c) God seeks to save, and heal the broken heart, if it would just allow Him!

Notice that these Jews had to be CONVERTED (28:27) from their religion, to Christ!

- b. And then for the **third** and last time, he takes the Gospel to the Gentiles (28:28). Three strikes and the Jews were out as far as Paul was concerned!
 - 1) The Gentiles usually hear and believe much more often than the Jew (Mt 15:21-28)
 - 2) Today, the civilized world is getting very hard against the Gospel:
 - a) Because of shams - false churches, bibles, teachings
 - b) Because of fake Christians - no depth, desire, realness
 - c) It all has led to the vacuum being filled by every new age idea and vain religion imaginable!
 - c. Whenever someone left Paul, after talking with him, he always got them at least thinking (28:29) - that is our job too!
 - d. Paul continues for two more years in Rome (28:30,31), preaching and teaching the truth of God's word, **with all confidence** - no one could disprove God's word. Let's all get that way as well!

C. Yet, Is This The END of the Acts? Better NOT be!

1. It only ends in the sense that the "*Acts of the _____*" are through.
2. There is still much of the "field" of the world left to be harvested (Mk 16:15).
3. Remember, it was during all this action, that God used Paul to write **14** Books of the New Testament - Paul was very busy all the time:
 - a. *Soul-winning* - winning people to Christ
 - b. *Discipling* - feeding and training the new Christians
 - c. *Church planting* - organizing the Christians into a body of committed believers
 - d. *Training men to preach and pastor* - equipping local churches to stand on their own, with their own pastors and teachers
 - e. *And writing* - leaving behind both Scripture (which is now completed), and other helps for the churches to continue to grow!

These are all things STILL needed today in Christianity - no room for laziness, or cribbing, or business in other worldly affairs (2 Tim 2:4)!

4. God sure isn't finished "acting." There is a lot of "action" coming up in the future (the Rapture, Tribulation, Millennium, Judgement Seat of Christ, the Great White Throne Judgement...)

5. We just need to "*keep preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence.*"

III. Conclusion - Review of the Principles

A.

IV. Study Questions