



Acts 19-28

Preaching Christ Boldly

Overview

Paul began his 3rd missionary journey in Acts 18:23, and Luke's report of that trip continues through chapter 21. Perhaps the most notable portion of this trip was Paul's time in Ephesus, establishing a church which would be the recipient of several New Testament letters (Ephesians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Revelation). Paul also visited churches in Macedonia and Greece before returning to Jerusalem. Paul's life took a drastic turn in Jerusalem, where he ended up arrested and on trial. The rest of Paul's life would be spent primarily in custody of some form or another.

Suggested Reading Schedule

Monday: Acts 19-20
 Tuesday: Acts 21-22
 Wednesday: Acts 23-24
 Thursday: Acts 25-26
 Friday: Acts 27-28

Paul was sent to Felix in Caesarea, and a couple years later (still in custody) he appealed his case to Caesar. This meant he had to be taken to Rome. The final chapters of Acts recount the dangerous and eventful voyage of Paul aboard a prison ship heading to Rome. When Paul arrived at Rome, he was allowed a fair measure of freedom as a prisoner, living in a type of "house arrest." While he wasn't able to travel, Paul continued doing all he could to preach the gospel. The closing words of Acts tell us Paul was, "proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance."

Questions:

1. How many sons did the Jewish priest Sceva have? _____
2. What was the name of the young man who fell asleep and fell out a window while Paul was teaching? _____
3. Ananias said to Saul, "And now why are you _____? Arise and be _____ and _____ you sins, _____ on the name of the Lord." (NKJV)
4. The Lord told Paul that as he had testified in Jerusalem, so he would testify in _____.
5. What did Paul preach about when Felix invited him to teach about faith in Christ? _____
6. Paul was sent to the Gentiles to open their _____, to turn them from _____ to _____ and from the power of _____ to _____.
7. After Paul's conversion, what message did he preach? _____
8. What was the name of the centurion in charge of Paul on the voyage to Rome? _____
9. How did Paul spend his two years of "house arrest" in Rome? _____



The Way

Throughout the book of Acts, Luke refers to the Christian faith as "The Way" four times (9:2, 19:23, 24:14, and

24:22). This unique description of Christianity teaches some important lessons. It shows that Christianity is:

Singular: There is only one way to salvation, not many ways. The Way is through Christ alone.

A Journey: Christianity is a journey to another place, a life beyond this earth. As we strive to live as Christians, we must keep our eye on the destination.

Absolute: While the world teaches there is no such thing as absolute truth, Jesus teaches otherwise. God's word is truth. God's way is *the way*.

A Perfect Ending?

If you're big into perfect endings, the book of Acts might pose a challenge to you at first. Simply put, Luke doesn't finish the story. After follow Paul's many travels, we are simply left with Paul in house-arrest in Rome. What happens? Does he get to appeal to Caesar? Is he released? We want to know! Paul's letters and history fill in a few details. It seems Paul may have been released for a while, but was later arrested in Rome again, this time under much more severe conditions. Tradition holds that Paul was finally executed by beheading in Rome. But why does Luke not finish the story? While it may be frustrating at first, perhaps there is a greater purpose. While we love to know a story's end, the story hasn't ended. It hasn't ended because the work of the church didn't end with Paul. Paul's impact was incredible, but even he encouraged others, like Timothy, to keep preaching, in season and out of season. So in a way, Acts ends perfectly. It ends with Paul preaching boldly, and thus sets an example for Christians in every age to follow. Acts doesn't "end" because the gospel is still being preached—by us!



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