

March 10/11, 2007

Study Questions
The Unstoppable Church
A Fitting Conclusion?
Acts 28:1-31
Pastor Jeff Petersen

Opening Discussion

1. Have you ever set a record or won a trophy, a medal or something similar to this? In that moment, what does it feel like to be a champion?
2. Are your days primarily composed of the “highlight reel” moments of life or just the “ordinary stuff” of life?
3. Paul was the great Apostle. His life had such significance and impact. God used Him to change the world as he sought to faithfully follow and serve Christ. But we aren’t Paul. So what do words like greatness, significance, and faithfulness mean in the context of our everyday lives as followers of Christ today?

Bible Study

1. Read Acts 28:1-10. Once again Paul encounters another trial on the journey to Rome. This time, just after surviving a shipwreck, he’s bitten by a poisonous snake. But how does He respond to what appeared to be a life-threatening event?

How would you respond if that happened to you?

Why do think Paul’s reaction is so different than what we would typically expect?

2. How did the people of Malta respond to this situation (see verses 4-6)?

What do their responses teach us about how people may respond to us as we seek to serve God?

3. In Acts 27, God used the adversity of the storm at sea to give Paul a leadership platform amongst all those on the ship. After the shipwreck, all 276 are washed ashore and, to the people of Malta, Paul is just one of the crowd gathering sticks (verse 3). But then the viper strikes and attaches itself to Paul’s hand. How did God use these circumstances to advance His purposes (see verse 7-10)?
4. Read Acts 28:23-31. Why had Paul gone to Rome? What had he declared as the ultimate reason God had orchestrated circumstances to bring him to Rome (see Acts 27:23-24)?

In Acts 25 and 26, Paul has the chance to proclaim the Gospel to a Governor and to a King. Then he uses the Roman legal system to provide a pathway for him to present the Gospel to the Emperor of the greatest empire in the world. But when Paul arrives in Rome he is put under house arrest to await his appearance before Caesar. What did Paul do in the meantime?

5. Verse 24 tells us of the response of the Jews in Rome. How did they respond?

What can we learn about our mission from Paul's ministry and the two types of responses he encountered?

6. Do verses 30-31 seem like a "fitting conclusion" to all we've read and studied through the book of Acts? Why or why not?

Application

1. Is sharing the Gospel with the President of the United States or another leader of the world (like Paul shared the Gospel with leaders in his day) something you are likely to ever do? Are Paul's actions in verses 30-31 something you could do?
2. Each of us has received God's gracious salvation because generations of people have been faithful to take up the baton and to pass on the Good News and to add to the unfolding story of countless lives being redeemed by a gracious God. What's more, at some point *someone* took a step of faith and shared the message of His love and salvation with us and *we* are now a part of the continuing story of the movement of God's redemptive mission throughout generations and throughout the earth. Give a summary of the chapter you hope will be added to the story after your time on earth has come to an end?

How do you want to have been used by God to add to the continuing story of His love changing lives?

3. What is one action step you could take today to help ensure that you don't miss out on being a part of the next chapter being written by God?
4. In four weeks it will be Easter, and we will be opening our new auditorium. Every seat represents a life change story that God wants to add to the continuing drama. Share the name of someone you would like to see come this Easter and commit as a LifeGroup to praying for those people and for each other as we seek to reach out to them.