

Acts 21:37-22:30

Paul has recently left Greece and traveled through Macedonia on to Troas, where he spent 7 days.

From Troas he traveled to Miletus where he called for the Ephesian Elders and counseled them concerning their role as shepherds.

He left Miletus and sailed to his ultimate destination: Jerusalem.

1. There he meets with James and the other elders
2. He delivers the offering that was collected for them
3. He pays for 4 men to complete their Nazarite vow.
4. And is falsely accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple...and everything erupts!
5. He is arrested by the Tribune, in order to save his life and stop the ruckus, and that is where we left off.

Now we pick up in Acts 21:37

21:37-22:2 Notice that Paul did not go on the defensive. He took the opportunity to go on the offensive!

1. Let us not forget that we are not playing defense! No! The gates of hell shall not prevail.
 - a. Gates are not offensive. They are defensive.
 - b. Hell has gates...not the kingdom of God.
 - c. Hell is playing defense...the KOG is playing offense.
 - d. And the gates of hell will not stand...they will come down!
2. Paul has this philosophy, so instead of cowering in the fetal position and playing defense, he goes on the offense.
3. He attempts to advance the KOG by taking the opportunity to testify to the power of God.

He shares his testimony! 22:3-21

And chaos breaks out again! 22:22-24

1. The Kingdom of God rubs the world the wrong way.
2. It offends our sinful natures, as we see here.
3. How desperately they hated the Gentiles
 - a. Our hatred blurs our vision.
 - b. Listen to how crazy they get because of their disdain for the Gentiles!
 - c. And being zealous, law abiding Jews, I can almost promise you that they had chapter and verse to support their animosity!

That is scary! And a reminder to us to

1. Be doers of the Word and not hearers only.
2. Be sure that we do not force the Bible to fit our theology, but rather force our theology to fit the Bible, even if it doesn't seem to fit perfectly in our finite minds.

22:25-30

Three of the Biggest Questions Ever asked

I. Who are you? v8

1. Do you recognize how big this question is? It is the biggest you will ever ask or answer! Who are you? Who is Jesus?
2. How are you supposed to know? How are you supposed to find out?
3. Do what Paul did...Look to Jesus and listen!

Hebrews 12:1-3

If we are to answer this question: who are you? we must do these things.

1. Put off

- a. Put off our sin...put off our encumbrances, our weights, our interferences.
- b. We can't look to Jesus and look to sin or to the weights of this world at the same time!
- c. How much energy, how much money, how much thought, how much love, how much time, and care to do we exert for this world?
 1. We have been bought with a price and our lives are no longer our own!
 2. Those adoring thoughts are Christ's, that energy is Christ's, that love, that time, that effort, that care that we exert for this world belongs to Christ.
- d. Our eyes cannot look up and down at the same time, so we must put off our sin and weights which ensnare us.
- e. Wont it be a sad day at judgment to find that we have spent most of our time and energy looking at earthly things?

2. Look!

All other things are vanities but Christ is a real, solid, substantial, glorious thing; all other things are temporary, fading things, but Christ is an enduring substance, the same yesterday, today, and forever, which was, which is, and which is to come. All the things are thorns, vexations of spirit, but Christ is full of joy and comfort, a most ravishing object, all composed of loves, or altogether lovely. O who would make it his business to fill his coffers with pebbles, when he may have pearls, or gold, or silver, or precious things? What, must you look off yours sins?! Why, see before you the graces of the Spirit of Christ. Must you look off your idle sinful company? See before you the fellowship that is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Must you look off your pomp and glory? See before you the privilege of adoption? Must you look off worldly riches? See before you the riches of the graces of Christ. Must you look off sinful pleasures? See before you fulness of joy. Must you look off your own righteousness? See before you the righteousness of Christ! Isaac Ambrose

1. How much is there if we will only take time to look?
2. Do we know, love, and adore Christ? Look to Him!

3. Consider

a. Hebrews 3:1 Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession

II. What should I do? v10

1. It is already appointed!
2. Acts 9:15, 26:16

What did he appoint? v14-15

1. Mind: For Paul to Know His will
2. Eyes: For Paul to See Him
3. Ears: For Paul to hear his voice
4. Body: For Paul to be a witness to all of what he had seen and heard.

God has a plan for your life. He has a purpose for you. What is it?

1. To glorify Him!
2. How do we glorify Him? By bearing fruit.
3. How can we bear fruit? By abiding in Him.
4. John 15

III. Why do you wait? v16

Ananias is probably wondering....what more evidence do you need?

1. Christ has shown himself to you!
2. He has spoken to you!
3. He has sent me to you...you have been miraculously healed...why are you waiting?
4. Some of you have been listening, considering, hearing His still small voice and you know that you need to respond to the gospel, profess Your faith in Christ...why are you waiting?

What did Paul need to do?

1. **Rise**
 - a. Get up
 - b. Get moving
 - c. That is the first step...and it is often the hardest...the first step.
2. **Be baptized and wash away your sins**
 - a. Public profession
 - b. Hebrews 10:22 *let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water*
3. **Call on His Name**
 - a. Acts 2:21 *AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.*
 - b. Romans 10:13 *for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."*

Why do you wait this morning?

1. Why do you wait to follow Christ?...you know what he has been leading you to do.
2. Why do you wait to obey Christ?...you know where you keep excusing yourself and falling
3. Why do you wait to surrender to Christ?...you know you need to be saved.

Why are you waiting?