

Readings

Scripture

¹¹After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead. ¹²Putting in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. ¹³And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴There we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵And the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage. ¹⁶And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.

¹⁷After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. ¹⁸When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. ¹⁹But because the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against my nation. ²⁰For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain." ²¹And they said to him, "We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. ²²But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

²³When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. ²⁴And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved. ²⁵And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: ²⁶'Go to this people, and say, "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." ²⁷For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' ²⁸Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

³⁰He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, ³¹proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

- Acts 28:11-31 (*English Standard Version*)

Sermon Outline

Without Hindrance
Acts 28:11-31

The Acts of the Apostles
Brad Anderson

Because the word of God continues unhindered, we can take courage... (Acts 28:15, 31)

When?

As we proclaim the gospel... (Acts 28:17-23)

- The Kingdom of God...
- The Lordship of Jesus Christ...

As we welcome the world... (Acts 28:11-16, 24-31)

- To the Jew first...
- And also to the Greek...

Reflection Questions

(taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- How would you feel if you learned that a prominent local pastor had been jailed for anti-government activities?
- Given the long delay, his shipwreck at sea, his continuing prisoner status, and serendipitous fellowship (Acts 28:15), how might Paul feel upon finally arriving in Rome?
- Why might Paul take the initiative to call this meeting with the Jewish leaders in Rome? Four times since this episode began in chapter 21, Paul's innocence has been clearly stated. Why does Luke emphasize this point so strongly?
- How does Acts 28:25-28 serve as a thematic bridge which, after crossing over, means that Christianity is no longer viewed as a narrow Jewish sect (Acts 28:28)?
- How would you characterize the ministry you have in your home? What do you like best about using your home to reach out to others? How do you think you could use it more effectively?
- What are some things that bother your friends about the faith? How do you help them overcome these barriers?
- It is likely that within a few years of this section, the emperor Nero had Paul put to death. How would Acts 28:31 serve as a fitting epithet on Paul's grave?