

And Finally... Acts 28:11-31

Acts began with Jesus saying the disciples would be his witnesses to the end of the earth. Now Paul is heading to Rome, and as the capital of the world it represented the beginning of the ends of the earth. Paul wanted to get there because of how significant it was as a city.

But he arrives as a prisoner. However, even though he is chained the gospel isn't. he faces many hindrances, but Luke can say the gospel went forth unhindered. How come? This matters to us because we face hindrances to the spread of the gospel, so what can we learn from Paul?

Paul's Confidence

Paul faced opposition, and his message caused division. It is the fear of these things that can make us reluctant to share the gospel. Yet Paul didn't give up, but carried on with boldness. Where did that confidence come from?

It came from seeing the gospel at work in the lives of others – seeing it transform them. The Christians in Rome walked 40 miles to greet him, and that gave him courage Luke tells us. If the gospel was powerful enough to cause people to love and serve, then it was worth proclaiming.

But Paul's confidence also came from knowing that God was sovereign. God was not just working in spite of Paul's imprisonment, but through it. When you know that for your own suffering and difficulties, it makes you bold. And Paul saw the opposition of the Jewish leaders as an open door of ministry to the gentiles. They would respond to it.

And so Paul's confidence also lay in the power of the gospel itself.

Paul's Message.

Paul's message was all about Jesus and how the kingdom of God has broken into our age. He kept Jesus central. But the gospel was spoken against everywhere, precisely because if Jesus is Lord, Caesar, and Roman idols, and our idols and ourselves, cannot be. So the gospel challenges all these things, but does so by focusing on Jesus.

Paul's Tactics

Whilst Paul went for people's heads as well as their hearts, he also shared his life with them. He opened his life to them as he opened the Bible with them. We must do the same.

What's it got to do with you?

Acts ends abruptly. It finishes, but it doesn't finish. It leaves you thinking, 'what happens next?' You happen next. You can be Acts chapter 29, and 30 and 31. Because the story of taking the gospel into the world never stops and we are invited to be a part of it. We can either join in on God's mission, or be disobedient. And you don't want to do that!