

Acts: God on Mission through Paul - Pt. 9
Paul Versus the Mob
Acts 21:27-22:24
June 3, 2018

I. What GAVE Paul this COURAGE? (21:27-22:21)

- A. Paul OWNED his whole STORY. (22:1-21)
- B. Paul KNEW his CALLING. (22:14-15,21)
 - 1. To KNOW God's WILL (22:14; Col. 1:27)
 - 2. To SEE JESUS. (22:14)
 - 3. To HEAR God's WORD. (22:14)
 - 4. To WITNESS. (22:15,21)

From Acts 21 until the end of the book we see Paul constantly under fire and telling and retelling his own story. It's a prolonged account of his suffering for the truth of the gospel, most often at the hands of the Jewish people who claim to follow Yahweh. Today we see Paul's incredible courage in the face of this violent opposition.

- 1. Are there parts of your "story" that you would prefer not to "own"? How does Paul's example challenge you in that?
- 2. How clear are you on your own calling? Could you state what God has called you to specifically in a sentence or two?

II. The Mob was MOBILIZED by FEAR. (21:27-31; 22:22)

- A. SEEKING to PROTECT God. (21:28; Acts 17:24-25)
- B. CONTROLLING and CONFINING grace. (22:12-22; Mt 23:13-15)

The mob of Jewish zealots stand in sharp contrast to Paul. They see him as public enemy #1. Their primary goal is to kill him or to get the Roman authorities to do that. In their own minds they are being faithful to their beliefs. But their actions are seeking to undermine the God they claim to worship.

- 3. What things are you afraid of? How often do they monopolize your thoughts?
- 4. What does it mean to you that you don't have to "protect God"? Does that make a difference in the way you live day to day?
- 5. Where do you see the church trying to control or confine grace? Why is that happening and how can you challenge it?

III. COURAGE like Paul or FEAR like the mob?

- A. Accepting GRACE for our whole STORY. (Rom. 5:8; I Tim 1:14-16)
- B. LIVING out our CALLING as a WITNESS. (22:1; Acts 1:8)
- C. GIVING as we have RECEIVED. (22:21; Mt. 10:8)

D. Not GIVING way to FEAR. (Lk 12:32; Jn 14:27; 2 Tim. 1:7)

The question for us becomes, "What will motivate our own lives?" What lies underneath our decisions and drives us toward the future. Obviously the goal is to be like Paul, but sometimes we get sidetracked just like those oppositional Jews of Paul's day. We start acting from the wrong assumptions.

6. Where do you need to let grace wash into your own story?
7. What specific ways do you sense God calling you to live as a witness?
8. What specific "fear" do you feel God calling you to surrender as you read this text?