

Unit 35, Session 5: Paul Preached In Rome

Big Picture Question: Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

Memory Verse: Isaiah 25:1— Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago.

Christ Connection: Being a prisoner in Rome did not stop Paul from sharing his faith. He continued to share the gospel even when people disagreed. The message about Jesus seems foolish to some, but everyone who trusts in Jesus will be saved.

Bible Passage: Acts 28

Find the passages together in your Bibles and read through them together. You could also read the paraphrase of all these passages below in blue. For younger kids, you may want to just read the bolded portions.

Paul's final days of ministry were spent in Rome, preaching and teaching about the good news of Jesus Christ, even while under house arrest (Acts 28:17-31). Following his usual pattern, Paul engaged with the Jews first, advocating for his own innocence and explaining the good news of the gospel (vv. 17-22). The Jews in Rome were intrigued and set a day to come and listen for more information about the branch of Judaism that seemed to be causing such a stir all over the empire. Paul used his time well trying to convince the Jewish leaders of the truth "about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets" (vv. 21-23). Scripture had testified about Jesus all along, and some were convinced by Paul's reasoning. Others, however, disagreed and could not believe what Paul had shared with them. This does not mean that Paul did a poor job of presenting the gospel message or that the gospel message is not moving enough to change the hearts and minds of all who hear it. It simply means that some will accept the message of Jesus Christ and others will reject it. Unfortunately, many of the Jews, who had the truth from the beginning, had grown hard hearted and disbelieving (vv. 24-27). Because of this, the gospel has been made available to Gentiles as well (v. 28), but even they will not all believe. Like Paul, "we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life" (2 Cor. 2:16). We do not peddle God's word for the sake of padding our pockets or living an easy life (v. 17). We are called to lay down our lives, take up our cross, and follow Christ, enduring to the end. Paul sets the example of a life lived faithfully to God right up to the end of his life: "proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance" (Acts 28:31). May we also be found so faithful.

Paul stayed on the Island of Malta for three months; after the ship he was on wrecked while traveling to Rome. Paul healed people who were sick and shared the goodness about Jesus with them. The people on the island were grateful for Paul's help. **Finally, Paul and other prisoners got on another ship and continued their journey to Rome.**

When the ship arrived in Rome, many people came to meet Paul. He was still a prisoner, but **instead of going to jail, Paul was allowed to live by himself in a house.** A soldier stayed with him to guard him.

On his third day in Rome, **Paul asked the Jewish leaders to come to talk to him. Paul told them, "I haven't done anything wrong. The Jews made me a prisoner in Jerusalem and handed me over to the Romans. The Romans wanted to let me go free, but the Jews objected. So I had to ask to speak to Caesar, the most important ruler in Rome.** Still, I haven't done anything wrong."

The Jewish leaders had not heard any reports about Paul doing wrong, but they **wanted to hear more about what he believed. They did know that Paul was a Christian, and they knew that many people did not agree with the teaching of people called Christians.**

So the leaders agreed on a day to meet with Paul. On that day, even more leaders came to hear what Paul had to say. **Paul taught all day about God's kingdom. He pointed to the Scriptures—the Law and the Old Testament prophets—to explain that Jesus is the Messiah.** Some of the Jewish leaders agreed with Paul, but others didn't.

For two whole years, Paul stayed in the house and welcomed everyone who wanted to hear about Jesus. He talked about God's kingdom and about Jesus. He shared the good news of salvation. **Many people listened to Paul's words and believed in Jesus.** Some were Jews, and others were not. The people were filled with joy and hope because they found new life in Jesus.

Paul never stopped teaching about Jesus. Even while he was a prisoner, he wrote letters to different churches to encourage them and remind them about God's love. **Paul helped people and prayed for them. He trusted in God, and the good news spread throughout Rome and beyond.**

If you or your child have questions about what it looks like to follow Jesus in salvation or baptism, Pastor Sam would love to talk with you! Please feel free to contact him at ssiever@lenexabaptist.com.