

Destin Church of Christ

October 29, 2023

Chapter 30: Paul's Final Days

(Acts 20 – 23; 27 – 28, Ephesians 1 – 6; 2 Timothy 1 – 4)

Introduction:

God longs to see us mature, to go deeper in our faith. If we are not careful, we can become content with where we are and forget God's call for us to grow, more and more, into people who live and look like Jesus.

Lesson Breakdown:

- The Journey Continues (Acts 20-21)
- Into the Fire (Acts 21-23)
- Shipwrecked (Acts 27-28)
- A Letter (Ephesians 1-6; 2 Timothy 1-4)

Plot Points:

- Jesus told his followers that they, like him, would be hated; Paul's story proves that this was true for his followers in the early church.
- Paul's ministry was lived out in the context of relationships and discipleship.
- Paul never wasted a moment. Whether writing letters or witnessing to Roman soldiers, he spent his entire life sharing the gospel and caring for the young, growing churches he had planted.

As you watch the video for Session 30, notice some of the main points.

- ✓ Our mission is to conform to the image of Christ for the sake of others.
- ✓ The whole body grows and builds itself up in love.
- ✓ "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God."
- ✓ "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith."
- ✓ We need to individually and collectively align our lives to the Upper Story of God.

UNDERSTAND THE STORY:

➤ Acts 20:

Paul comes to Miletus and sends for the elders of the church in Ephesus to meet him there. (page 439) [Acts 20:13-21]

Paul says he will face chains and tribulations in Jerusalem, but the prospect of testifying to the gospel fills him with joy. (pages 439-440) [Acts 20:22-24]

He tells the people the Holy Spirit has made them overseers, to shepherd the church *of the Lord* which He (Jesus) purchased with His own blood. (page 440) [Acts 20:25-28]

Paul warns against the savage wolves who will preach perverse things. (NIB) [Acts 20:29-31]

Paul tearfully departs Ephesus. (page 440) [Acts 20:36-38]

➤ Acts 21:

In Caesarea, the prophet Agabus binds his own hands and feet with Paul's belt and tells him the Jews in Jerusalem will bind Paul in the same way. Paul says he is willing to die for the Lord Jesus. (page 440) [Acts 21:7-15]

Jews from Asia stir a mob against Paul. (page 441) [Acts 21:27-29]

- Why did the Jews get so worked up when Paul was seen in the temple (v 27)?

Roman soldiers rescue Paul, who asks to be allowed to speak to the crowd. Paul addresses the Jerusalem mob, in Hebrew. (pages 441-442) [Acts 21:30-40]

➤ Acts 22:

Paul delivers a sermon, which is an autobiography, telling of his persecution of Christians and subsequent conversion. (pages 442-443) [Acts 22:1-21]

The crowd riots in response to Paul's message. The commander orders that Paul be flogged. Paul asked the centurion: "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?" The centurion tells the commander that Paul is a Roman. (page 443) [Acts 22:22-26]

- How did a person become a "Roman" citizen? What was the basis of the commander's statement in verse 28: "*With a large sum I obtained this citizenship*"? (page 443) [Acts 22:27-28]
- Why was the Roman commander "afraid" when he realized he had ordered Paul, a Roman citizen, to be put in chains? (page 444) [Acts 22:29]

The next day, wanting "to know for certain why Paul was accused by the Jews," the Roman commander arranges a hearing of the charges against Paul before the Sanhedrin. (page 444) [Acts 22:30]

➤ Acts 23:

Paul rebukes the high priest for ordering him to be struck on the mouth. (page 444) [Acts 23:1-5]

The Sanhedrin's reaction to Paul is split between Pharisees (who do believe in the resurrection of the dead) and the Saducees (who do not). (page 444) [Acts 23:6-9]

Paul is rescued by the Roman commander. Paul is told in a dream that he will go to Rome and testify there. (page 445) [Acts 23:10-11]

Forty Jews vow not to eat or drink until they have set an ambush to kill Paul. Paul's nephew learns of the plot, and Paul is warned. (page 445) [Acts 23:12-22]

Paul escapes to Caesarea, with a full military escort and a letter referring his case to the provincial governor. The letter says that Paul is not worthy of death. Paul awaits trial in Caesarea. (pages 445-446) [Acts 23:23-35]

➤ Acts 27:

Paul is taken by ship to the island of Crete, but a decision is made to sail on, instead of wintering at the city of Fair Havens on the island of Crete. (page 447) [Acts 27:1-8]

The ship encounters great difficulty in a storm and all hope of being saved is given up. (pages 447-448) [Acts 27:9-20]

Paul reveals to the crew that they will not perish, because an angel appeared to him and told him it was God's intention that he appear before Caesar. (page 448) [Acts 23:21-26]

On the fourteenth night of the storm, Paul ministers to the passengers and crew. The ship runs aground, and all are safe, in fulfillment of God's promise through Paul. (pages 448-449) [Acts 23:27-41]

The centurion, wanting to save Paul, prevents the soldiers from killing prisoners to stop them escaping. (pages 449-450) [Acts 23:42-44]

➤ Acts 28:

Paul arrives on Malta. (page 450) [Acts 28:1-2]

- What happened to Paul right after he was shipwrecked on his journey? (page 450) [Acts 28:3]
- What did the islanders think this was a sign of? (page 450) [Acts 28:4]
- Who or what did they think Paul was? (page 450) [Acts 28:5-6]

Paul heals the father of Publius, a famous citizen, and many others, and finally arrives at Rome. (page 450) [Acts 28:7-16]

Paul asked to meet with the Jewish leaders, telling them he had been examined by the Romans, but they found no cause for putting him to death. (page 451) [Acts 28:17-22]

Paul meets the Jewish leaders and stresses that Moses and the prophets prophesied the coming of Christ. (page 451) [Acts 28:23-24]

The Jewish leaders agree among themselves and depart. Paul quotes from Isaiah (Isaiah 6:9-11), saying they will hear but not understand. (page 451) [Acts 28:25-27]

The Jews have a dispute amongst themselves. (page 452) [Acts 28:28-29]

Paul spends two years in rented accommodation in Rome, freely preaching the gospel, before his trial in Caesar's court. (page 452) [Acts 28:30-31]

➤ Ephesians 1:

Paul sends greetings to the saints in Ephesus. (page 452) [Ephesians 1:1-2]

God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ. (page 452) [Ephesians 1:3-5]

We are redeemed through Christ's blood. (page 452) [Ephesians 1:7-10]

Paul continues to pray for the Ephesians. He reminds the people that God raised Christ from the dead and gave him great power, putting all things under his feet, including the church. (page 453) [Ephesians 1:16-23]

➤ Ephesians 2:

He made you alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins. (page 453) [Ephesians 2:1-3]

You once walked according to the prince of the power of the air, but we have been raised up to sit in the heavenly places in Jesus Christ. (page 453) [Ephesians 2:4-7]

You have been saved by faith, the gift of God, and not works. We are God's workmanship. (page 453) [Ephesians 2:8-10]

Even though they were once Gentiles in flesh, without Christ, having no hope, have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (pages 453-454) [Ephesians 2:11-13]

He (Jesus) is our peace and has broken down the wall of separation. Through Him we have access to the Father. Jesus Christ reconciles Jew and Gentile, now fellow citizens in the household of God. The apostles and prophets are the foundations, and Christ is the cornerstone. (page 454) [Ephesians 2:14-22]

- What did Paul mean when he told the Ephesians: “*you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*”? (page 454) [Ephesians 2:19-22]

➤ Ephesians 3:

From Christ, we become part of a family of heaven and earth. Paul prays that Christ may be known to the Ephesians, and dwell in their hearts. (page 454) [Ephesians 3:14-19]

God is above all we do or think; to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations. (page 454) [Ephesians 3:20-21]

➤ Ephesians 4:

Walk worthy of your calling, with gentleness and lowliness, to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace. (page 455) [Ephesians 4:1-6]

➤ Ephesians 5:

(NIB) [Ephesians 5:1-21]

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (page 455) [Ephesians 5:21]

Wives must submit to their husbands, as to the Lord. As the church is subject to Christ, so is the wife subject to the husband. (page 455) [Ephesians 5:22-24]

Husbands must love their wives, as Christ loves the church, cleansing and purifying her (note gender). A husband must love a wife as himself. (page 455) [Ephesians 5:25-33]

➤ Ephesians 6:

Children must obey their parents in the Lord. Parents must bring up their children in the Lord. (page 455) [Ephesians 6:1-4]

Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. (pages 455-456) [Ephesians 6:23-24]

➤ 2 Timothy 1:

In his greeting, Paul defines himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. Grace, mercy and peace, and a joyful remembrance of Timothy’s faith. (page 456) [2 Timothy 1:1-5]

God has not given us a spirit of fear. (NIB) [2 Timothy 1:7]

Paul invites Timothy to share his sufferings. (pages 456-457) [2 Timothy 1:8-12]

➤ 2 Timothy 2:

Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Spread the word among faithful men. Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. As in athletics, one must compete according to set rules. (page 457) [2 Timothy 2:1-5]

One must also be hard-working, like a farmer. (page 457) [2 Timothy 2:6-7]

Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to Paul's gospel. Paul suffers trouble, but the word of God is not chained. (page 457) [2 Timothy 2:8-9]

Paul endures all things for the sake of the elect. (NIB) [2 Timothy 2:10]

➤ 2 Timothy 3:

Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (pages 457-458) [2 Timothy 3:10-12]

- What will happen to evil people and impostors? (page 457) [2 Timothy 3:13]

You must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. (page 457) [2 Timothy 3:14-15]

All scripture is divinely inspired, and profitable for doctrine, reproof and instruction. (pages 457-458) [2 Timothy 3:16-17]

➤ 2 Timothy 4:

Paul is being poured out as a drink offering because is close for him to depart. He has fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith. (page 458) [2 Timothy 4:6-8]

Paul hopes some of friends come to visit him, and he asks them to bring the cloak he left with Carpus at Troas, and his scrolls and parchments. (page 458) [2 Timothy 4:9-13]

Becoming like Jesus takes a lifetime ... and then some. Day by day, we need to become more like Christ. As we do, others will be able to see Christ in us and through us.

Next week ... we'll look at the final words of John through the revelation and how those words bring the Upper Story full circle. Read chapter 31 of *The Story*: "The End of Time."

Revelation 1 – 5; 19 – 22