

PAUL IN ROME

Acts 28:15-30

STRUCTURE

Key-person: Paul

Key-location: Rome

Key-repetitions:

- Paul spoke: invited Jewish leaders to his house and gave his defense (Ac 28:17-20); spoke all day to Jewish leaders about the Kingdom of God (Ac 28:23); preached and taught about Jesus (Ac 28:31).
- House: Paul was allowed to live by himself (Ac 28:16); Paul invited influential Jews to his house (Ac 28:17); Jewish leaders came to Paul's house and he spoke all day (Ac 28:23); stayed in a rented house for two years (Ac 28:30); welcomed all who came to see him (Ac 28:30).

Key-attitudes:

- Calmness and tranquility.
- Paul's passion to talk about Jesus.

Initial-situation:

Jews from Asia falsely accused Paul of bringing non-Jews into the Jerusalem temple courtyard. A mob seized Paul and beat him. The Roman commander rescued and arrested Paul. The crowd kept shouting, "Kill him!"

The commander discovered some Jews had conspired to kill Paul, and he sent Paul to Governor Felix in Caesarea. Governor Felix wanted to do the Jews a favor, so he left Paul in prison for two years. Festus replaced Governor Felix. The Jews requested for Governor Festus to send Paul to Jerusalem for trial. Paul countered with a request to be tried by Emperor Caesar. Paul and other prisoners were handed over to a Roman centurion officer to be taken to Rome. The travelers boarded a ship and sailed for Italy. They were shipwrecked on the Island of Malta.

Initial-problem:

After three months on the island of Malta, Paul and his companions put out to sea in a ship which had wintered at the island. The travelers arrived in Rome.

Final-situation:

For two years, Paul stayed in Rome in his own rented house. He welcomed all who came to see him. He preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLE STORY

After three months on the Island of Malta, Paul and his companions put out to sea in a ship which had wintered at the island. The travelers arrived in Rome. Paul was allowed to live by himself, but he had a soldier who guarded him. Paul's right arm was always chained to the left arm of the soldier who guarded him (Ac 28:11-16).

Three days after arriving in Rome, Paul invited influential Jewish leaders to meet with him at his house (Ac 28:17-23).

Paul told the Jewish leaders, "I haven't done anything against our Jewish people or against our ancestors' customs. I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. The Romans cross-examined me and wanted to release me. But the Jews objected and I was compelled to appeal to be judged by Caesar. I don't have any charges to bring against my own Jewish people. I only wish to escape the death penalty. That's why I asked to speak with you. I'm in chains because of the Messiah the Jewish people hope for."

The Jewish leaders wanted to hear more from Paul. A day was designated and a large number of influential Jews went to Paul's house. Paul spoke all day long and explained to them the Kingdom of God. He tried to convince them about Jesus, using the Law of Moses and writings of the Prophets. Some were convinced by what Paul said; others refused to believe. They disagreed among themselves and left (Ac 28:24-29).

For two years Paul stayed in Rome in his own rented house. He welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance, he preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ (Ac 28:30-31).

The book of Acts ends with Paul in Rome, waiting for his trial before Caesar, the Roman Emperor.

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What restrictions were placed on Paul when he was in Rome?
2. What have limitations, beyond your control, been placed on you?
3. How can you serve God in spite of the limitations placed on you?
4. When Paul arrived in Rome, why did he invite Jewish leaders to meet with him in his home?
5. How did Paul use his rented house in Rome?

6. How can you use your home to advance God's Kingdom?
7. When Luke ended the book of Acts, what were Paul's circumstances?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Christians can use their own houses to evangelize others.** Paul arrived in Rome and was allowed to live in a rented house. Paul summoned Jewish leaders to his house in order to speak to them about Jesus (Ac 28:16-28). For two years Paul stayed in Rome in his own rented house. He welcomed all who came to see him and he preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ (Ac 28:30-31).
2. **A person may recognize an injustice against himself without seeking revenge against those who wronged him.** Paul told the Jewish leaders in Rome that he appealed to be judged by the emperor because of false accusations Jews in Jerusalem made against him. He didn't have any charges to bring against his own Jewish people; however, he only wished to escape the death penalty (Ac 28:17-19). Jesus taught his followers to love their enemies and pray for those who persecuted them (Mat 5:44).
3. **Often God appears to be in no hurry, and his servants must wait patiently for God to fulfill his promises.** Shortly after being arrested in Jerusalem, the Lord told Paul, "Take courage! You spoke about me in Jerusalem. You must speak about me in Rome" (Ac 23:11). Paul was then sent from Jerusalem to Caesarea to be judged by Governor Felix. Although Felix knew that Paul didn't deserve to be arrested, he left him in prison for two years (Ac 24:24-27). Paul's travel to Rome was delayed because of a shipwreck (Ac 27:27 - 28:11). Once Paul arrived in Rome, he was under house arrest for two years while waiting for trial by the emperor (Ac 28:30).
4. **The book of Acts recorded the history of the Holy Spirit's actions in the lives of the followers of Christ, and it is an open-ended book.** The book of Acts ended in an unexpectedly open-ended fashion. Paul remained a prisoner under house arrest for two whole years. During this time Paul was allowed to have visitors to whom he proclaimed the gospel (Ac 28:30-31). Our stories will not become part of the Bible; however, they may still be recorded in the history of the Holy Spirit's actions in the lives of Christians.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Interactive Sharing:

- Paul remained a prisoner under house arrest for two whole years. Invite listeners to share about “dead time” experiences when they were waiting for something to happen.
- Paul invited Jewish leaders into his home and talked to them about Jesus. Invite listeners to share ideas about how they could use their homes to tell others about Jesus.