

INTRODUCTION

- * We have titled this exegetical study of the Book of Acts - "Unveiling the Mystery." That "Mystery" is the church. In our study of Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we saw the proclamation of how God had extended His grace in Christ Jesus to both the Jews and the Gentiles. In Christ, both Jews and Gentiles come to the Father, through the Spirit, as "one new man." Through the sacrificial death of Christ, and His ensuing victory over death, the middle wall of partition - the works of the law - had been removed. This new work was the result of the new covenant - and would be referred to as "the church."
- * God began "the church" through the original apostles of Christ. We saw how they gathered in prayer waiting for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them as Jesus had declared. Then 3,000 Jews were saved and added to their number on the day of Pentecost.
- * When persecution arose, the church scattered from Jerusalem and began to take the good news of redemption in Christ to other regions. God used Philip to take the Gospel to the Samaritans and He used Peter to open up the gospel to the Gentiles proper - at the house of Cornelius.
- * Saul of Tarsus had risen up to destroy that work and went as far as Damascus to arrest followers of "The Way." But, God had other plans for Saul and took him from being a persecutor of the church to being a promoter of the church! It would be Paul (as his name would become) who God would use to greatly expand the church into the regions of the Gentiles.
- * Today, we witness the full-circle of Paul's ministry in this mystery of the church. From favorite "son" to hated "enemy" ... all for the name of Jesus!

INSTRUCTION**I. THE P_____ ... TO THE E_____ (21:15-25)****A. The Re_____ of the Apostle (v. 15-20)****B. The Re_____ of the Elders (v. 20-25)****II. THE P_____ ... AT THE T_____ (21:24-27)****A. Paul's Submission ...**

1. TO THE E_____

2. TO THE L_____

B. Paul's Completion of the Vow**III. THE P_____ ... BY THE J_____ (21:27-36)****A. The False Accusation (v. 27-29)****B. The Beating (v. 30-32)****C. The Deliverance (v. 33-36)****IV. THE P_____ ... OF HIS D_____ (21:37 - 22:24; cf. Acts 25:16; 2 Tim 4:16; 1 Peter 3:15)****A. His T_____ - The Revelation of the M_____ (22:1-16)****B. His M_____ - The Revelation of the M_____ (22:12-21)****INTROSPECTION**

- * What are you willing to suffer for the name of Jesus?
- * How would you describe your level of submission to dictates of the Lord?
- * Are you prepared to give a defense to anyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you?
- * Is there a need to change the way you think and therefore the way you act?

INTERACTION ... Thoughts & Questions to ponder for later discussion

- * If persecution is on the horizon for the church of the United States, how could/should believers prepare themselves beforehand? Can we? Should we?