

## STUDY – Acts 28:11-31

Initial Reflection: Read Acts 28:11-31.

What stands out?

Is there anything you don't understand?

### The journey (as preparation), vv.11-15

1. Read Acts 23:11, and 27:23-25. How do we see the fulfillment of these divine messages to Paul, in his final journey to Rome?

*Paul is encouraged by God through the discouraging (and dangerous) 'storms' (metaphorically and physically) on his way to Rome. This encouragement now continues through the people of God (verses 14 and 15).*

*And, as the Lord promised, Paul arrives safely at Rome.*

2. What is significant about the mention of the figurehead on the Alexandrian ship Paul is travelling in?

*It's a reminder of the cultural context Paul is ministering in. The ancient Romans and Greeks were polytheists (believing in multiple gods), which explains the twin gods who were believed to be sons of Zeus and responsible for ensuring smooth travel by the sea.*

*And yet, as we've seen repeatedly through the book of Acts: any safety or security that Paul (and anyone else) experience, is all and only from the gracious, merciful hand of the Lord!*

### The introduction (as illustration), vv.16-28

3. What is ironic about Paul's concluding statement from his initial address, recorded at the end of verse 20?

*Paul is innocent of every charge, and the Jewish leaders in Rome are aware of this (verse 21), yet they've heard so much about what he's reportedly saying against Judaism.*

*Also, the reason for Paul's imprisonment is the very thing that he's devoted his life to proclaiming to Jew, and Gentile alike (always, first to the Jews in the synagogue): the hope of Israel. That is: Jesus!*

*Jesus is who Paul is proclaiming, and is the hope – the only hope – to the people of Israel, who are waiting for Jesus, the promised Messiah. Yet it's this, that sees him bound.*

*That which chains Paul (physically) is that which compels him in his ministry. Paul still has hope for Israel.*

Do you have hope for the central west of NSW?

How does this compel you to share Jesus?

4. How does Paul's introductory ministry across these verses, mirror that of his first mission trip with Barnabas (see Acts 13 and 14)?

*The mixed response Paul has here (verses 24-25), is exactly that which he and Barnabas see from their gospel proclamation in modern-day Turkey (Acts 13 and 14): there's acceptance (belief and salvation), and there's rejection.*

*Meaning, they don't give up, but continue this Gospel proclamation, now to the Gentiles (verse 28, and Acts 13:46-48).*

5. Can you see the glorious tension between God's responsibility for salvation, and humanity's responsibility for condemnation, in verses 26-28)?

*Invoking Isaiah 6, Paul points out that those in his audience who are rejecting Jesus (of which they're responsible), are just like their ancestors from several hundreds of years earlier who rejected God and His prophet Isaiah.*

*And yet, as the quote from Isaiah 6 concludes, there's hope: the same hope for everyone still today...that the salvation of God will come to them: eyes opened, ears hearing, hearts understanding, and God will graciously turn and heal them (God's responsibility for salvation).*

What are the implications of this, for our ministry, as we share Jesus for life?

*We don't know who God appoints for eternal life (Acts 13:48), so being opposed by hard hearts (or any other challenging circumstances) shouldn't deter us from the Gospel proclamation that God has instructed us to do. There will be those who will listen (verse 28)! That's why, we share Jesus for life.*

#### The ministry (as continuation), vv.30-31)

6. Read Acts 1:1-3. What's significant about the mention there, along with in verse 31 of Acts 11, of 'the Kingdom of God?'

*This is an important book-end to the book of Acts, reinforcing that this book is really about the acts of the risen, ascended King Jesus! It's a detailed account of the early acts under God and His saving rule: as He powerfully enables and purposes the good news of His life, death and resurrection to spread to the ends of the earth, forming the church – His church – a people from all tribes and nations, called into His eternal Kingdom.*

Reflect (or discuss) what has stood out to you throughout this teaching from the book of Acts.

How does this help you in your daily walk with Jesus?

How does this help you in the ministry you commit to in your church?