

SERIES – THE JESUS STORY CONTINUES

The End of the Beginning

Acts 28:16-24; 30-31

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Acts 28:16-24; 30-31

- I. The Book of Acts and us
 - The story of how the early Church began and the Gospel spread is a continuation of the story of Jesus
 - After Acts, the story continued with the history of the Church
 - We are part of the ongoing story and we are responsible for passing it on to the next generation
- II. Paul's trip to Rome
 - The ship he sailed on sank off the shore of the island of Malta
 - The Maltese people thought Paul was a god when he got bit by a poisonous snake but did not die
 - After three months he sailed on another ship and arrived in Rome where he was put under house arrest for 2 years
 - He shared the Gospel with some Jews who visited him and some became believers
- III. Our responsibilities in passing on the story of Jesus
 - Seek to understand those who see things differently than we do
 - Be encouraged that the global Church is growing in spite of what we see happening here
 - Demonstrate the love of Christ to those who are turning away from the Church
 - Point people to Jesus so they see that he's more than an idea – he's a living reality that can change their lives

¹⁶ When we arrived in Rome, Paul was permitted to have his own private lodging, though he was guarded by a soldier. ¹⁷ Three days after Paul's arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, "Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. ¹⁸ The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. ¹⁹ But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. ²⁰ I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come."

²¹ They replied, "We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here. ²² But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere."

²³ So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul's lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. ²⁴ Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe...

³⁰ ... For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his own expense. He welcomed all who visited him, ³¹ boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one tried to stop him.

We have a story to tell that is life changing. Let's do our part to keep the story alive so that love wins out in the end.