

Paul's Gospel Meetings in Rome

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from an outline by Mark Copeland)

Introduction: Acts 28:17-31

- A. When Paul arrived at Rome following an eventful sea voyage, he was immediately placed under house arrest - Acts 28:16
- B. He waited two years to make his appeal to Caesar - Acts 25:9-12, 28:30
- C. However, he was quite active during that time
 - 1. He met with the Jewish leaders in Rome
 - 2. He received and taught many visitors, including his guards
 - 3. He wrote four epistles (Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians)
 - 4. Even when restricted, Paul was productive in the Kingdom

I. PAUL'S MEETINGS WITH JEWISH LEADERS

- A. The first meeting, Paul called for the leaders of the Jews in Rome - Acts 28:17
 - 1. He explained the reason for his appeal to Caesar - Acts 28:17-20
 - a. He had done nothing against the Jews or their customs. Roman officials wanted to let him go, but Jews in Jerusalem opposed it, forcing him to appeal to Caesar
 - b. It was for the hope of Israel he was bound in chains - Acts 26:6-8
 - 2. The Jewish leaders wanted to hear more - Acts 28:21-22
 - a. In over two years, there is not record of the Jews in Jerusalem contacting the Jews in Rome regarding Paul.
 - b. Could it be that they knew they had no standing?
 - c. They just wanted to hear more about the Kingdom of Christ that they mistakenly believed to be a new "sect" of the Jews
 - 3. Paul accomplished a great deal in this first meeting
 - a. He established his credentials as a credible witness for Christ.
 - b. He made a connection between his preaching of the Gospel of Christ with the prophesied hope of the Jews.
 - c. He captured their interest in hearing more of his message.
- B. In second meeting, even more came to hear Paul - Acts 28:23
 - 1. He taught from morning to evening - Acts 28:23
 - 2. He taught about Jesus and the kingdom of God - Acts 8:12
 - 3. He taught from the Law of Moses and prophets - Luke 24:44-47
 - 4. Their reaction was mixed; some were persuaded, while others disbelieved, the same reactions of hearers today - Acts 28:24
 - 5. Paul concluded with a solemn warning, the same kind of warning given to hearers today - Acts 28:25-28
 - a. He warned them about being hard of hearing and closing their eyes to truth - Isa. 6:9-10
 - b. If they will not hear the Gospel, God will find people who will - Isa. 42:1, 6
 - 6. They left disputing among themselves - Acts 28:29
 - 7. Paul had multiple repeat meetings in Rome - Acts 28:30-31
 - 8. Paul's Gospel meetings in Rome are little different than our own.

II. PAUL'S CHARACTER IN ROME

- A. He rejoiced in his sufferings - Col. 1:24; Phil. 2:16-18
- B. He magnified Christ in his sufferings - Phil. 1:20
- C. He was given the opportunity to practice what he preached - Rom. 5:3-5

III. PAUL'S CONFIDENCE IN ROME

- A. He fully expected to be released from prison
 - 1. He made plans to visit Philemon - Philemon 22
 - 2. He wanted to visit the Philippians - Phil. 1:23-27, 2:24
 - 3. He was released briefly and traveled for a while
 - a. By references made in 1st & 2nd Timothy, & Titus
 - b. By the testimony of those who came along later: Chrysostom, Jerome, Eusebius, and even Clement of Rome, who lived in the latter part of the first century A.D.
- B. J.W. McGarvey notes in his commentary on Acts: "No two years of Paul's life were better filled with earnest labor than these two spent in his Roman prison"
 - 1. Phil. 1:12-14
- C. Paul didn't need to be free to travel to be effective; God wants us to grow where we are planted and to produce fruit regardless of our condition
 - 1. We learn from Paul that good can flourish in the soil of hardship if we glorify God regardless of the circumstances - Phil 4:11-13