



## The Last Chapter of Paul's Life

- Twenty years have passed since Paul's conversion to Christ.
- He traveled on three missionary journeys, welcomed Gentiles into the church, trained the next generation of Christian leaders, wrote six letters that would shape the theology of the Christian church, and altered the future of Western civilization.
- All his success came at a cost, but he never gave up!

*...I've been imprisoned much more often. I've been beaten more times than I can count. I've faced death many times. <sup>24</sup> I received the "forty lashes minus one" from the Jews five times. <sup>25</sup> I was beaten with rods three times. I was stoned once. I was shipwrecked three times. I spent a day and a night on the open sea. <sup>26</sup> I've been on many journeys. I faced dangers from rivers, robbers, my people, and Gentiles. I faced dangers in the city, in the desert, on the sea, and from false brothers and sisters. <sup>27</sup> I faced these dangers with hard work and heavy labor, many sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, often without food, and in the cold without enough clothes.*

*<sup>28</sup> Besides all the other things I could mention, there's my daily stress because I'm concerned about all the churches.*

2 Corinthians 11:23–28 (CEB)

## Paul Goes to Jerusalem

- Paul and his traveling companions go to deliver the offering he collected from among the new Gentile believers in central Turkey.
- Surprisingly, we have no evidence that the leaders of the Jerusalem church express any gratitude for the gift or the sacrifice of the Gentile Christians who gave it.
- Paul tells James and the other church leaders what God has been doing among the new Gentile believers. The leaders reply:

*...“You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. <sup>21</sup> They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. <sup>22</sup> What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come...”*

Acts 21:20–22 (NIV)

## Paul Arrested at the Temple

- While at the Temple, Paul was recognized by some Jews from Asia (likely from the city of Ephesus).  
*...“Fellow Israelites, help us! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple and defiled this holy place.”*

Acts 21:28 (NIV)

- **FACT:** Paul never brought Greeks (Gentiles) into the temple, but the accusation stirred the crowd and the damage had been done.

### Off to Prison Again

- The Jewish mob was going to kill Paul, but he was rescued by Roman guards and transferred from Jerusalem to Caesarea by the Sea and put in jail. He remained imprisoned for two years.
- During his two years in jail, Paul testified before two Roman governors and King Agrippa II. King Agrippa II said,

...“*This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment.*”

Acts 26:31 (NIV)

### Off to Rome to Appeal to the Emperor

- This 2000-mile, one-month voyage took six months.
- Shipwrecked again! Ship struck a sandbar off the coast of Malta.
- He was bitten by a poisonous snake, but did not die or get ill.

### Rome at Last! But What Happened?

- Paul arrived in Rome in 60 A.D.

*When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.* Acts 28:16 (NIV)

*For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!*

Acts 28:30–31 (NIV)

### Mystery of Mysteries

The Book of Acts suddenly comes to an end. What happened to Paul? Was he acquitted and released? Did he die in prison? Was he executed by Rome?

### Likely Outcome Based on Church Tradition

- Years 60–62 A.D.: While under house arrest in Rome, Paul writes Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon. All these letters clearly state that Paul was in prison or chains when he wrote them.
- Years 62–64: Based on Paul’s letters of Titus and 1 and 2 Timothy, it appears that he was released from house arrest and made a fourth missionary journey.
- July 64: Fire breaks out in Rome destroying much of the city and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless. Roman historian Tacitus writes stating that Nero orchestrated the fire in order to rebuild Rome to his liking, and blamed the fire on Christians.
- Nero orders arrest of Christian leaders—Paul and Peter among them. Paul and Peter both placed in Mamertine Prison to await execution.

### Paul’s Death

- Paul was taken from Mamertine Prison to where the Church of St. Paul at the Three Fountains is today. There he was beheaded for his faith after testifying to the gospel before Nero.
- His burial is located in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

What won’t happen if you don’t do what God has called you to do?