

# The Fearless Apostle Paul

(Acts 28:30-31)

- Introduction:
1. I don't know of a better, "one-sentence-summary" of Paul's life than (Acts 28:31).
  2. I have never known a more courageous man than Paul!
  3. We have a 2<sup>nd</sup> century description of the physical appearance of Paul.
    - a. "Quite small, bald-headed, bow-legged, with knees far apart, with meeting eyebrows, large eyes, a long nose and a red, florid face" (The Acts of Paul and Thecla – circa 150 A.D.).
    - b. He was also said to be about 4'7" tall.
    - c. But don't miss this (Galatians 6:17).
  4. My aim in this lesson is to help you gain a better appreciation for the apostle Paul and to be emboldened by his courage.

## I. Paul's Conversion

- A. (Acts 9:1-25).
- B. He had the courage to admit he was wrong and change (Acts 9:20).
- C. He had the courage to continue knowing he would suffer (Acts 9:15-16; 20:22-23; 21:11-14).
- D. He had to escape a city by being let down through the city wall in a basket to avoid being killed, yet he continued (Acts 9:23-25).

## II. Paul's Perspective

- A. (Acts 14:1-3).
- B. Paul has already had an attempt on his life (Acts 9:23-25), been expelled from a region (Acts 13:50), and now he find more trouble.
- C. The people's minds are poisoned against Paul.
- D. Paul wasn't one to run from opposition.
- E. Paul shows us a different model. Hardship isn't reason to leave, but to stay!

## III. Paul's Selflessness

- A. (Acts 16:11-40).
- B. There were several ways to become a Roman citizen.
  1. By being born a citizen.
  2. By completion of military service (25 years)!
  3. By reward.
  4. By a grant.
  5. By a financial gift.
- C. Paul was a Roman citizen by birth (Acts 22:28).
- D. There were great advantages of Roman citizenship.
  1. The right to be free.
  2. The right to vote.

3. The right to entertainment.
  4. The right to be exempt from certain taxes.
  5. The right to not be beaten.
  6. The right to avoid ignominious deaths.
- E. This is huge for Paul, and he used this right to protect himself (Acts 22:24-29).
- F. But note what happened in Acts 16.
1. Paul endured a beating without informing them he was a Roman citizen.
  2. But why?
    - a. Went to the river instead of the synagogue (Acts 16:13).
    - b. Women were present (Acts 16:13).
    - c. It required a quorum of at least 10 Jews for a city to have a synagogue.
    - d. Paul converted these women (Acts 16:14-16).
    - e. These women would have been easy marks for persecution for being Christians by the authorities.
    - f. Could it be that Paul took this beating so that he could have an upper hand over the authorities so that they would not harass or persecute these women? Seems likely.
- G. What would you be willing to sacrifice for the good of the church?
- Conclusion:
1. I hope this has whetted your appetite for appreciating our brother Paul.
  2. He was a great man; one that I look up to and respect.
  3. May we develop the fearlessness and courage of Paul!