

Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

Date of Sermon: Oct 15th 2017

Speaker: David Lawrence

Title: Out of Control?

Introduction: Chapters 21, 22 & 23 describe Paul's return to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey through Turkey and Greece.

Review: Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

Read: Acts 22:22-23:35

Reflect:

- In what ways is Paul *in danger* on his return to Jerusalem?
 - Paul was expecting his journey to Jerusalem to be fraught with danger: why? (21:10-11)
 - Did Paul expect that following Jesus would make him immune from trouble? (21:12-14)
 - Paul understood that as a follower of the way of Jesus, he would be required to walk the same path that Jesus walked. Both Jesus and Paul taught their followers that trouble would follow those walking the way of Jesus (e.g. John 16:33; 2 Timothy 1:8).
 - How do we react to this?
 - Is there a sense that we expect following Jesus to mean that our troubles disappear (as we sometimes sing!)?
 - What forms might our 'suffering' take in the Western world?
 - What if we do NOT suffer for being a Christian? Is there something wrong with us?!
 - Why do you think Paul was willing to go on to Jerusalem despite the warnings? Are there clues in his letter to the church in Rome (Romans 8:28-39) and in his letter to the church in Philippi (Philippians 3:7-14)
 - What lessons are there here for us?

Leaders: feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but
do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect – Respond
and **DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!**

Thornbury Baptist Church:

Following the Way of Jesus: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

- In what circumstances might members in the group be facing opposition or danger of some kind? What strategies, perspectives or encouragement might they draw from Paul?

- In what ways is Paul *protected* in his return to Jerusalem?
 - Saved by... ? (Acts 21:33-36)
 - Saved by... ? (Acts 22:22-26)
 - Saved by... ? (Acts 23:9-11)
 - Saved by... ? (Acts 23:16)
 - Saved by... ? (Acts 23:22-24)

 - Despite Paul's many experiences of deliverance by a diverse range of characters and circumstances, how does he account for his deliverance (2 Timothy 4:16-18)

 - Paul saw the many 'practical' acts of deliverance that he experienced as evidence that Jesus was standing by him, and delivering him "from the lion's mouth". Is there ever a tendency for us to see 'ordinary' things (Roman soldiers; Roman citizenship; an attentive nephew) as something *other* than 'Jesus standing by us'? Why is this? How might we become more aware of and appreciative of 'Jesus standing by us' in the daily circumstances of our lives?

And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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