

A Mission Worth Dying For

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[0 : 00] Hallelujah! And thank you for tuning into this message by David Entry at Carish Church. As we journey in this season of great awakening,! May God pour fresh life into you through His world!

and align you more deeply with His purpose. Acts 21, let's read from verse 15. It says that, And after those days we took up our carriages and went up to Jerusalem.

And there went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea and brought with them one Nassan of Cyprus, an old disciple with whom we should lodge.

And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following, Paul went in with us unto James, and also the elders were present.

And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought amongst the Gentiles by His ministry. And when they had heard it, they glorified the Lord and said unto Him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealers of the law.

[1 : 17] And they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

What is it therefore? The multitudes must need come together, for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this thing we say to thee.

We have four men which have a vow on them. Take them and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads, and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing.

But that thou thyself also walketh utterly, and keepeth the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such things, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself, with them entered into the temple to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

[2 : 40] And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stared up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help!

This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people and the law, and this place. And further brought Greeks also into the temple, and had polluted the holy place.

For they had seen before with him in the city, Trifermos and Ephesians, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together, and they took Paul, drew him out of the temple, and forthwith the doors were shut.

And as they were about to kill him, Tidans came to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in Apple, who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them.

And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, the left beating Paul. Here is the reading of God's word. Father, we thank you for the privilege to be together to feast in your word.

[3 : 53] We pray that feed us by yourself, to the glory of your name, in Jesus name. Amen. Hallelujah. The songwriter said, Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.

Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine, air of salvation, purchase of God, born of his spirit, washed in his blood. This is my story. This is my song.

Praising my savior all the day long. This is my story. This is my song. Praising my savior all day long. Hallelujah.

When you are genuinely saved, there will always be praise in your heart to the Lord, because it's the greatest of all blessings. Now, we saw how Paul told them he's going to Jerusalem.

Acts chapter 19, he said in his spirit to go to Jerusalem. In Acts chapter 20, at Melitus, he told the elders of the Ephesus church. What he said to them was, he says that, Indeed now, you will not see my face again.

[4 : 56] He said, I will not, because he was going to Jerusalem. And he says that, I don't know what lies ahead of me. Verse 23 of Acts chapter 20, except that in every city, the Holy Spirit is indicating that bones and afflictions are with me.

24 says, Nevertheless, none of these things move me, nor count my life dear to myself. And then in Acts chapter 21, the disciples in Tyre told him, verse 4, that he shouldn't go to Jerusalem, because they could tell by the spirit.

They had supernatural intelligence. Spirit led insight that as he goes to Jerusalem, he's going to face the worst crisis of his life. So they picked it up.

So they told him, but Paul, and he reminded him, that's the brethren. They were disciples and they were brothers. They are not enemies. Then in Philip's house in Caesarea, Agabus shows up in the verse 10, and he typologically prophesies that whoever owns this belt or this ghetto, King James says, as he goes to Jerusalem, this is how the Jews are going to bind him and then give him to the Romans.

And so they were all concerned, including Luke, the one who was doing the writing. The first time he said, we and the brothers there, we told him, Paul, for goodness sake, don't go.

[6 : 18] And Paul said, why are you saying these things to break my heart? Verse 13 said, I'm not only ready to suffer. You are talking about suffering, but I'm ahead of you.

I'm ready to embrace death if it means fulfilling my assignment. So, so long as he was concerned, going to Jerusalem was part of his assignment because he, because he hinted it in the chapter 20, verse 24, that none of these things move me, nor account of my life dear to myself, that I might finish my race with joy and the ministry which I've received.

So that means that, watch this, going to Jerusalem, so long as he was concerned, was part of fulfilling his mission and his assignment. He could not, not go to Jerusalem because if he aborts his mission to Jerusalem, that means that he has aborted the fulfillment of his assignment.

Because he's, he believed and he knew that his assignment extend into the journey to Jerusalem.

So, the spirit was telling him that this assignment is fraught and is going to be loaded with crisis and pain and persecution and bonds and affliction.

He said, I know it. The spirit didn't say I shouldn't fulfill my assignment because of that. Because, I know to fulfill my assignment, I have to go to Jerusalem, but I also know that when I get to Jerusalem, it's going to be very bad.

[7 : 43] It's going to be tumultuous for me. Then it appears in Caesarea, and Nagarbus was prophesying that this is what's about to happen. If you were a soul, you know it. You're not surprised.

So, it's just confirmation of all you've been saying. But, the scariness of the thing made his companions and close allies advise him, don't go.

And then he said, no, I'm ready to die so I can fulfill my mission. Then, they concluded, well, let the will of God be done. So, they concluded that the will of God be done, even if it means that he's going to.

So, they knew what Paul was insisting was likely in line with God's will. There have been few theological submissions and discourses that suppose that Paul was disobedient to the Spirit.

So, our pastors recently asked me that in the verse 4 of chapter 21, the Bible says that the believers, the disciples, said, finally, they stayed there seven days and told Paul by the Spirit.

[8 : 52] So, they were not just saying from their mind. They were telling Paul by the Spirit that, don't go to Jerusalem. So, he's concluding that the Spirit was saying to Paul, don't go to Jerusalem.

No. The reason why they were telling Paul by the Spirit is, they could tell by the Spirit. Were they right? Yes. By the Spirit they could discern. Like Paul has already said that the Spirit in every city has been, that's a very pivotal point.

Because in Acts chapter 19, verse 21, he was determined in his spirit to go to Jerusalem, then from there, Rome. Okay. Then in Acts chapter 20, verse 23, he says that the Spirit is indicating in every, the Holy Spirit is indicating in every city.

So, getting to Tyre and meeting some disciples and the Spirit indicating was not anything new to him. Am I communicating? Was not anything new to him. Now, that statement in verse 4, chapter 21, is not meaning that the Spirit said, don't go.

But they, by the Spirit, because they knew it, now the human interpretation is that because they have problems, don't go. Because if you go, no one will see you again.

[10:11] And to be honest, that was the last stages of Paul. Do you know what happened to him? He went to Jerusalem. He ended up in prison in Jerusalem or in custody in Jerusalem for about seven days.

From there, he was in prison in Caesarea for two years. From being in prison in Caesarea for two years, he was taken to Rome in prison for two years and beheaded. So, really, no one had Paul. That was the beginning of the end of Paul's freedom. Do you understand that? And yet, he said, it is the will of God for me to fulfill my ministry, that way. Am I communicating?

So, when you are so concerned for your life, you are not likely to fulfill God's purpose for your life. When you are so sensitive about your feelings, about your pain, about how people treat you, how people receive you, what people say about you, you cannot fulfill your assignment in God.

It is important. Every, I think, the top footballers, I was told that, part of their training, their coaches really shout at them, especially from early.

[11:23] They put you under so much pressure because once you get to the limelight, it is part of greatness. It is part of leadership. You will be criticized. You will be lied upon.

You will be misrepresented and misinterpreted. People will be smiling with you, but kissing you behind your back. Stabbing is part of leadership.

People can look like close allies, but they can be your worst enemies. It is part of leadership. So, as you grow into leadership, you must learn, especially spiritual leadership, you must learn how to put your trust in God.

Because the human nature is unpredictable. They don't have to mean evil. They can do you the most serious evil you can ever.

And what breaks their heart is sometimes where the problem can come from. Usually, you never foresaw it coming. So, Paul went and the brethren told him, don't go.

[12:29] I'm emphasizing on the brethren here. It's the brethren who said, don't go. Then he goes to Caesarea. A prophet came to prophesy.

The prophet didn't say, don't go. He just came to tell what's ahead by the brethren. So, it looks like Paul doesn't listen. He doesn't listen to brothers. Not your enemies, but the brothers.

But because the brothers were also spiritual enough, when they realized they couldn't persuade him, they gave him the respect and concluded that probably God is in the picture.

So, let the will of God be done. So, then the journey starts. Verse 15. Paul, after those days, he parked and went up.

Interestingly, every time you read scripture, from where they were traveling to Jerusalem, it's actually a journey down south. But any time Jerusalem is up.

[13:31] Every journey to Jerusalem is always up. Because it's not just geographical. Okay? It's not just geographical. It's spiritually positional.

Jerusalem is always up, not geographically. So, even when the place is higher than Jerusalem, the Bible says they went up.

That's what I'm trying to say. So, even if geographically, okay, the position of where they are moving to Jerusalem is higher up, so long as altitude is concerned.

Still, they go up to Jerusalem. God understand they were going down south. But the Bible says that they went up. You study the scripture. Every time it's up to Jerusalem.

Up to Jerusalem. Up to Jerusalem. The man, the good Samaritan in Luke chapter, I think 15, he was moving from Jerusalem down to Jericho.

[14:30] And he fell into thieves. It's usually when you start backsliding that you fall into thieves. The good Samaritan, the story was the man was traveling from Jerusalem.

Down to Jerusalem. Down to Jericho. And then thieves caught him. It's not good to backslide. Tell somebody it's not good to backslide. It's not good to backslide. It's not good to backslide.

Because backsliding makes you a cheap victim. There are some decisions you shouldn't be making when spiritually you are not in good shape. You shouldn't be making some decisions.

You might be offended legitimately so you feel it. And it's true. But you are not in a good state to make a major spiritual decision.

You are going to fly from frying pan to fire. Satan knows how to provoke you.

[15:32] Come on, make a decision. And he will surround you with people who are more carnal. They speak into your ears. Come on. Make a decision. Make a decision. You are not in a good spiritual state.

So Paul was in good shape. So he knew even though there were challenges ahead, he knew that he's in a good shape. Because he's ready to finish his assignment by saying, I've fought a good fight.

I've kept the faith. And I've finished my course. Paul makes his journey up to Jerusalem. Everybody say, up to Jerusalem. Up to Jerusalem.

Paul makes his journey up to Jerusalem. And then he says that when they go to Jerusalem, verse 16 says that, And some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us, brought Nassim of Cyprus. He's not a Jew. An early disciple. There are people who have been around for a while. He said, you've been in the game for a long time. Let's go. One of the things I also realized, I'm about to drop something quite interesting.

[16:31] One of the things I also realized, in longevity for God's work, is good to notice people who have been serving faithfully for long.

It is a major asset in the future of anything God is doing. Can I say that again? People who have been serving faithfully for a long time, they tend to be an asset to the future of what God is doing. They may not be what the charismatics call charismatic. They may not be gifted. I am always weary of depending on gifted people.

It's fought a lot of churches. If you depend on gifted people who have not been schooled or disciplined properly, they are going to be the biggest risk of the work.

There are people who have been long in the journey and consistent as Christians. Some of us, when you put us on the spot, poke us, what will come out? You'll realize we've been around for a long time.

[17:36] So if you haven't been around for a long time, it doesn't mean God cannot use you. God can use you mightily, but learn to be consistent. Don't be in a rush to be seen.

He said, this disciple is an old time disciple. They said, no, you can't come with Paul because where he's going, Mark won't do well. We need an old time disciple from Cyprus.

There are people there. May God make you a long standing disciple. I know as I speak, some of you will be thinking, oh, I've just been born again for three years.

I've just been in church for a while. I've got a long way to go. Yes, you have. I'm telling you, you have a long way to go. And be prepared for the long haul. Yes.

But you'll be shocked if you prepare your heart. Sometimes you haven't gone so far, but God can accomplish certain key things with you. Key things with you that others who have been long enough couldn't accomplish.

[18:36] So, God uses you based on your heart. But when you have been around faithfully stable for a long time, you become an asset. That's what I'm saying. To the work of God, you become an asset.

However, you can be in just now. Paul, as soon as he got born again, he was preaching. And people were changing. So, God can use you. He can use you mightily. You can even be the biggest asset.

But just that, if you haven't been long, it's likely there's a sharp curve coming you won't see. The sharp curve will flip over. You will flip over.

Anybody who has been in church for a while, you understand what I'm talking about. There are people who show up with zeal. Zeal. Zeal. Power. Zeal.

Don't be moved by those things. Don't be moved by those things and don't be moved by people who share a lot of testimonies. Don't be moved. Don't be moved. It doesn't mean they'll be there for the long haul.

[19:33] It doesn't mean they'll be there for the long haul. Some people can manage themselves and come very close around senior pastorate. You will think they are very fiery. Watch them. Sometimes, over a period of time, they will fall.

Because what's attracted them is the wrong thing. When what attracts you is the wrong thing, you won't last. You won't last. Because this thing is Christ-based.

If it is your heart for Christ, then when the crisis comes, you will say like Paul, I do not come. None of these things move me. Neither do I. Am I preaching at all? I'm actually sharing ministry materials. So, they went with the other believers. And then verse 17 says that, and when we had come to Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

Finally! Finally, they've got to Jerusalem. Their place of problems. Yes, it's their place of anticipated problems. When we got to Jerusalem, their brothers.

[20 : 35] See brothers, they're gay. You cannot do Christianity by yourself. You cannot do it by yourself. Just watch how we keep seeing the brethren.

This is Apostle Paul. And what is interesting is he wasn't traveling alone. One, he was traveling with the team. Two, they went and met brethren. A Christian life is a brethren life.

It's a brethren life. Who are your brethren? When you love the applause of the crowd, how people see you, your spiritual journey will be short-circuited.

It's how God sees you that matters. Study to show yourself approved unto God. 2 Timothy chapter 2 verse 15. Study it unto God, unto God, unto God.

Sometimes there will be this unhealthy lust for people to like you. It comes to all of us. Do you understand what I'm saying? So we all have the natural tendency and the natural lust.

[21 : 43] Lust to be celebrated or to be preferred above others. It's a natural lust that comes to everybody. But you become more vulnerable to that lust if you are not maturing and you don't set your heart right.

And focus right. What am I in this for? Paul said, I am in this so I can finish my assignment with joy. That's why I'm in it. I know it's an assignment from God.

So even though my convenience, my comfort, my importance, my relevance is being threatened, I don't mind. I don't mind. I don't mind. When they change your sitting position, you become morose in church.

Can you imagine? In church, just sit, sit, change. You can praise God. So then how can you praise God in prison?

As a church, we have to make sure that nobody feels that this is my permanent, as for me, this one is mine.

[22 : 41] Nobody. Even me, I shouldn't think that preaching is my permanent assignment. The reason why I take this work serious is because I have been given the God-given assignment of feeding this local congregation.

That's my primary job. Actually, my primary assignment in this organization is to feed the local. That's the job of every pastor.

So Peter is an apostle. But he says in Acts chapter 5, verse 1, he said, Peter, to the elders of whom I'm also an apostle, he's writing, but he said, me too, I'm an elder.

Because elders take care of the church. So he said, me, church taking care of the church is also important to me. However, even though I have a bigger assignment, I'm still an elder in this assignment.

So it's very important. I'm teaching some interesting things. So people can come in with wrong. That's where teaching plays a role. Wrong understanding.

[23 : 45] Wrong opinion. You are doing church, but you don't even know why you are doing it. In a modern day, I've seen pastors who don't even understand what Christianity is about.

I've seen it. And I'm wondering, this person doesn't even understand what Christianity is about. I just have a clue. When I see the details of your presentation and of the way you carry yourself and the things you are doing, I realize you actually don't know what Christianity is about.

But yeah, it's like I form a club. I form a club. Me too. That's my club. That's my turf. It's a big problem in the body of Christ. And it's a function of what leadership you sit under and what teachings you sit under.

I will not endanger your spiritual journey by failing to teach you certain things. I have to teach you some things. Pastor, but this is not a pastor's conference. It doesn't matter.

You are not them spiritually. You are alert spiritually. So you should know. So that your cousin who is a pastor who doesn't know, in conversation you can tell, Oh, man of God, we don't do it like that.

[24 : 51] That's not how to do it in ministry. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. So, so, so, he said that they got to their brethren and the brethren received them gladly.

I too, we are happy you are coming. Welcome. Welcome. Then Paul, as his custom was, look at it. On the following day, I told you one of the reasons why I wanted to, why not to go on fellowship with the seniors.

On the following day, Paul went in with us to James. James. Who is that? Who is this James? And all the elders were present. Who is this James?

As soon as he got to Jerusalem, the next day, he was going to see James. Who is this James? You know, in Matthew chapter 4, I think 21 or so, Jesus called, one of the disciples is called, he was a fisherman.

His name was James. He saw other brothers. James, the son of Zebedee. Okay. And John, his brother. This John was the one who wrote the gospel according to John.

[25 : 58] He's the same person who wrote the book of Revelation, who wrote the book of 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John. This John is the brother of James. Which James?

There are two James. Mrs. Zebedee's sons. Their mother came to lobby, came to Jesus and said, can you let my son, one sit on your left and your right?

And Jesus said, no, no, no, no, no, you don't know what you're asking for. Can you drink the cup I'm about to drink from? And they said, yes, we can, because they like the position.

And the other disciples were not happy at all with this kind of thing that's going on, lobbying for positions. And then that James was the one in Acts chapter 12, verse 2 and 3.

His head was. Then he killed Herod. He killed James. Which James? James, ah, you see, the brother of John.

[26 : 56] They used their sword to kill him. He said he would drink it. He said he would drink it. Do you know what is interesting? Him and his brother.

His brother was the one who died last among the disciples. His brother was the one who Jesus said in John chapter 21. Peter said, how about this? So I said, if I want him to live till I come back, what has that got to do with you?

His brother. All the disciples. He's the only one who died a natural death. All the rest were killed and executed. Killed and executed. He was the only. John was the only one who died a natural death. But his brother was one of the first to go. So when his brother was killed. So then which James are we talking about here? Because, Acts chapter 12, the James has been killed.

So, but we can see in Acts chapter 21, verse 18, he went to see James. We James again. Now, this James was not one of the 12 of Jesus Christ.

[27 : 53] This particular James eventually looked like he became the leader, the senior of the church in Jerusalem. Acts chapter 12, when Peter was released from prison and he went to the guys, he told them, shh, shh, shh, shh.

Listen, I've come, but I'm going. So go and tell James. Verse 17. Acts chapter 12, verse 17. He said, Peter told them, motion with them by his son. Silent. Keep silent. Declare to them how the Lord has brought him by an angel from prison.

And he said, go and tell these things to the brethren. You see that? Go and tell it to James. In 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 7, when Jesus resurrected, he actually made a personal appearance to James.

And that he was seen by James. Who is this James? In Galatians chapter 2, verse 9.

Bible says, Paul said, Peter and James. He called Cephas. He said, Peter. James and Peter and John, who seem to be peerless. Perceived that have been given the grace of God.

[29 : 00] So, what are you talking about? The peerless in the church. James is dead. In Acts chapter 15. You remember there was a confusion in the church of ancient, whether Gentiles should be circumcised and all that, or they shouldn't be circumcised.

You remember that? And so, they went to Jerusalem to go and see the elders. When they met the elders, Paul, verse 4, Paul reported what God has done.

All right? So, when they came to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and he reported all the things. Paul likes reporting what has happened so far. Look at Acts chapter 15, verse 12.

The Bible says that, then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul, declaring how many miracles and wonders God has brought through them among the Gentiles.

They like, this is a very important point, they like reporting when they go back. What has happened? When you are working with a group of people, it's good to report. It's good to, reporting is not a bad thing.

[29 : 57] Amen? So, yeah, in Acts chapter 21, when he got to Jerusalem, when he went to James, he actually went to report. Look at that. Acts chapter 21, verse 19. And when he has greeted them, he told them details of the things which God had done amongst the Gentiles through his ministry.

He reported. He reported. Acts chapter 14, verse 27. When they did all the round trip and they got back to Antioch, they told them, and when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them.

Did you see the reporting? So, now, back to James. So, in Acts chapter 15, when they had told them all that, look at the verse 13. Then James, after they had said that, James answered saying, men and brethren, listen to me.

Who is this James? He seemed to be an authority. In Galatians chapter 2, verse 12, Peter, he was playing the hypocrisy. He was eating the Gentiles until some brethren came from James.

Who is this James? Before certain men came from James. But James was stationed in Jerusalem. Who is this James? Do you want me to tell you who this James is?

[31 : 09] In Matthew chapter 13, verse 55. They asked about Jesus. Is this not the Capitan's son? Is not his mother called Mary? Mary's son.

Jesus' natural brother. Listen, Jesus had natural brothers. And Mary was not an ever virgin. No, he wasn't an ever. She was not.

No, it's very important. Very important. This was, people, they knew him. In his hometown, they knew him. They said, ah, but it's not a carpenter. He was a carpenter. He made the table they were using. He made the bed they were sleeping on.

He made them on the bed. So, they knew him. He was an accomplished carpenter. Suddenly, after going to be baptized and going to the wilderness to fast and pray, comes back and says, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

And he was doing miracles. Ah, but we know him. He's not a carpenter. And we know his mother. His mother is called Mary. In fact, his brother is James, Joseph. They are there. We know his brothers. James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.

[32 : 09] Not Judas, Iscariot. Okay. So, this is James, the brother of Jesus. Now, in Galatians chapter 1, verse 19, Paul went to James.

He said, but I saw none of the apostles except James. So, when Jesus was alive, his brothers and sisters were not one of his disciples.

They didn't actually believe in him. It's after the resurrection. After his passion. And they got into it. So, James, Jesus' natural brother, had become so deep in the work that he wrote the epistle of James.

James chapter 1, verse 1. James chapter. And he had a brother called Jude who wrote the epistle of Jude. So, James, a born servant of God and of the Lord. He didn't say a brother of Jesus because he's not coming to write that epistle.

So, it's not family matter. When it comes to ministry, it's not family matter. It's important. The distinction must be clear. He didn't say, Jesus, my brother. He said, I'm actually a slave.

[33 : 14] Yeah. But, when you look at Jude chapter 1, verse 1. Jude 1, it says that Jude, a born servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. You see. So, Jude himself, who was also a natural brother of Jesus, didn't say a brother of Jesus.

He said a born servant. But then, James is my brother. So, when we have family life and there's ministry, I'm not going to mix ministry. The fact that we are family does not mean you should be the next in line in ministry.

So, they went to see James. Now, does it make sense? So, when you go to Jerusalem, James seemed to be one of the, actually, it seems like he was the head of the church in Jerusalem.

He was now in charge, in command. So, as soon as they went to see James, but look at what is interesting. Oh! And when they went to see James, they reported what the Lord has been doing.

And when they finished reporting, when they got there, they received them gladly.

They reported what they learned. And then, the next thing that came, after they reported, you would have thought, they said, this is amazing. Wow! I can't wait that God has brought you what he's about to do. They didn't go into that.

[34 : 19] But when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. Thank you, Jesus. Then they said, sir, they said to him, you see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed that, who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Lord.

There are so many Jews who have believed. Remember, Paul, Philippians chapter 3, verse 6. He said, when it comes to zeal, I was persecuting it. So, zeal is not a problem for me.

I'm also zealous. I was zealous. In Romans chapter 10, verse 2, he said, they have zeal, but no knowledge. This fire, fire, fire, fire, fire. You are lacking details.

You don't understand what this thing is about. Fire, fire, fire, fire, fire, fire, fire. But you are spoiling a lot of things. He said, the Jews, Paul, this Paul, for I bear them witness that they have zeal for the Lord, but not according to.

He spoiling things. You are spoiling things. You see, your heart is good, but your head is not informed. Your head is not informed. All of us, we need to be schooled spiritually in the proper way of the Lord.

[35 : 32] Like, Acts chapter 18, 25, what was the name of the guy? Apollos was schooled, taught in the ways by a priest like Nacueta. Every one of us.

It doesn't matter. Stop judging yourself with your heart. When it comes to the work of God, stop judging yourself with your heart. Because you can be sincere and sincerely wrong.

Stop patting yourself on the back, saying that my heart is sincere. I'm sincere. You can be sincere and be destroying the work of God. These guys were zealous. Paul said, I was zealous.

But without knowledge. Zeal in the wrong direction. Am I teaching at all? Zeal in the wrong direction. And Galatians chapter 1, verse 14, talks about Paul.

It says that, this is Paul. Paul said, I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the tradition of my fathers.

[36 : 33] So he said, talking about zeal, me, I was small. And yet, my eyes have now opened. So James said, sir, you know how myriads of Jews, there are so many of them, they have believed in a zeal for their law.

Did you see that? They have believed in the Lord, but still their legs are in the law. You cross them, they will crush you. That's the problem of the church.

Ladies and gentlemen, you see why Paul had to go to Jerusalem? There was a big problem. See who was advising him? James. James was saying that the people believed in the Lord, but they love the law.

Because they are traditionalists. They're traditionalists. So you have gone to roam around in Gentile territories. You are just coming. And unfortunately, they've been told that you are teaching wrong things.

See, go to the next verse. Verse 21 says that, He said, He said, that's what you are teaching. Was that what Paul was teaching? No. He was just teaching what we read this morning.

[37 : 35] Justification by faith. So whether Jew or Gentile, circumcision or uncircumcision is not the key. It's not an issue. You just have to be in Christ.

When you are in Christ, there's no Jew. That's what he was teaching. But you see what they were hearing. Ah, So I am now saying that, yeah, circumcision is not important. So the Jew, circumcision is key.

The law is key. And the temple is key. How you treat the law, how you treat the temple, how you treat the system, the rituals, the customs will determine how they receive you. It doesn't matter whether you are a Jew or not. You dare not touch any of those things.

So now these are people who have now become born again, or they have believed in Christ, and yet their tradition untouched. So they've been told that you don't believe in their tradition. They've been told that you don't believe in their tradition and you are teaching all kinds of things.

So they said, can we advise you? There are some people who are ready to go through the ritual. There's a ritual, Nazarite vows, where you go through a system for about one month, abstain from drink, wine, cutting your hair, and eating meat, and so many things.

[38 : 58] You have to have. It's voluntary. It's not a force. You do it for one month. And then after the last seven days, you stay in the temple, and then when the days are ended, you shave your hair.

You bring a lamb for a sin offering. You bring a ram for a sacrifice. And then you bring some items for sacrifice. So if you don't have money to do that, somebody should sponsor you.

And there are four guys who have gone through the rituals, and they are about to end. So Paul, he said, take them. Go into the temple. You have to shave your hair with them. And then when they shave their hair, you burn it all in the temple at the end of the ritual.

Then you've done. Because you've been to Gentile territories, it's good you also go through the ritual with them. What is this? What is this? Now I have to go to the temple. But don't tell me Paul doesn't listen to their brethren.

He listened. He listened. He listened. Thank God he didn't listen to the first set. But when he listened to the next set, even James see the problem that came. He listened to them. So Paul did according to what they said he should do.

[40 : 00] So, let's quickly look at it. Verse 26 says that, and Paul took the man, purified himself, went through all that purification. Verse 27, and then verse 27 says that, and when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, he hasn't done anything wrong.

He hadn't done it. The Jews who came from Asia, because Asia is Gentile territory. You know, Ephesus, they've heard about Greatest, Diana, everywhere.

Paul had not preached. He was in the temple to follow the brethren. Brethren advising. Brethren, senior brethren James' advice. He was following the advice.

See, so it is not about just his preaching. There was a demonic orchestration against him. But because God is the God's sovereign Lord, he's the God of providence, he can behave, he does things ironic.

Ironic providence. Where what people use to fight you, God can be waiting for that same thing to fulfill his purpose in your life. It happened to Joseph.

[41 : 12] Joseph said in Genesis chapter 50 verse 20, you meant as for you, he said you, you meant it for evil. But what you meant for evil, God wanted that same thing and God meant that same thing for good.

That's the providence of God. It's very ironic. So, they were about to attack Paul. So, the people advised him, so you don't have problems with the Jews, go and fulfill these rituals.

He went to fulfill it. He hadn't even finished in the temple. God delivered him from that. That's the, God delivered Paul from the temple. Because, do you think he would have sung praise and worship in the temple?

Do you think he could have sung, Hallelujah for the Lord our God? He couldn't do that. Because, there are set of rituals you have to follow. And the Jews were too many there. He couldn't be doing that.

But guess what? When he was in prison, when they put him in prison in Philippi, he was able to sing praises even to God. So, so long as Paul was concerned, the prison in Philippi was not prison.

[42 : 21] Rather, the temple was a prison. And Paul was about to be delivered from prison. That temple prison.

It's getting interesting. So, he was in the temple doing what they said he should do. He was following the rituals. The Jews said, hey! The Bible says the guys, the guys cried out, men of Israel, help!

Help! Help! Can you imagine? What has he done? Help! Help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, against the law, against this place.

You see that? And furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple and defiled this holy place. Because they assumed, they saw him, Trifemus, in town.

So, they assumed. The fact that he has come, Trifemus has also, for they previously saw him in Trifemus. So, they assumed that Trifemus was not there. He hasn't brought Gentiles to the temple.

[43 : 26] He was just doing what he has been advised to do. You see why it was good he didn't follow the advice of the other guys. But this advice was okay, because James is a senior man.

But that's why he had to go to Jerusalem. Brothers and sisters, there's a point I want to drive up quickly and let me finish this. The reason why I wanted to go to Jerusalem is to be out of prison. And to go and release the pure gospel.

The pure gospel God had given him. Because as he walked with God and traveled, he became more refined and he understood the gospel better. Which even the leaders in Jerusalem had actually compromised.

The pure, fundamental gospel was there. But they have allowed Judaism to be mixed into it. And you don't need to mix all those things. Do you remember the brethren who came from James? They were the ones who Peter started a genius behavior.

So there's a problem with that territory. The first discourse or disagreement that came in the early church in Antioch. Brethren, Acts chapter 15 verse 1. Brethren came from Jerusalem and Judea. [44 : 28] Born again brethren. They came and they said, no, no, no, no. You are Gentile. You must be circumcised. Else you will be saved. So it looks like Jerusalem was producing some elements that can have a negative impact on the future of the church.

So Paul was determined to go there. He was determined to go there because he had a mandate. Do you understand what I'm saying? Now, so that's one of the main reasons. Then they arrest him. The guys started beating him. They shut the temple. The whole city was in trouble. So the soldiers whose garrison was next to the temple, the Antonio Fort was not far from it. Almost so that if there is any skirmishes, the soldiers. So as soon as they heard the noise, the captain took some soldiers. Said, let's go down there. When they came, they've seen this man who was being beaten.

And that's how God rescues the man. From that time, he was never a free man again until he died. That's why they said, don't go to Jerusalem. But he wasn't going. See, his life was not to enjoy life. [45 : 29] To fulfill an assignment. And so, number one, when he got there, because I'm trying to paraphrase this because I don't want to go into details again. When he got there, they arrested him. And the soldiers came and stopped there.

People from beating him. When they saw the soldiers, they stopped. And then they said, what's going on? So the soldiers took him. Whilst they were taking him inside, in fact, they actually carried him the stairs. Because the stairs, the way the people were determined to be, they carried him. As they were going, he spoke Greek. And the centurion said, are you not the Egyptian? Verse 38. He said that, are you not the Egyptian who, some time ago, set up a rebellion and let 4,000 assassins out of the wilderness?

What happened was that a few weeks or months ago, there was this Egyptian who let, you know, those times they're like terrorists. They were fighting the Romans.

So he let a bunch of people like terrorists and they attacked. And so most of them were arrested and killed. But the leader ran away. So he was being, like there was a bounty for himself. We are looking for him. So when the garrison, the soldier had, he thought that's the guy.

[46 : 36] So he happily went and arrested him. Come on, let's go. And then he spoke Greek. He said, are you not the Egyptian? Then Paul said, no, no, no. I'm a Hebrew. Paul said, I am a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city.

And I implore you, permit me to speak to the people. He wanted their audience because he had something to tell them. Paul's biggest desire was give me opportunity to preach.

Whether it's in pain, whether it's in joy, comfort. He said, I don't care. Give me the opportunity because now I've gotten this my Jewish people. Give me. And so they gave him the chance and he beckoned.

He said, come, come. And as soon as he called up, they all went silent. The same mob that was making so much noise. They stood at the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people.

And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in a Hebrew language. Paul said, ah, finally. Finally. Ha, ha, ha.

[47 : 39] That's why I came to Jerusalem. I'm going to preach this gospel. I'm going to preach this gospel. I'm going to preach this gospel. I'm going to preach this gospel. So he said, give me the chance.

He wasn't concerned about the accusation. I said, give me the chance. And he beckoned in the hole. Satan. God gave. That's what he lived for. To preach the gospel. So whether he's going to be killed.

He's going to be assassinated. He's going to. He said, if there's a problem. He said, give me the chance to preach. Paul's life ambition has been fulfilled. Chance to preach to the Jews in Jerusalem.

Preach the pure gospel. He opened his mouth. And fired. Next week, we'll go into his preaching. Did you receive something? Thank you for listening to this message by David and Julie.

We trust you've been encouraged. Strengthened. And enlightened by the word. Stay connected by following David and Julie on social media. Including Instagram and LinkedIn. You can also listen to more messages from all major streaming platforms.

[48 : 47] On the Carish Church app. Don't forget to like. Share. And be blessed. My god who has the past. My god who has the past. My god who has the past. My god who has the past. My god who has the past. My god who has the past.

My god who has the past. My god who has the past. Thank you.