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Peace. Pastor Bill

**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

17 Acts 21: 17 to 22: 29, “Paul’s Ministry while in Jerusalem” – with commentary

**Acts 21: 17 - 26, Paul’s arrival at Jerusalem;” Acts 21: 27 – 36, ”Paul Arrested;”
Acts 21: 37 to 22: 21, “Paul Speaks to the Crowd;” Acts 22: 22 – 29, “Paul the
Roman Citizen.”**

The purpose of the Book of Acts is to record the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Vision and Ministry of Peter and Paul. **Today’s study is the 17th of 20 lessons.**

A contextual statement:

Interestingly, *The Interpreter’s Bible* makes the following observation. In the book of Acts, “The Lord is not returned, but in the meantime the word of God is being carried on by the church. The Gentile mission is itself the eschatological action of God.” (*The Interpreter’s One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press. 1971. p. 730.)

This I want to affirm as our perspective. **We will study this book from the perspective of the in-breaking of the Holy Spirit.** This puts us on the cusp of a deep and foreboding spiritual hole that is eternally deep. The Holy Spirit is that intuited presence within us that urges us to “Jump.” “Jump!” To take this leap of faith means to surrender ourselves to the eternal deeps. The discovery, to which I can personally testify, is that this deep, dark, mysterious hole is the place where God lives within us. As we lose control of everything— our-selves, our relationships to neighbor and to God— then we can discover that God really does sustain us. But the experience is like falling, and it is not entirely comfortable. But it works.

According to our Study Chart we are studying “Paul’s Ministry while in Jerusalem” (21:17 to 26: 32). We will review this section in three studies.

Read the assignment in one reading.

I. Acts 21: 17 - 26, Paul’s arrival at Jerusalem”

A. Go to your commentary to discover more information about the problem presented here. Provide a brief report.

WS: Paul attempted to gratify and placate the Jews. Paul is invited to comply with a ceremonial law, and the early church leaders thought it prudent to do so. The IHOP Bible Study agreed this was not a good idea for Paul, because he was the historical embodiment that the old way of relating to God (The Old Covenant) is replaced by a new way of relating to God (The New Covenant). To comply at this time, in order to secure his safety, is a breach of his integrity.

One IHOPer suggested that maybe this was necessary in order to insure that Paul makes it to Rome.

B. Observe there are several rituals involved. Report on the following:

This is the law of the Nazarite when the days of his consecration are done, he shall bring it (his shaved hair) to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Christians fast, Jews take a Nazarite vow. (<http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/acts/46.html> - [Cached](#))

The Dangers of Hearsay -- Thus we see that the Apostle's plans were overtaken and the rest of his life changed by the actions of some brethren who misrepresented Paul. A consideration of Paul's teaching as seen in the Epistles indicates that Paul never taught Jews not to circumcise their children or to forsake the Law of Moses. It is clear that Paul taught that adherence to the law as a means of salvation was folly. Further he, implementing the decision of the Apostles at Jerusalem as laid out in Acts 15, did not constrain the gentiles to be circumcised or keep the Law of Moses. We know that all things are in the Father's power. However, reading the record of the Acts, we cannot but conclude that the accusations of those brethren in Jerusalem curtailed Paul's actions. He had come to Jerusalem to deliver the money he had collected for "the saints [which are at Jerusalem] [tho 2151, acts 21-23, saint paul university, bloomquist](#) <http://www.bloomquist.ca/SPU%20Courses/THO%202151%20Acts/acts%2023-28%20notes.html> - [Cached](#)

Vs. 23 -- Vow making

John Wesley's notes:

Yea, and James himself had long before assented to Peter, affirming before all the apostles and all the brethren, [Acts 15:10](#), That this very law was a yoke which (said he) neither our fathers nor we were able to bear - Amazing! that they did not know this! Or, that if they did, they did not openly testify it at all hazards, to every Jewish convert in Jerusalem!

Vs. 24b -- Head shaving

John Wesley's notes: Ought he not, without any reverence to man, where the truth of God was so deeply concerned, to have answered plainly, I do not keep the Mosaic law; neither need any of you. Yea, Peter doth not keep the law. And God himself expressly commanded him not to keep it; ordering him to go in to men uncircumcised, and to eat with them, [Acts 11:3](#), which the law utterly forbids.

Vs. 25 -- Review the significance of the letter written to the Gentiles with its report of the Jerusalem Council.

(The following is from Clark's Commentary.)

Verse 20. But that we [write](#) unto them] Four things are prohibited in this [decree](#): 1. Pollutions of [idols](#); 2. [fornication](#); things [strangled](#); 4. [blood](#). By the first, POLLUTIONS of IDOLS, or, as it is in ver. 25, meats offered to [idols](#), not only all [idolatry](#) was forbidden, but eating things offered in [sacrifice](#) to [idols](#), knowing that they were thus offered, and joining with [idolaters](#) in their [sacred feasts](#), which were always an incentive either to [idolatry](#) itself, or to the impure acts generally attendant on such festivals.

By the second, FORNICATION, all uncleanness of every [kind](#) was prohibited; for porneia not only means [fornication](#), but [adultery](#), incestuous mixtures, and especially the prostitution which was so common at the [idol temples](#), viz. in [Cyprus](#), at the [worship](#) of Venus; and the shocking disorders exhibited in the Bacchanalia, Lupercalia, and several others.

By the third, THINGS STRANGLED, we are to understand the [flesh](#) of those [animals](#) which were [strangled](#) for the purpose of keeping the [blood](#) in the body, as such [animals](#) were esteemed a greater [delicacy](#).

By the fourth, BLOOD, we are to understand, not only the thing itself, for the reasons which I have assigned in the note on Genesis ix. 4, and for others detailed at the end of this chapter; but

also all [cruelty](#), manslaughter, [murder](#), &c., as some of the ancient fathers have understood it.
The Letter

Verse 23. Send greeting unto the [brethren](#)-of the Gentiles] There was no occasion to send such a letter to the [brethren](#) which were of the [Jews](#), because that [law](#) which had been so long read in their synagogues taught them all those things; and therefore the [epistle](#) is sent exclusively to the Gentiles.

II. Acts 21: 27 – 36, "Paul Arrested"

A. What is the problem that upset the Jews? Do some research in your commentary. Please report here.

WS: 1). Paul is speaking against the people as Jews, their Law and sacred place in Jerusalem. 2) Paul is accused of bringing a Greek from Ephesus into the Temple reserved for Jews only.

III. Acts 21: 37 -- 22: 21, "Paul Speaks to the Crowd."

A. This is Paul's testimony concerning his conversion. Reflect briefly on the significance of this event, and why this story upset the Jews.

WS: Paul takes upon himself direct access to God, and he is sent by God to the Gentiles.

Vs. 38 is the curious accusation by the Roman Commander accusing Paul being an Egyptian terrorist.

IV. Acts 22: 22 – 29, "Paul the Roman Citizen"

A. Research your commentaries about the significance of Paul being a Roman Citizen.

Vs. 28b to 29 -- Evidently, one's relationship to Rome gives Paul a Bill of Rights.

V. How does this material reflect the work of the Holy Spirit?

WS: IHOP response— Being circumspect sometimes gets us in more trouble than if we had been forthright and honest.

WS: Why does Luke include this passage? IHOP response—It documents important aspects of Paul's journey in ministry. It illuminates how the early church could have gone one way or the other, and illustrates Christianity's relationship to Judaism. In particular, Paul's retelling of his conversion could have impressed some Jews in such a way as to awaken them to faith in God and in practice to their society.

Alright folks, talk to me.