

## Acts 21-23 The Power of Absolute Surrender!

**This morning we are returning to our study in the book of Acts – we are picking up the Story in Acts 21 – Paul is on his way to Jerusalem.**

**A)It is the **final march of his life**. He will eventually end up in Rome – where he will eventually die as a Martyr for Christ.**

**B)The **Striking thing** that we see in Paul in this section of Scripture is despite the fact that he knows what awaits him**

**1)He moves and shares throughout these last chapters with **incredible confidence and Power**.**

**C)That is why I have entitled this message THE POWER OF ABSOLUTE SURRENDER -and it really is the theme of these final chapters.**

**The theme of the message is not about an EXTERNAL POWER I but an INTERNAL POWER.**

**A)That Power is CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.**

**B)Listen: The power of the Christian life is JESUS HIMSELF.**

**1)It is not something that He gives you. It is Him.**

**C)Jesus does not dispense Power and strength the way a Pharmacist fills a prescription.**

**1)Take this pill for encouragement, this one for patience – and this one for POWER. – ONLY ONE.**

**No what Jesus does – is He gives us Himself!**

**A) Jesus is the Christian Life. – It Jesus living in and thru your life by His spirit that allows you and me to be who God has called and designed us to be.**

**B) God has made **no provision** for you and I to live the Christian life **in our own flesh**. Not I just need to try harder.**

**1) Jesus is the Christian life – The Christian life is all about Surrendering more of me – to Jesus –**

**C) The more I surrender to Jesus the more that Jesus is seen in me**

**1) The more the Attributes of Who Jesus is – are **exemplified in my life**. One of those Attributes is **POWER**.**

**D) There is Power, you see in Absolute Surrender to JESUS!**

**D) No one demonstrates that kind of living more powerfully and profoundly than the APOSTLE PAUL.**

**As a Pastor – I try to always live what I preach – but we are entering some deep waters here.**

**A) I personally don't know anyone who can get up and say – All that I am and all that I want and all that I will be is ALWAYS JESUS.**

**B) I think we would all like to be able to say that: - But it is not the reality**

**1) But my hearts cry is Jesus I want more of you in me – I want to decrease and I want you to increase.**

**C) Paul had it – I want to be growing in that mentality in my life.**

**D) So as we move through this final section – I want us to see the Power of Jesus being manifested in Paul **because** He was absolutely surrendered to Christ and His mission. **{The RESULT Is POWER}****

E) We are going to actually cover – three Ch.s today – because this section encompasses an entire story.

1) I want us to see it in Full. **Power in 4 ways!**

**Starting in Ch.21 #1 We see the Power of One Purpose! RD V.1-4**

A) V.4 **They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.**

B) But didn't we read already in Acts 20:22 – where Paul said **“And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem,”**

C) **Bound = Compelled or Driven- The Holy Spirit was pushing him toward Jerusalem.**

Paul continued – I go bound ....v.22b **not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.**

**So is God being schizophrenic here?**

A) One Chapter – Paul you are going to Jerusalem and bad stuff is waiting for you there.

B) Next Chapter God is saying through the believers – Don't go Paul. Answer – No God is not being Schizophrenic – {That is not God – **your boss maybe** – NOT God.

C) Here is what is happening – the Holy Spirit is telling them both the same thing. – Here is what the Holy spirit is saying:

1) **Paul there is going to be problems if you go to Jerusalem.**

**Now here is how the Christians were interpreting the message – If there is going to be problems – then that means **you need to avoid them.****

A) In other words **DON'T GO PAUL!**

**B) This is a mistake that a lot of Christians make that the goal in life is to avoid hardship. – Problems – AVOID THEM.**

**C) So the Christians were interpreting the warning as Paul you shouldn't Go!**

**D) Paul is saying Yes there is a Warning from the Spirit – so I had better be Ready!**

**1) See the difference?**

**E) Paul was able to have that attitude because remember back in Ch. 20:24 Right after talking about how the HS told him he would suffer**

**1) Paul said V. 24 But none of these things move me nor do I count my life dear to myself – Running the race to finish with Joy!**

**See that is the Power of living for One purpose that comes from Absolute surrender –**

**Paul's one Purpose was to Glorify Christ**

**A) Up- Reach - We exist to give glory to Jesus for who He is and all that He has done for us, and to glorify Jesus in everything we do by giving Him our best!**

**B) Paul was living for one Purpose to See Jesus glorified in and thru His life.**

**RD V.5-9**

**C) SO they land in Caesarea and there was a road heading out of Caesarea – 64 miles straight to Jerusalem - Paul will make a B- line**

**1) Even though – trouble is waiting for Him –**

**Because absolutely surrendered – Power one Purpose**

**They stop to visit with Philip – Remember Philip Acts 8 revival Samaria**

**A) Go to desert of Gaza – why ? Divine Appointment – Ethiopian Eunuch**

**B) Baptized – God transported Philip to Caesarea – He stayed there – and became an evangelist – now he is known as Philip the evangelist.**

**1) Preacher of the gospel**

**C) Philip got married – when Paul shows up Philip has four unmarried daughters who prophesied –**

**1) Prophecy is to speak a Biblical word with Power and Precision.**

**D) Great girls – Full of the word – and anointed by God!**

**1) You have to be that kind of guy – no attraction!**

## **RD V.10-11**

**Agabus this Prophet with a rep for being accurate says Paul when you get there they are going to bind you and deliver you to the Gentiles**

**A) Now is Paul going to Go? – YES – WHY?**

**B) Because he is living a life of Absolute surrender – He knows the Power of having one purpose.**

**1) He is committed to that one purpose of seeing Jesus glorified – even if it means through Paul's own suffering!**

**13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." POWERFUL !**

**14 So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."**

**Three things in this section worthy of Emulation!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Paul was not persuaded by the opinions of others.**

**A) They were like don't go don't go – and Paul was like: I am going!**

**B) Now this doesn't mean that we are not influenced by the opinion of others – the Bible says there is wisdom in a multitude of Counselors**

1) It is important to listen to other people – seek counsel

2) but once the Lord has made it clear what His will is { We just need to follow it – regardless of others opinions.

**C) It is one thing to seek counsel and to weigh out that counsel – counsel from others can bring confirmation that we are hearing from the Lord**

1) But often times what we are seeking is **APPROVAL** – and we might not get that – but we need to be willing to do what Christ is calling us to do anyway.

**D) V.12 says they pleaded with Paul – the idea is over and over – but Paul would not be moved.**

**Note As hard as it is for us to accept God's will for our lives it is even harder sometimes **for others** to accept God's will for our lives.**

**A) Sometimes Christians with Good intentions and love can be a hindrance to absolute surrender in another person's life.**

**B) We do so for several reasons: **sometimes it is because we don't want them to separate from us!****

**Bb) Baby dedications - great – but sometimes we need another dedication when the Child turns 18 making their own decisions about college/missions**

1) We train them up to have a walk with the Lord –

**C) **Mission field – NOT SO FAST!** – Parents try to talk their kids out of it**

1) Encouraging them to count the cost is wise – but be careful how you approach that.

So sometimes it is because we don't want to lose them or want them to move far away from us.

A) **Other times** we hinder God's will because we don't want them to suffer.

B) We know the career or ministry path they are taking is going to be **filled with hardship** – and because we love them we don't want that for them.

1) **Sandy's dad** – His sons – Pastors – In for a Hard life.

So we can hinder God's will because we don't want them to suffer.

Sometimes it is because their obedience and commitment shines a light on our own lack of obedience and commitment – it is convicting.

A) So we want them to tone it down a bit – not be so **RADICAL** for Jesus because it makes us wrestle with our own complacency.

B) So 1<sup>st</sup> Paul was not persuaded by the opinions of others.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paul placed no limits on following Christ.**

A) v.13 Paul said I am ready to die if that is what Jesus wants for me!

B) It is **a critical crossroads** in the life of every believer where we come to the place of saying: I am ready to follow Christ no matter what!

C) Some people like to **put restrictions on God** – I will go only here – I will do this – I won't do that – That is not absolute surrender.

1) I don't think that is any kind of surrender.

**D) My dad gave me the soundest advice ever – my freshman year of college – Baseball scholarship – Vanguard – called into ministry – when .....**

**1) You are not going to be happy or fulfilled until you are doing what Christ has called you to do and be.**

**E) I can't tell you how many times I have come back to those words when faced with a tough call or decision to make.**

**Some of you here today are wrestling w/ committing you life to Jesus - Becoming a follower of Jesus**

**A) Those words are true for you. “You are not going to be happy or fulfilled until you are doing what Christ has called you to do and be.”**

**B) Some of you here – profess to be committed to Christ – but you struggle to follow Him in many areas of your life. – same thing is true for you.**

**“You are not going to be happy or fulfilled until you are doing what Christ has called you to do and be.”**

**C) So 2<sup>nd</sup> Paul placed no limits on following Christ.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Paul was living for one Name! V.13 “For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”**

**A) What Name – JESUS – we see this echoed over and over in the book of Acts – It is all about the Name – say that – it is all about the Name**

**B) Not CCV – not Rob – Jesus – His name – If you get blessed here/ tell people u get blessed by Jesus at CCV.**

**{ SO and So is amazing – No Jesus is Amazing }**

**C) Lets commit to being a Jesus place – RD V. 14-16**



## **So we see here that Paul's absolute Surrender to Jesus resulted in him Living for One Purpose THE GLORY OF JESUS!**

**Here is another result: His absolute surrender**

**#2 Gave him the Power to Endure False Accusations.**

**A) Everything can be going great in our lives until opposition comes – someone says something.**

**B) Worst is when someone makes false accusations about you – attacks your character or integrity**

**1) That happens there is an ugliness in us that can rear it's head. – {Know what I am talking about}**

### **Rd v.17-25**

**Now Paul could have responded – you guys are crazy I didn't do those things OR teach those things.**

**A) In fact I did the opposite remember when I had Timothy get circumcised out of sensitivity to the Jews**

**B) I don't need to take a vow – and I am certainly not paying the expenses – who do you think I am BOP**

**1) Paul could have protested!**

**C) But he didn't/ instead he humbly went along with what they were proposing – Why?**

**1) Because Paul was absolutely surrendered to Jesus**

**In his heart – Paul didn't matter.**

**D) If it was going to help the unity – and Help with the mission Paul was**

## **all about it**

**1) That is powerful – NO OTHER AGENDA BUT JESUS! –**

**E) So Paul agreed to go thru this little purification ritual with these others guys.**

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

**Now when you do the right thing – what do you expect to happen? A good result RIGHT?**

**A) I said I was sorry – and I was expecting them to forgive me.**

**B) But that is not always the case is it – You can do the right thing and experience a lousy result.**

**1) People get madder – respond more negatively.**

**C) Question: Who are you doing the RIGHT THING FOR?  
JESUS –**

**1) Not someone else's response or approval – if that happens great – but – Needs to be done for Jesus**

**D) What was the result of Paul doing the right thing?**

**RD V.27-28a stop at place**

**So They brought Three accusations against Paul**

**A) { They said Paul was teaching against the people, the law, and this place= temple.**

**B) This people: The Jews believed that they were the pathway to God –**

**the way to come to God is you have to convert to Judaism.**

**C) Do you need to become Jewish to be saved – No just believe in Jesus.**

**They said he was teaching against the Law – Do you need to follow the law to be saved. No believe in Jesus**

**A) Paul taught the law had a divine purpose – it was righteous –  
{ purpose reveal we are sinners }**

**B) Saved by believing in Jesus.**

**C) They said that Paul **taught against the temple** – why were they saying that?**

**1) What was the #1 thing happening in the temple?**

**SACRIFICE**

**2) Paul was teaching that Jesus was the final sacrifice!**

**Here was another false accusation**

**V28b and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." 29 (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they **supposed** that Paul had brought into the temple.)**

**30 And all the city was disturbed; Normally pop of about 60k – Pentecost 500K and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut.**

**D) We are talking one angry mob here.**

**RD V.31-36**

**Here again we see that thru Paul's absolute surrender to Jesus – he is able to endure these false accusations.**

**A) Paul is not backing down one bit- He is not giving up and He will not shut up – see in a minute.**

**B) Why is that? Because Paul is absolutely surrendered to Jesus**

**1) And there is a supernatural power that comes from being absolutely surrendered to Jesus.**

**C) The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available to us – because JESUS LIVES!**

**1) Paul is experiencing that here!**

**Result #3 Power to testify in the face of opposition.**

**A) In V.37 Paul says can I speak to the pp?**

**B) Now this is amazing to me- they all want to kill him – Paul says can I talk ...**

**He replied, "Can you speak Greek? 38 Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?" { terrorist rebel guy }**

**39 But 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."**

**40 So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying,**

**Ch. 22 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now." 2 And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent.**

**B) They listened intently as Paul shared his testimony**

**We looked at this in Ch.9 – reiterates in v.3-21**

**Shares how he was saved on the road to Damascus – Jesus said Paul why persecute me.**

**A)But then he gets to the part where Jesus commissioned him to preach to the gentiles**

**B)That is when everything goes south –**

**22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said,"Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" 23 Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air,**

**C)Not the response that Paul was looking for- He was hoping they would all want to receive Jesus**

**1)INSTEAD - KILL HIM –**

**24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him. {Beat it out of him}**

**25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by,"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?"**

**D)Remember Philippi – they beat Paul and then found out he was a Roman citizen – Paul is not making that mistake again – Tell them first**

**RD V. 26-ch23v2**

**Paul said I have tried to live with a good conscience and the High priest – said – slap him for that.**

**Ch. 23V3 Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?"**

**OT law said like our judicial system that a man was innocent until proven guilty**

**A) Today unless you are a conservative Christian J**

**B) Paul's point was you are breaking the OT law you haven't proven anything and you are slapping me.**

**4 And those who stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?"**

**5 Then Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"**

**C) Even in this Paul quickly reverts to real humility – Paul could have said – He is the high priest he should know what the law says**

**D) Paul didn't go there { What happens next is brilliant – **RD**  
**V.6-10****

**Crazy couple of days right – wow!**

**A) Perhaps you are sitting there wondering – where is the Lord in all this?**

**B) Maybe you have had a crazy couple of days – crazy year – 2010 – not stopping now.**

**C) You are thinking – where is the Lord in all this**

**D) You have surrendered to Christ – following Christ and you are in a valley – you are in a Prison**

**E) Sit here today – thinking Where is Jesus – why doesn't he help Paul - ..... help me!**

**Notice v. 11 “But the following night the Lord stood by Him.”**

**A) Paul is at one of the lowest points of his life and where is Jesus? – Right beside Paul.**

**B) Jesus promises us “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” Hebrews 13:5**

**1) Just as Jesus was standing right beside Paul He is standing next to you today. – He is there.**

**C) His love is unfailing – David Psalm 13**

**Notice the rest of v.11 "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."**

**A) Be of good cheer – or TAKE COURAGE!**

**B) This tells me that Jesus knew exactly what was going on in Paul's heart – He knew what He was feeling.**

**C) Paul was getting weak and weary in well doing.**

**1) Paul was feeling a bit discouraged – Jesus is there saying Paul TAKE COURAGE - I got this!**

**D) I love this picture { Our darkest night our toughest circumstance, our biggest trial.**

**1) Jesus is right there - He loves us and draws near and says TAKE COURAGE – I'VE GOT THIS!**

**Jesus makes this Promise to Paul – just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you ..... Rome!**

**A) We just read of Paul testifying in Jerusalem –**

**QUESTION: How many were saved? ZERO**

**B) But note this Jesus is still glorified – He is still honored - still takes notice.**

**1) Paul you shared the message – You told them about me –**

**C) Guys this is huge { Jesus is not keeping track of how many respond – that is up to Him anyway.**

**1) He is keeping track of how faithful we are in sharing the message. I LOVE THAT!**

**D) Promises Paul – Going to Rome**

**That was the longing on Paul's heart to share the gospel in ROME – Heart beat of the World at ...time**

**A) Guys this is so encouraging – I just love the way Jesus rushes to Paul's side – darkest hour**

**B) Paul's absolute surrender to Jesus gave Him the power to testify in the face of opposition.**

**#4 The Power to believe the Promise of God!**

**A) Because Paul was absolutely surrendered to Jesus – Paul could trust Christ Proven Character.**

**B) Jesus says I am going to Rome – I am going to Rome! – Testify in Rome**



## RD V. 12-19

**C) Commander assembles 470 soldiers to get Paul back to Ceasera that night!**

**D) Letter is written explaining the situation – Paul is delivered to GOV Felix –**

**1) Felix says to Paul V. 35 “I will hear you when your accusers also have come.” And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium.**

**D) That is where we are going to leave Paul until next time.**

**Absolute surrender to Jesus – resulted in Paul having Power to**

**#1 Live for one purpose.**

**#2 Endure false accusation.**

**#3 Testify in the face of opposition**

**#4 Believe the Promise of God.**