

Paul's Final Days

Day One – Heading into Trouble

Today's reading: Page 439 through break on page 446

This reading covers: Acts 20-22

Summary: Because God sent him, Paul goes to Jerusalem knowing trouble is there. Paul was a follower of Christ. His devotion to Jesus was his defining role. When God made it clear Paul was to go to Jerusalem, he went despite certain persecution.

Consider this:

We hear the term “blind faith” all the time. Real faith is not blind at all. Faith is being sure. Faith is being certain. Faith involves a supernatural confidence.

We do not follow a God who requires blind faith. We follow a God who sent his son, so that we can have faith in someone real. When God sends us, we can be confident that he who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

For further reading: Hebrews 11

Prayer:

Father, you never ask me to do anything that you are not willing to do with me. I am so grateful that I do not live this life alone. Thank you for your presence as I walk the journey of faith here on earth. Give me the confidence I need to have in you. Give me faith to be sure and be certain that what you have in store for me is exactly what I need. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Two – God's Grace

Today's reading: Break on page 446 through break on page 456

This reading covers: Acts 27-28; Ephesians 1-6

Summary: Even in prison, Paul shares about the incredible grace of God.

We know Paul's background and what he had done against the name of Christ. We know what he deserved from God, and it wasn't grace. Paul was keenly aware of God's tremendous gift of grace. He spent the rest of his life preaching in the name of Christ and offering Christ's grace to anyone who would listen to him, including us.

Consider this:

Mercy is being saved from something, and grace is getting a gift of something. Every believer is saved from hell and given heaven. For each of us, mercy and grace looks a little different in our daily lives. How is your life different because of God's mercy and grace? What have you been saved from? What did you receive?

For further reading: Galatians 2:20-21; Ephesians 1:3-10; Ephesians 2:1-10; Hebrews 4:15-16

Prayer:

Father, thank you for your grace. Thank you for sending Jesus. Because of him I can approach your throne of grace with confidence, to receive mercy from you, and grace to help me in my time of need. I deserve neither, and yet you give me both. Thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day Three – Faithful Until the End

Today's reading: Break on page 456 through end of chapter

This reading covers: 2 Timothy 1-4

Summary: As Paul nears death, he encourages the next generation of Christian leaders.

Consider this:

We know what a zealous unbeliever Paul was before his conversion. We know he became a passionate Christ-follower after meeting Jesus. Paul pursued Christ-likeness with the discipline of an Olympic champion, and even at the end of his life he never ceased to encourage others to do the same.

For further reading:

- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27
- Philippians 4:13
- Hebrews 13:7
- Hebrews 6:12
- 1 Corinthians 4:16
- 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for the example of men like Paul, who were faithful to the end. Thank you for his words, which give me faith in my journey, and hope for the prize at the end. Our rewards are the same, Paul's and mine. Help me to be faithful to the end, in word and in deed. I want to be an example for someone else. In Jesus' name, Amen.