Acts Chapter 21 Verse 1a

* This word for *“departed”* is literally to ***“tear away.”*** There was such a bond between these men, a bond that we see still today in the church, that was real with real power. In 2 Timothy 3 verses 1 – 5 Paul warns that this kind of bond, this strength of love will become **more and more rare**, even in the church…folks that love and serve themselves, love and serve money…become boastful, prideful, and blasphemy proceeds forth. Lovers of pleasure, worshippers of emotion, rather than lovers of God…truly, for folks like that, the idea of a ***friend*** is just a ***facade***…underneath the surface they’re really just concerned with themselves and time will tell their tale, man.
* But here, this bond, that they had to tear themselves away from Paul, this is the bond that exists within the family of God. A bond that ***wins wars***, a friendship that ***survives offense***, ***a love that is rooted in the worship and purpose of Jesus Christ.*** This is the bond we should contribute to and experience today within the church. *(What do you call James Bond at bath time? Bubble-O-7! HA!! – The best Bond was Sean Connery in my opinion. What time did Sean Connery make it to Wimbledon? Tennish! HA!)*

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 1 – 5a

* ***Paul still went.*** Isn’t that amazing, but also a bit confusing?! No doubt the Holy Spirit had revealed to them what awaited Paul…which by all earthly means is ***not good***…but this is the same Paul that wrote, *“To live is Christ, and to die is gain!”* This revelation of the Spirit wasn’t to stop Paul, he had already received ***directly from the Lord!***
* Remember that? Back in Chapter 18 (verses 9 and 10), *“The Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you!”* Not only that but the Holy Spirit had said to him (he told us back in Chapter 20 Verse 23) that in every city (not just Jerusalem) *in every city chains and tribulations await him.* Fear of mortal danger would not deter him…he had a purpose and he knew God was with him.
* And here’s a word perhaps for you…***earthly wisdom has merit…but what has God said?*** You may be facing a circumstance today or one may be (is definitely) coming in the future where the world will discern the circumstance or even your spiritual God-fearing friends will offer their counsel…**but above any other voice, heed the Word of God.** What has God said? That’s the direction to go. Psalm 118:8 says, *“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.”*
* When your heart says *this way is just*, remember how Jesus dealt out justice on the cross…by **giving Himself** in their place. When your circumstance says *you are right, stand your ground*, remember that **right and righteous are at times not the same thing**…give audience to the voice of the Lord over even the voices of those around you that love you and love God. Don’t fall into the trap of adding to God’s Word though…that’s a terrible awful thing to do…
* So they’re like, *“Don’t go,”* and he’s like, *“You guys want to hit a drive thru on the way?”* HA!!

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 5 – 14

* You simply ***cannot stop*** a man like this. He was sure of what God had called him to do…his heart broke as he watched folks around him that he loved plead with him not to proceed, their reasoning was for his own personal safety, but he valued God’s will over even that. That person is unstoppable by any condition or circumstance of this world. ***That is when your calling is sure…***
* I want no calling that can be stopped. If there is a calling that is placed on my life and it can be stopped then I may go as far as to say that its ***no calling at all.*** Or perhaps better said, I have forsaken one calling for the other. ***The first calling any of us have on our lives is to walk with the Lord and grow up in Him.*** 2 Peter 1:5-11. If you’re called, give all diligence…the only calling I truly want to live out…man, with this one life I have to live honoring the Lord, **making it count**, ***the only calling I truly desire is one that cannot be stopped.***

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 15 – 22

* That’s not true. Paul has really ***no problem*** with folks keeping *customs, circumcision, feasts, vows*…I mean that’s obvious! He had taken a vow himself back in Acts 18 if you recall. Paul wrote in Romans 14:4-6 that virtually ***whatever you want to do, do it unto the Lord***…and so what had gotten around about Paul wasn’t entirely true…it was based on a true story! HA! What he taught was that none of these things have any power to make you right with God…*no right, no ritual, no repetitious prayer or work of righteousness* could add one cubit to your standing with God (and those things still can’t) because truly ***all was paid and all was gained at the cross.***

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 23 – 26

* We can be sure of this, ***Paul made no sin offering!*** There were several types of offerings to bring. A sin offering, a peace offering, a burnt offering…he most likely brought a peace offering. But why!? Why not take a stand? He’s yet to even have an opportunity to ***reintroduce himself***, even less to ***preach the Gospel***…and so he lives out what has penned in 1 Corinthians 9:19 – 23. All he wanted to do was to love God and love people…and if that meant being inconvenienced or made uncomfortable, ***he did not care!***

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 27 – 30

* That word *“supposed”* almost immediately **causes the death of Paul.** To take a gentile into the Temple past the Court of the Gentiles was punishable by death. Signs were up, it was posted, it was a cultural must…even the Romans honored this mandate because it was so drastically important to the Jews…but the **truth** is, Trophimus wasn’t with Paul. They simply ***supposed*** he was.
* Supposition is powerful. I will go as far as to say that supposition, *supposing something to be true*, is as strong as truth in the mind and heart. In the Greek, it’s the same root word as the word, *“Law.”* It almost costs Paul his life immediately right here…**don’t suppose anything.** ***Let YOUR yes be yes and YOUR no be no***…you better be sure, first hand sure, of what you believe before you take action…or you can make major *life changing* or *life ending* mistakes.
* The hired laborers in Matthew 20 supposed they would receive more wages because they had worked longer and so they ***complained and rebelled*** against their master and ***hated*** their fellow worker. The disciples supposed Jesus was a ghost in Mark Chapter 6 when He came to them walking on the water so ***instead of praising, they panicked.*** When the Holy Spirit fell upon the church, the onlookers supposed they were filled with strong drink in Acts Chapter 2…and many ***missed a real work of God***…watch out for suspicion, supposition, its pure crazy evil…find out what is the truth…and most times, that takes courage!

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 31 – 32

* This drives me crazy! **Thousands** of believers, thousands of Christians…brothers and sisters in the Lord, brothers and sisters to Paul…and yet it takes Roman soldiers and centurions to peel the Jews off of Paul!? Doesn’t make sense to me. Could it be that ***the church had conformed more to the culture than it had to Christ?***

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 33 – 36

* This is interesting. Paul was taken at the temple and accused of basically the ***same things*** they accused Stephen of 20 years before…and now as Paul is being led away, the people yell basically the ***same thing*** they yelled after Jesus! Here’s the thing, when you are *dissed* for Jesus, you’re not alone, man…what if you got made fun of or disrespected or shamed and yet there ***were millions of people standing at your six!?*** Wouldn’t cut so deeply would it? Well that **IS** the case!

Acts Chapter 21 Verses 37 – 40

* Paul just got beaten by them, abused, harmed, hurt…but here he is…***trying to reach them***…is that your heart? Let me tell you, that is the Lord’s heart for YOU!