

DIVINE CHRISTIAN COMPULSION!
ACTS CH21:7-16



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CHRISTIAN CRASH PADS! V7-9

Who were the team (Ch20:4-5) going with Paul to Jerusalem?

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| Sopater the son of Pyrrhus | - | Berea |
| Aristarchus + Secundus | - | Thessalonica |
| Gaius (probably the same person Ch19:29) | - | Derbe |
| Timothy | - | Lystra(Asia) |
| Tychicus | - | Asia |
| Trophimus (Acts Ch21:29 + 2 Tim Ch4:20) | - | Ephesus (Asia) |
| Luke (Ch16:10-16 + Ch20:5-Ch21:18) | - | Philippi (Macedonia) |

Why were they going? Romans Ch15:25-33 and 1st Corinthians Ch16:3-4 inform us that Paul intended that local representatives from the planted Churches he had founded should convey the money collected for the poor Christians in Jerusalem!

The apostle Paul accompanied by his team of 8 (see above) travel over a distance of 120 miles on this last leg of their journey, probably over a fortnight, involving at least 2 ship voyages from Tyre – Ptolemais 25 miles and Ptolemais – Caesarea 30 miles, before going on foot or horse from Caesarea – Jerusalem 65 miles. Ch21:16 reveals to us that along with Paul's team of 8, other disciples from Caesarea also accompany him and the team to Jerusalem!

How will the team and Paul be supported? We have seen the Christians sharing amongst the congregation in Acts Ch2:44-46, Ch4:32-37, Ch6:1-4 and in Acts Ch11:27-30 the same godly principle is used in an inter-church need. The Jerusalem Church sent Barnabas and Agabus, now the young fledgling international church responds, by also sending! Not only do they send Barnabas and Saul, but as people gave v29 according to their ability, they send a vital financial gift. ***Partnerships between churches involve different levels of giving and receiving in ministry to one another!***

We again see this godly principle in action as care is provided for those who are actively involved in gospel-ministry work. The Christian community from different cities, come together to support Paul and his team, check out - ***V4 - 7 days, V5 - 1 day at the beach, V7 - 1 day near the Port, V10 + V15 - 14 days and V17,18 + 27 - at least 8 days!***

CHRISTIAN CONFUSION! V10-14

Paul probably stays around a fortnight with Philip (v10 + v15). This Philip is "Philip the Deacon and Evangelist, not Philip the apostle - Acts Ch6:1-6, Ch8:4-8, Ch8:26-40 + Ch21:10-11, who has been living in Caesarea for around twenty years where he has settled down and now has 4 unmarried daughters who all prophesy!

But why don't they prophesy about Paul?

Why does Agabus back in Acts Ch11:27-30 travel to Antioch? Why not just stay in Jerusalem and tell the Church there? ***Agabus travels to the "First International Church" in Syria Antioch, because he has a message from God for them! The prophetic message is for that Church!***

In the exact same way, Agabus now travels to Caesarea, because he has a prophetic message for an individual (1 Kings Ch11:19, Is Ch20:3-4 + Ez Ch4:1)! As we touched on last week, ***prophesy in the New Testament is used in three ways:***

1. Firstly, ***through preaching God's Word.*** 1st Corinthians Ch14:3, we can be strengthened, encouraged and comforted. We need to value preaching! ***Acts Ch2:17-18 every born again Christian has the gift of prophesy,*** used as we tell people the Good News about Jesus Christ!
2. Secondly, ***foretelling the future for the Church.*** In Acts Ch11:27-29 where Agabus brings God's revelation of a future famine. The Church is warned! As above with Agabus having a prophetic message to an individual Church!
3. Thirdly, ***foretelling the future for an individual.*** In Acts Ch20:22-23, Ch21:4 + Ch21:10-11 where Agabus again is used, telling Paul about what is awaiting him in Jerusalem, the hardships and sufferings that he will endure!

We now see prophesy being used in a prophetic message for an individual! But it causes such confusion and heartache! Notice the "we" in V12, it is not just the locals, but now the entire team, urging Paul not to go to Jerusalem!!!

Why does Paul want to go to Jerusalem? Remember back in Acts Ch20:2-3, when Paul was visiting Corinth and he wrote to the Church in Rome (Book of Romans) **“At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.” Romans Ch15:25-26** So Paul, being quite clear of the prophecy from the Holy Spirit, continues to head to Jerusalem!

V13 – Paul's response is reminiscent of Jesus' in Luke Ch22:42 - “Father if you are willing remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done.” Luke wants his readers to see the parallels between the fate of Jesus and Paul's fate (Mark Ch9:31). V14 – The disciples eventually get it!

CHRISTIAN COMPANY! V15-16

Paul will soon be facing the cultural consequences from his preaching and Church planting ministry, and we should at this point be reminded of **the prophecy made by Jesus in Ch9:16! Paul is about to be God's chosen instrument for further sanctification, through suffering for the Gospel of Christ!**

Just before that, a Cypriot named Mnason is the next source of Christian hospitality, who is putting up the whole team! Come on mun!! The whole team, Paul, the 8 and the disciples from Caesarea. How's that gonna go down, men? You come home with a people numbering the size of a Premier League Football Team, around 25 people!

Notice how Luke describes Mnason – the Cypriot an early disciple. Translated, “From the Beginning!” Mnason, can be fully trusted in putting up the apostle Paul, His Team and other disciples, now firmly supportive of God's Will (v14).

Christians need hospitality and company!!! Luke begins and ends these verses with incredible examples of Christian care, Christian hospitality and Christian company!

APPLICATION

What do you think about the examples that Luke provides of those who host and help the gospel workers?

Have you been involved in providing help and hosted gospel workers?

What is it like?