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“Being Relatable for Christ”

Acts 28:17-31

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In the closing chapter of Acts, Paul meets with some Jewish leaders to explain the truth about Jesus. Until his dying day, Paul used various encounters with people as opportunities to tell them about Jesus Christ. He always looked for a “relatable entry point” in connecting the hearts of people with the truth of Jesus. Paul’s approach to evangelism is a great example for us to follow in reaching people who cross our paths with the good news of Jesus Christ. Follow along as Pastor Gary encourages us to see the world around us with a heart for the lost.

1. [Acts 28:17-31](#) - *“And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: ‘Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. But when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.’ Then they said to him, ‘We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere.’ So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: ‘The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, “Go to this people and say: ‘Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you will see, and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes*

*they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!’ And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves. Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.”*

2. The apostle Paul’s continued imprisonment
  - a. Paul was wrongfully imprisoned due to an accusation of heresy by the Jewish leaders for preaching that salvation is through faith in Jesus rather than obedience to the law
  - b. After two years of “legal wranglings,” he appealed his case to Caesar Nero and sailed to Rome
    - i. During the trip, he and the other 276 passengers endured a shipwreck when their ship capsized in a storm
    - ii. All passengers survived by floating on pieces of the ship’s debris until they reached the island of Malta
    - iii. Paul then sailed the rest of the way to Rome where he was placed on house arrest and allowed to have visitors
  - c. He would ultimately be beheaded five to seven years later by Nero’s order
  
3. While imprisoned, Paul used every opportunity to share with others about Jesus
  - a. Paul led some of Caesar’s servants to Christ
    - i. **Philippians 4:22** - *“All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar’s household.”*
    - ii. God places people in our path so that we can share with them the good news of Christ
  - b. Paul would find a relatable entry point in his conversations with others to share about Jesus
    - i. **1 Corinthians 9:19-22** - *“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men that I might by all means save some.”*
    - ii. We can better help people understand the Gospel when we understand their backgrounds
      1. Paul used the Jewish Scriptures to reason with the Jews

2. When Paul reasoned with Gentiles in Acts 17, he appealed to their belief in an “unknown God,” explaining to them that this God was actually Jesus, the God of the universe
  3. Some people were persuaded and some were not, but Paul was faithful to his calling to share the Gospel and left the results to God
4. Every chance encounter is an opportunity
- a. A simple question to provide an entry point to a conversation about Jesus is, “Do you go to church?”
    - i. If they say yes, you can follow up with, “Where?”
      1. Then ask how long they have been following Christ
    - ii. If they say no, you can follow up with, “Why not?”
      1. If they had a bad experience at church, explain the importance of following Christ even when others may not represent Him well
    - iii. Find the entry point for the people you encounter
      1. Be observant
      2. Be willing to tell others about Christ
      3. Be an example of a life in submission to Christ
  - b. God will take you to “Caesar’s household” (wherever He places you) so that those around you can see and hear Jesus in you

### Discussion Questions

1. Read [Acts 28:17-31](#) to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Read [Philippians 4:22](#). How do we know Paul was sharing Christ with those in Caesar’s household? (See #3a above)
3. Why does God place people in our path? If you were wrongfully imprisoned, would you still share Christ with those around you? Why or why not?
4. Read [1 Corinthians 9:19-22](#). How would Paul begin conversations about the Gospel? What can we learn from Paul’s approach? (See #3b above)
5. Compare and contrast the way Paul reasoned with the Jews in Acts 28 with his conversation with Gentiles in Acts 17. (See #3b-ii-1 and #3b-ii-2 above)
6. Where did Paul focus his efforts? (See #3b-ii-3 above)
7. Have you ever shared the Gospel with another person? What was your entry point to begin the conversation?
8. How can we find entry points with others? (See #4a-ii above)

9. Where is “Caesar’s household” in your life? (See #4b above)

10. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)