



Approaching God

Read the beginning of Psalm 55 and begin with an opening prayer

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. (Ps. 55:1-2)

Isaiah 55 is an invitation to come into the Lord’s presence, and to experience the soul transforming power of his salvation. Who is it that receives this invitation? Who are the people who are satisfied in Isaiah 55? They are the ones who come empty-handed and bare. Those who yield and surrender experience the very goodness of God. Start today by coming into his presence with wherever you feel most needy today and ask for God, fountain of joy, to fill you.

Acts 28:17-31

Passage Introduction: The Hope of Gospel Salvation

Verse 17 presents us with a very unusual situation. When Paul arrived in Rome and was placed under solitary house arrest (v 16), we might have expected him to go get a good attorney. After all, he was brought there to be tried for his life. But of course, throughout Paul’s ministry, the first place he went to in new cities was the synagogue. Paul could not go to the synagogue in Rome, though, because he remained under house arrest. Paul, therefore, did the next best thing: he called the Jewish leaders to his house. He brought the synagogue to himself

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Notes:

Acts 28:17-31 - **17** Three days later he called together the local Jewish leaders. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: “My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. **18** They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. **19** The Jews objected, so I was compelled to make an appeal to Caesar. I certainly did not intend to bring any charge against my own people. **20** For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.” **21** They replied, “We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of our people who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. **22** But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect.” **23** They arranged to meet Paul on a

Vs. 30-31

There are many possible explanations for the book's seemingly unfinished nature. But perhaps it is deliberate. Perhaps it is an unfinished story that leaves the reader facing this question: "What are you going to do about this?" How would you answer that today?

certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. He witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus. **24** Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. **25** They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your ancestors when he said through Isaiah the prophet: **26** " 'Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." **27** For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.' **28** "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!" **30** For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. **31** He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- What are 2 or 3 things in this passage for which you can thank or praise God?
- As you think back over the entire book of Acts, what events and themes stand out for you?
- The book of Acts has one of the strangest endings of any biblical book, not counting Mark whose ending is almost certainly missing. How do you react to the way the book actually ends?

Key Takeaway:

What are some of the key takeaways you have had about the mission of God throughout the book of Acts?

Close in Prayer: Pray that your heart will always be open to the Lord, that your ears and eyes will never be closed to him, and that he will be proclaimed openly as you live from day to day.