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**RELATED SCRIPTURES**

Acts 15:1-35 | 1 Peter 5:10 | Romans 6:5

**STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.1.23**

**SUMMARY**

The apostle Paul faced countless crises in his missionary journeys. At this juncture, Paul's next stop was Jerusalem where the prophet Agabus warned him not to go (Acts 21:10). Nevertheless, Paul proceeded and brought some disciples from Caesarea with him. Initially, he was greeted warmly by his Christian brethren, and among those to greet him was James, the brother of Jesus, who was the recognized leader of the church in Jerusalem. By the time Paul arrived in Jerusalem, however, rumors were circulating that Paul was teaching Jewish converts to forget about the law of God, the temple, and all the sacred traditions of their past. This rumor was inaccurate as Paul frequently told converts they had freedom in issues of indifference, particularly cultural matters unrelated to salvation. To silence the mouths of the slanderous critics, James and his disciples encouraged Paul to accompany four men to the temple who had taken a Nazarite vow, purify himself as they did, and pay for their sacrifices. Paul agreed to go, but in the process, a group of Jews saw Paul and accused him of bringing his Gentile companions they previously saw with him into the temple. The law forbade Gentiles from entering the temple beyond the outer court, but Paul had done no such thing. This false accusation resulted in these (non-Christian) Jews dragging Paul out of the temple, intending to kill him. Despite the mob, the Roman soldiers spared Paul's life; nevertheless, they arrested him and took him away in chains. Paul's suffering is strikingly similar to Christ's—rejected by his own people, falsely accused, beaten, and arrested, though no guilt was in him. Jesus-followers will share in the sufferings of Christ, but ultimately, he will vindicate them; for if we share in his sufferings, we will also be raised with him (Romans 6:5).

**GROUP QUESTIONS**

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Acts 21:17-36.

Paul was warned not to go to Jerusalem because of the danger he would face. What risks do you feel you face as a Christian? How do you cope with these risks?

Part of the Christian journey includes partaking in the sufferings of Christ. Why do you suppose the Lord made suffering a part of our sanctification? Is there a benefit?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

**CLOSE IN PRAYER**

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.