

READ THE NEW TESTAMENT THROUGH SCRIPTURE: **ACTS 28:1-31**

ABOUT: Paul finds himself “quarantined” in Acts 28:30-31 Ha Ha...not technically quarantined, but yes under house arrest confined to his house for two years of which we are all relating to right now. Paul was allowed to avoid prison by being put under house arrest (Acts 28:16), Paul is under guard (Acts 28:16), and is free to have visitors (Acts 28:30) as well as give the Gospel teaching about Christ (Acts 28:31). Due to Paul’s Roman citizenship, respect he earned from Roman authority through his court trials, God’s good hand being upon him, etc. Paul gave the Gospel, taught about Christ, wrote several epistles while in “quarantine”...what will you do?

ANALYSIS: Understand this though, these are some bad times Paul, as well as Christians, find themselves in. Historically it is said that the circumstances of Acts chapter 28 take place about A.D. 61 give or take some. Do you understand these times in the Romans Empire? Let me paint a bit of a picture for you (I understand the technicalities in the different calendars and dates but for the sake of giving a picture I am not putting the dates down to the day for you Bible scholars out there):

~~~Christianity comes into the picture with Christ about A.D. 30 and is met with severe persecution by the unsaved Jews from the very start in about A.D. 33 with the crucifixion of Christ (John 11:47-57; 20:19); down to the church (Acts 8:1-5).  
~~~The chief Jewish persecutor, Saul, gets saved (Acts 9:1-8) probably in the mid to late A.D. 30s just a short time following the establishing of the church. If Paul got saved say in A.D. 35 was he a Pharisee while Christ was in Israel? Think about that!  
~~~Up to Acts chapter 28 most of the Christian persecution came from the unsaved Jews. Remember, the Romans delivered Paul from the Jews (Acts 21:30-34).  
~~~Nero became Roman emperor in A.D. 54 at 17 years of age having three main advisors which included his mother, Agrippina. As Nero got older, he began to step out from under Agrippina and she responded by promoting her stepson Britannicus as the true heir to the throne. Britannicus died “out of the blue” and Agrippina was executed under Nero in A.D. 59 with Nero remaining in power.  
~~~Nero was in adultery with his friend’s wife (Poppea) and in A.D. 62 Nero had his own wife (Octavia) executed; then married Poppea. Three years later Nero killed Poppea and becoming a man who lived by his passions and lacked self-control.

Where is Paul at this time?...while Nero is going on a murderous attack Paul is right there in Rome leading people to Christ around A.D. 61 to A.D. 63 (Acts 28:17-31)! The number of Christians is growing in Rome, and Christians are preaching the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of Nero (Acts 28:23; 28:31).

Some, not all, believe that after the 2 years of house arrest here in Acts chapter 28, in about A.D. 63, Paul was released and did some travelling. Whether Paul was released or not, we do know of a historical event that took place in Rome in A.D. 64.

- The Great Fire Of Rome happened early morning of June 19, A.D. 64 burning for 6 days and 7 nights consuming almost three quarters of Rome of which many blamed Nero for.
- Just as this fire spread Christianity was spreading all over Rome as well ignited by the giving of the Gospel by Paul. Roman citizens were being converted to be people who oppose the worship of the Emperor, oppose sacrifices, and preach a new kingdom ruled by King Jesus Christ.

A Roman senator and historian named Tacitus wrote this in his book *Annals* which was published a few years after the fire concerning Nero’s response to the fire: *“Therefore, to stop the rumor, he falsely charged with guilt, and punished with the most fearful tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius...”*

**APPLICATION:** Where is Paul at this time?...he is back in prison, as some believe for the second time while others believe that he remained from Acts chapter 28 to the end of his life. What is Paul doing? Writing the epistle 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy in about A.D. 67. The Roman Empire, the world, is a mess in A.D. 60’s: politics, morals, society, religion, education, are corrupt and scandals as well as catastrophes are many; with Christians being brutally persecuted. Imagine the world that the epistle 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy is written in. In all of this, Paul’s advice to young Timothy is in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:5.  
**Watch:** “to be sober; to be calm and collected in spirit; be temperate, circumspect, dispassionate”; **In all things:** “in every situation and circumstance”; **Endure afflictions:** “experiencing painful hardship/suffering that seems to be a setback but really isn’t; to endure, persevere through troubles”; **Work:** “do business; do the employment; that which anyone is occupied”; **Evangelist:** “one announcing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ”; **Make full proof:** “fully carry out; complete; accomplish”; **Ministry:** “administration; service” ---**How does one do this?---**

\* COMMIT – 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:1-6

\* CONSIDER – 2<sup>ND</sup> Timothy 2:7-13; 3:1-13

\* CONTINUE – 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:14 – 4:4

**ACTION:** I can tell you this, what was going on in A.D. 67 is not even close to what we are going through today, yet the admonishment was 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:5. Are you living out 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:5? If not, I can tell you why you are not: You are not committed to what you are called to be committed to --- You are not considering what you are to be considering --- You are not continuing in what you are to be continuing in. Why don’t you get to where you are supposed to be...right now?  
**WALK B4 TALK:** Monday – Commit (with verses); Tuesday – Consider (with verses); Wednesday – Continue (with verses). **ALLOW** the Holy Spirit to speak to you specifically, **APPLY** accordingly, **ACT** on God’s Word.

