

## THE WAY – BLIND & DEAF: SPIRITUAL DIABETES

### SERMON OUTLINE

July 30, 2017

Acts 28:17-31

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### INTRODUCTION

**ACTS:** from home to the world! Challenges of the Gospel (Acts = how to pray for missions/missionaries)

**Diabetes: “silent killer”** - (consider/compare the physical to the spiritual condition):

SCARY FACT: 56 per cent of people diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes last year did not even suspect they could have the condition – they had no idea!

**TEST:** When presented with the truth = your reaction reveals your heart condition.

- ✓ Whine, complain – never helps
- ✓ React, demand – reveals you have a problem (not the truth)

### CONTEXT: Paul finally gets to Rome - Malta to Rome (11-16): Getting ready for the end

#### A. CONFIDENT (1-10). His faith/trust in God = calm, confident so took advantage of down time

Trip took 6 months; 3 months in Malta = knowing he would be a prisoner, probably die; did not waste transition times – he saw them as opportunities that God planned to touch lives for Christ.

#### B. SET SAIL (11-13): engaged the world.

*“a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead”* = gods of marooned sailors

#### C. THANKS + COURAGE. Took courage (14-16)

1. “we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days (14).”
2. “On seeing them, Paul **thanked God and took courage** (15).”
  - ✓ INITIATIVE: Paul gave thanks + took courage λαμβάνω lambano. to take, receive; accept with initiative  
NOTE: relationship between “giving thanks” – “encouraged” (Phil. 4:4-7)
  - ✓ Just being with other believers gave him “courage” – to face uncertain future and trials, possibly death (same today; that’s why church is important – church is not perfect, but we need it)

**APP. Missionaries!!** Give thanks + take courage – YOUR RECEPTION = essential part of work!!

### WHAT HAPPENED? 28:17-31

#### A. Concern & Curiosity (17-22).

Two groups of Jewish leaders

1. The Curious in Rome (had heard nothing) (21, 23)
2. Jewish leaders in Israel (everywhere spoken against) (22) = cowards & gossips – in 6 months they had not sent evidence (there was none), but they were still gossiping. Remember, these were Jewish, biblical leaders

**Lesson:** gossips are cowards, they work behind the scenes

#### B. Confrontation with the truth (23).

#### C. Confusion vs. Courage (24-25 & 30-31): 2 responses to the same message

## WHY DID IT HAPPEN (27)?

### A. The problem: SPIRITUAL DIABETES = heart, ears, eyes Acts 28:27

For this people's **heart** has grown dull, and with their **ears** they can barely hear, and their **eyes** they have closed;

- ✓ **Grown dull:** *παχύνω pachuno* to thicken, to fatten, fig. to make dull  
thick (with excessive fat); having an insensitive heart, i.e. unfeeling (obtuse).
- ✓ **ears barely hear:** *βαρέως bareós* heavy, with difficulty, sluggish, disinterested
- ✓ **eyes closed:** *καμμύω kammuó*  
Compound word: *kata (κατά)*, down/against *y musterion*; to shut down

### B. A family medical history of problems

- ✓ Isaiah 6:9-10 (Paul's quote from the LXX)
- ✓ Matthew 13:10-17 – why parables
- ✓ John 12:36-43 – sad reality

**NOTE:** Jews = “of the Word”/fear of God = religious sincerity + spiritual diabetes = loss of life, loss of “rest”

## WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES? (27, 28)

1. **Loss of healing opportunity** (27). “Walking dead” = perpetual illness – they could have been healed

2. **Loss of participating in God's work** (blessing) (28) – obligated to pass the baton

Close your heart? God will simply move on to others who are willing

**Esther 4:14 = ESTHER PRINCIPLE** – God does not have to use you, He goes with the willing heart

3. **Loss of REST (Hebrews 3 & 4). WARNING!**

- a. Consider Christ (1);
- b. don't harden heart (7-19),
- c. **exhort** one another (13)

*But exhort one another every day . . . that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*

- ✓ **Exhort:** *παρακαλέω parakaleó*. Call alongside; to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage (Paul + people)  
Hebrews 10:25. *Stimulating one another to love and good deeds*  
*Paraclete. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7*  
*Παράκλητον paraklēton* Only used twice: John 14:16 & I John 2:1 = Advocate (HS, Christ)  
Holy Spirit = take over role of Jesus = walk alongside, be legal advocate (defend and intercede)
- ✓ **deceitfulness** (*ἀπάτη apatē* = apathy) *of sin* (not gross immorality, but the day-to-day apathy toward keeping the cutting edge)

d. **Hebrews 4:1-10.** A hardened heart prevents us from enjoying God's rest (not denies heaven).

**THE WORD:** a spiritual “doctor” who can see/heal our heart condition. **HEBREWS 4:12-13**

## WHAT CAN I DO? Proverbs 4:23

“Guard your heart.” **How's your health?** How do you respond when your body says, “help!?”