

**The Return to Jerusalem**  
**Acts 21:1-17**

This morning our passage is Acts 21:1-17. So, grab your Bible and turn there. And this is the end of the third missionary journey. These have been going on for a while. The first missionary journey was Acts 13-14 - the second missionary journey and then the third missionary journey. The first missionary journey just went to modern-day Turkey, but the second and the third missionary journeys have expanded to Greece. And now, the third missionary journey covers from chapters 18 to 21. It's focused mostly on a city in the western end of modern-day Turkey on the coast, Ephesus. And now, we're headed back to Jerusalem. We're returning to Jerusalem in Acts chapter 21. This return to Jerusalem has a purpose to it that is beyond just what you read in the book of Acts. This return (from the western coast of where we've left off at Miletus, will travel across the Mediterranean, and for today's passage will conclude in Jerusalem, but we hit the coast of modern-day Israel) is for a purpose that extends to a delivery of a monetary gift from the gentile churches that Paul had collected in Greece, Macedonia, and was now delivering to believers in Jerusalem that were in financial need. And we learn this not from this passage that we'll be looking at today, but from Romans 15.

The book of Romans was written on the third missionary journey while Paul was visiting these churches in Greece before he headed back to where we are. So, he had already written the book of Romans but at the time when he wrote the book of Romans, he spoke about this collection that he had gathered for the need of the Jerusalem believers. He wrote (Romans 15:25-27), "...but now, I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things." So, these cities in Macedonia which would be Thessalonica, which would be Beria, which would be Philippi, and then in Achaia which would be Corinth, had contributed to the needs. And Paul is delivering this monetary gift to the church in Jerusalem. He does so after he calls for the Ephesian elders one last time, and now he's departing to Jerusalem.

So, as we go to the scriptures in Acts chapter 21, we'll look at the first section, the first six verses, where he sails from where he had just given the charge to the Ephesians to shepherd the church of God, to be protecting the church from the savage wolves that were coming, to be overseeing faithfully in Ephesus. Now he's going to depart from this port town of Miletus, and he's going to go to Tyre in this first leg of the journey in chapter 21:1-16. So, this is from Miletus to Tyre. And I kind of need to warn you a little bit that we're going to see a lot of places. And I know when you've maybe heard about people's journeys, and I've told people, hey, this is where I went. This is what I did. There's the pictures. They get this kind of glazed look over their face. They really don't care that much about all of what I've done. Well, this is the Scripture, so we ought to care a little more about that than the average person's trips. And there's more here than just they went here, they went there, and they went another place. So, let's read this together; "When we had parted from them and had set sail, we ran a straight course to Cos and the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara; and having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail. When we came in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, we kept sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload its cargo. After looking up the disciples, we stayed there seven days; and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem. When our days there were ended, we left and started on our journey, while they all, with wives and children, escorted us until we were out of the city. After kneeling down on the beach and praying, we said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home again."

So, this is this visit and you see a pronoun "we," and that should clue you in that "we" includes the author of the book of Acts, Luke, and he accompanied Paul on this journey back to Jerusalem. We have a first account of what transpired. So, he's included in. For this section of the scripture then, we see many places, and when you read these places, they don't mean anything to you probably. But the people Luke was writing to, the gentiles of the world, the ancient near east, that had come to believe, and then out to Greece, these people would be familiar with these areas. Some of these people had actually known of these places had been to these places. Maybe they lived in these places. It's kind of like if you were traveling someplace and somebody you encounter was from Lancaster or had visited Lancaster. Right? Now, it's pretty boring, but when you're someplace else, you go, oh, and you start talking about where you've been and what you've done. And putting this in

the context of the readers of Luke's writing, they would be more interested. And as we look at these, these many places are connected to many people, and these people were affected and touched by these journeys of Paul.

So, these meant something. So, put your mind in the first century that he visited places like Cos and Rhodes. These are Greek islands off the coast of modern-day Turkey. These islands, the smaller one is Cos. Rhodes is about four times the size of Cos. Cos is maybe notable because if you've ever heard of the Hippocratic oath, Hippocrates started the very first medical school in Cos, that island, probably only about thirty thousand people that live there today. Rhodes is about four times the size of it. And if you've ever heard of Rhode Island, the state, that was named after Rhodes because an Italian explorer came across an island off the coast of Rhode Island, the state, that they considered to be very similar to this island. So, that's how we get the state called Rhode Island. Then after visiting those two places in verse 1, we come to Patara. What Patara is is a port town along the coast of the northern Mediterranean Sea. They change ships at Patara in order to get to Jerusalem a little more quickly. What they're taking are not like passenger ships. They're going on along with a cargo ship, and to go straighter, to go faster, you take less stops. It'd be like the equivalent of the bullet train instead of the one that takes stop after stop after stop. So, this is why they wanted to get on this other ship at Patara that would cross over to Phoenicia. So, Patara was an ancient harbor along the coast of the Mediterranean, southern Turkey. Right now, it's just ruins there. There's nothing to see other than excavations.

So, after they stop there, they go right across to the area of Phoenicia which is a region in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, which is the coast of modern-day Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. One of the ways we get our modern alphabet is from the Phoenicians that originally settled there. So, this is a region. And the ship sailed past the island of Cyprus. As we read, they come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left, so that means they're going on the southern side of it. And Cyprus, if you recall, was the original destination to the very first missionary journey that Paul embarked on with Barnabas who was from Cyprus. Paul arrived there, and now he's fittingly ending his third missionary journey, passing by that island, to the southern part of it, into the region of Phoenicia. So, the ship stops in Tyre for a week to unload the cargo so there's obviously quite a bit of cargo. Paul's not in charge of the itinerary so he just waits for the cargo to get unloaded, and he ends up

spending a total of seven days there in this coastal town called Tyre. This town is where the church was established after a persecution that broke out among the Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem.

What we find, if you recall back in Acts chapter 11, was this scattering of the persecution. I'll read this. Acts 11:19-20; "So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. "But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord." So, this is when the gospel first went to gentile people at that point, and it came about because of the scattering of the persecution of the Greek-speaking Jews. So, if you recall the early part of Acts, there were controversies between the Greek-speaking Jews, and the Hebrew-speaking Jews. There's people of Jewish background from the culture that was Greek, and there were people from the background that was culturally Hebrew. It was an issue within the church. It was an issue in the society, and the easiest people to be persecuted by the Jewish people (not the believers but the Jewish people) were the Greek-speaking, Jewish Christians, and those people scattered. They founded the church in Tyre, and that's now the church that Paul is revisiting.

So, what we can learn out of this is, God is moving people around for a purpose, for His purposes. Some of the travels you see by Paul - he determined to go to a place, others of the travels of Paul - he had one plan and was sovereignly directed to another place or by revelation told to go to another place. And some of the gospel is going because of persecution, people just fleeing and taking with them the knowledge of Jesus and sharing that knowledge of Jesus to people they encountered. So, in our day and age, the gospel spreads through all kinds of means, and God is moving people to deliver truth. So, that should be our participation. Wherever we're going, wherever we're moved to by the Lord, then we're bringing the truth of Jesus to those people. That's what's happening in Acts; that should be what's happening today.

So, as we read this traveling, and he's in Tyre, verse 4, he "...stayed there seven days..." because he's waiting for the cargo to be unloaded and the ship to set sail. Again, the people in Tyre were "...telling Paul through the

Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.” Obviously, he continues on anyway which has led people to consider that Paul is disobedient to the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, by continuing on to Jerusalem. Now, I don’t think we need to read it this way at all when the scripture says, “...they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.” The Spirit isn’t the one saying, “...not to set foot in Jerusalem.” It’s the people that were saying to Paul, “...not to set foot in Jerusalem.”, in light of the prophecy of suffering. And we see more about prophecy in light of the suffering that was coming in the next section. We’ll look at where the prophet named Agabus who will talk about Paul being delivered over to the hands of the gentiles, so when it says, “...they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem,” I think the best way to understand that is the Spirit was revealing the suffering that was headed Paul’s way, but not that this was a prohibition to go to Jerusalem. It was more a warning.

So, this is the end of his time in Tyre. They have a departure that is very like the departure from Miletus with the Ephesian elders when they gather and they’re sending them off. There’s a real connectivity here with Paul and the people that he’s with even though he wasn’t there a long time, seven days. Obviously, he had an involvement with them, a ministry with them, and there’s a caring and a praying together and a farewell, and they board the ship and return to Jerusalem. There’s a real relational connection there because of the time spent.

So, in our next section, we’ll look when Paul moves from the town of Tyre to the town of Caesarea, and we see that in verses 7-14; “When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and after greeting the brethren, we stayed with them for a day. On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses. As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us, he took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’ When we had heard this, we as well as the local residents began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, ‘What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at

Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.’ And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, ‘The will of the Lord be done!’ ”

So, as we look at this section, we find Ptolemais; that was a sea port. It was about twenty miles, twenty-five miles, south of Tyre. So, halfway between Tyre and Caesarea is this town of Ptolemais. Then they stayed there a day because that was the itinerary of the ship, and then they head down from there to Caesarea. So, verses 8-14, the setting of that is all in this town of Caesarea. When we last heard about Caesarea, that is where Peter had traveled to the Roman centurion and his family that he preached the gospel to, and they became believers. That was in Acts chapters 10-11, a lot of material about the Roman centurion in Caesarea. So, at Caesarea, there is this prophecy by a man named Agabus. We had seen Agabus before. He pops up in Acts 11:28, and he is giving a prophecy of a coming famine - that we now are having people being cared for by this gift as a result of the difficulties of the time. So, Agabus has already given a prophecy, and now here he is giving another prophecy. This prophecy is a visual prophecy, and it’s very similar to what we find in the Old Testament. With the Old Testament prophets, we find Ezekiel; we find Isaiah; we find Jeramiah. Their way of prophesying at times was by acting it out, and that’s what Agabus does; “...he took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’ ” So, this visual type of a prophecy harkens back to prophecies in the Old Testament. This is making a similarity between what we find here in the New Testament and Old Testament prophecies like I’ve shown verses for you in Isaiah and Jeramiah and Ezekiel.

Then, there’s the phrase, “This is what the Holy Spirit says...” in verse 11. This is like the New Testament equivalent to the Old Testament phrasing of “...thus says the Lord...” This shows that there’s a commonality between what we find in prophecy in the New Testament and what we find in prophecy in the Old Testament. There’s this modern notion of prophecy in the New Testament being different, and the reason this comes about is because, in our day and age, there’s people that consider themselves to be prophets, and they will tell people what God says, God says this, and God says that. And one of the ways you can tell if someone’s a prophet, not only will they have miraculous events surrounding them, so you can pay attention and say, ah, we have a prophet; I should listen to him; He’s speaking for

God. Because anybody can say this is what God says and misrepresent God, so what do you do with people that just say they represented God but really aren't, and maybe there'll be some things that are wrong? Well, if you're in the Old Testament, the Old Testament describes the penalty for being a false prophet or someone that prophesizes in error, and that is they're put to death; that's in Deuteronomy chapter 18.

Now, in the New Testament we have false prophets. We don't find people being put to death, but we do have people today who are saying they're speaking from God, and what happens on occasion is that what they say doesn't come true. Then what do they do? Well, here's what has popularly happened, they've come up with this idea that New Testament prophecy or prophecy now in the church age is different than prophecy in the time of the Old Testament with the nation of Israel. Prophecy in the New Testament, they'll say, can be wrong, so if they make a mistake, if they're not right, that's just a mistake, but they're still okay to be a prophet. That's the way they will present this, and they claim that New Testament prophecy is different than Old Testament prophecy. Well, I look at verse 11 and see the prophecy of Agabus. It's almost like going out of its way to compare itself to Old Testament prophecy. And then, you have the other issue of, if it's prophecy, what is prophecy? Prophecy is revelation from God that's given directly to a person who is then able to pass this to other people. This is what God says. We have prophecy in the Scripture. God has revealed Himself to people, and they wrote it down for us in the New Testament, in the Old Testament, and we now have it for us.

God is able to work through humans, flawed people, to deliver complete, one hundred percent truth accurately, and He does so in prophecy. We don't have to goof up. We can do it right, and that has been done right in the Scripture. So, when somebody says they're speaking from God, how do we know when we can count on it? Well, if what they say comes about, and if what they say is corresponding to undeniable miraculous events like we see in the Scripture, that validates the Scripture; then we can take notice.

But in the meantime, while we're waiting for such a thing, I think we should be skeptical because there's false prophets who will want to mislead people and say, oh, if we're wrong, it's okay. Listen to us anyway. Well, once you have the issue of error introduced, the possibility of error introduced, how do you trust anything? Is it ninety-nine percent true? Is it ninety-five percent

true? Maybe it's seventy-five percent true? That's not prophecy. Prophecy of the Scripture is one hundred percent true, and we can count on it. It is from God. So, this prophecy of Agabus was true, and the Jews at Jerusalem did indeed arrest Paul and bind him and deliver him to the hands of the gentiles. So, Luke records these prophecies for us, and his purpose for recording these prophecies is to give the reader confidence that Paul's arrest is not an accident. It's not an unfortunate circumstance. It is all part of God's plan for ministry. God had a plan. This plan was known about, and God is working out His will in spite of these obstacles that Paul would face.

One of the people that was communicating about the concerns that the people, the brethren, had was Luke himself, so even Luke who's the author of this text was one of the people begging Paul "...not to set foot in Jerusalem." Because this is natural to care about Paul, they didn't want to see him suffer, but it wasn't having the highest goal in mind. It was having Paul's best interest in mind but not God's best interest. And Paul was looking not to his own needs, his own circumstances, but to his service of the Lord. In fact, that's been Paul's life from the very start of his following Christ. The Lord informed Ananias back in Acts chapter 9 (this man that was helping Paul on beginning the journey of following Jesus) that Paul's destiny would be to suffer. And then we see a little bit later in chapter 23, Christ commending Paul for his faithfulness in ministry in spite of his suffering, that Paul was faithful through these sufferings. So, this was all known about. This would continue to be known about, and now we have Paul having the opportunity to listen to these people, choosing not to. He answers and tells them, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." So, we have an encounter here of magnitude where there are people that were listening to the prophecies and considering that Paul was in danger, in jeopardy.

I wanted to spend some time speaking to you about Phillip and his daughters, and I flew right past it. So, I'm going to rewind that because I don't think I covered all that, and I wanted to do that. Back in chapter 8, Phillip, the evangelist there, is not Phillip the apostle. He's another Phillip, and Phillip, he was "...one of the seven..." and he's identified as "...one of the seven..." And if you recall back in Acts chapter 6, there is this evangelist who is "...one of the seven..." people who were dealing with an issue of the church that was a conflict. So, back in Acts chapter 6, there was this state of

affairs where the Jewish Christians who were Hebrew in their cultural background were in conflict with the Greek-speaking, Jewish Christians. And the Greek-speaking (they were called Hellenistic Jews who were believers in Christ), were feeling like their widows were being overlooked in their need. So, that was a concern, and that became a controversy back in that time of confusion and dissent. So, how did the apostles solve this? They solved this by picking seven people, and Phillip was "...one of the seven..." people, and the people they picked all had Greek names. So, therefore we can conclude these are the Greek-speaking Jews or the seven that are being spoken about to solve this problem and make sure that everybody's needs were taken care of. Phillip was "...one of the seven..." We saw him in Acts chapter 6. We see him again in Acts chapter 8 where he's doing the work of the evangelist. His is going to the Ethiopian eunuch in the travels there, and he's sharing the gospel.

So, we find Phillip again in Acts chapter 8, and it's at his home that he has "...four virgin daughters who were prophetesses." And Luke and Paul "...were staying there for some days..." We don't know anything else about these prophetesses, these "...four virgin daughters..." that he had. It's just mentioned to us, but it does raise a question here that we have "...daughters who were prophetesses." We find other cases. We find Ana who was a prophetess. We see females that have a function of being prophetesses. So, it kind of lends the questions of, in some places we find prohibitions on women in terms of teaching or exercising authority over men in the church. We find that in 1 Timothy 2:12 in Paul's writings, and we find the restrictions of church leaders in that realm too. So, here you have females that can be prophetesses, but they can't teach the church. So, what is up with that? Because it seems like in the way we tend to think being a prophet is a much bigger deal than just being a teacher. So, if you can attain the status of being a prophetess, then you should be able to be a teacher.

Well, there are functions within the church, and no function within the church is inherently higher or more special. So, some people are teaching, some people are giving prophecy, some people are evangelizing, some people are serving in various capacities with the church, and there's a variety in the church. Paul teaches the church is united together in all the giftedness to bring about service to itself under one head, the Lord Jesus. For what a prophet being, is one who speaks direct revelation from God is not the same thing as someone teaching. What a teacher is is someone communicating the

revelation that already exists. And so, what I'm doing this morning is not prophesying, not communicating direct revelation. I'm talking about and interpreting the revelation that has already been given in the New Testament to us. So, this is the realm of teaching. The realm of prophesy is the direct revelation. The prophet is somewhat of, if you will, a passive vessel being used by God to deliver the revelation of God. The teaching is more involving an understanding and an interpreting in order to instruct the church. Both can be wrong. You can have false prophesy, people pretending to be speaking from God, and they're not; or people taking the prophecy and distorting it and teaching wrongly about it. But that's a distinction between prophecy and teaching. In God's design we have prophetesses whom God uses to deliver truth to the church, and this is what the four virgin daughters were in verse 9. So, I thought that was worth remembering who Phillip was and what prophecy is and then addressing this idea of prophetesses and the idea behind that.

So, when you have this prophecy by Agabus of the Jews in Jerusalem binding and delivering Paul into the hands of the gentiles, Paul is able to disregard the counsel, the exhortation, even the passionate exhortation, begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. So, why? Why do we find Paul disregarding that here? And then in the next passage, we will be dealing with the next time I get to speak, we'll find Paul receiving direction from the church leaders in Jerusalem and adopting their plan for him. But here, we have other people that he's not listening to. Well, I would describe it this way, Paul proceeded in spite of their exhortation because the counsel related to his life; the person that was going to be affected by their counsel was Paul himself. This event that we see in Jerusalem that is dealing with the church ministry and how best to go about trying to solve issues within the church, Paul adopted the plans of other people in those cases. But here, this was only involving him. He was the one who had his life to live and he was committed to, not just be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. His view of the Christian life was not to flee suffering at all costs, but rather, it was a part of the Christian experience. We find sometimes, him fleeing. We find other times, him not fleeing. That's the same thing with Jesus. We find Jesus sometimes avoiding people that were looking to arrest Him because it was not the time yet. And other times, He makes a different choice. So, Paul is not fleeing suffering at any cost.

And we see these words that he gave when he was in that incident in Acts chapter 14 where he was stoned. The Jews had come from Antioch and Iconium in central modern-day Turkey that had attacked him and stoned him and left him for dead. And the believers had come and sort of delivered him and saved his life there. And his testimony to this was to these people. It's through many sufferings, many trials, many tribulations, we passed through in our service to the Lord. And that's what Paul's doing here. His goal was not just to make things easy for himself, it was to serve the Lord. And he considered it necessary to move to Jerusalem. He did not regard the prophecy as a prohibition but simply the warning - very similar to Christ's own knowledge and what awaited Him. And there's some similarities between the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts when we see this moving to Jerusalem for the difficulties that lie ahead between Paul and Jesus. I'll just kind of give a parallel here. Both accounts describe either Jesus being delivered to the gentiles in Luke 18:32, or Paul here being delivered "...into the hands of the Gentiles," verse 11. Verse 13, we have Paul determined to go to Jerusalem, not ready to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem. So, he's dedicated, and so, Jesus in Luke 9:53, He sets his face toward Jerusalem even though He had told His disciples what would await Him when He goes to Jerusalem. And then, "The will of the Lord be done!" That's what the people said in verse 14; "The will of the Lord be done! " And that was the words of Jesus before He died; "...not My will, but Yours be done." There's similarities, and Paul was walking in the footsteps of Jesus, devoutly dedicated to serving in spite of the sufferings and inflictions he might encounter, that he is destined to encounter.

So, in the application for us, you know, all of us, each one of us, have an opportunity to encounter difficulties when we serve the Lord. So, only we can decide what these difficulties are and whether it's more prudent to divert our self to another place or to move through the suffering or difficulties. It's not for me to tell you that these difficulties are too much for you or it's better and more prudent for you to move to some other place and to do an alternative plan. But sufferings will come our way if we're looking to serve the Lord, and that's the goal. That is our end, not just trying to serve ourselves and get an easy life and to avoid difficulties, but to serve God in faithfulness. And if we're going to serve God in faithfulness, we will encounter difficulties, and when we encounter difficulties and opposition and inflictions, if our only desire is ourselves, we'll flee, but if our desire is to serve the Lord, then there might be times when we will say, "The will of

the Lord be done!”), and we will persevere not for our sake, but for the Lord’s sake and for the sake of the people who we’re serving. For the believers that Paul was serving, he had their end in mind not just his. So, we all have that responsibility to do, and we should consider how to prudently decide how to serve the Lord most effectively with the one life we’ve been given.

The last section just deals with a travel to Jerusalem from Caesarea. Verse 15; “After these days we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem.” They’ve left the ship at Caesarea on the coast, moving inward. That’s a phrasing that you might say if you were mounting a horse back in those days, so it’s possible they even took horseback and to move upward in elevation to Jerusalem; “Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came with us, taking us to Mnason of Cyprus, a disciple of long standing with whom we were to lodge.” So, this fellow Mnason of Cyprus, he’d been a part of the church for a long time which probably then goes back to the days of the contention between the Jewish, Hebrew believers and the Greek, Jewish believers and the conflicts that we were talking about “...a disciple of long standing...,” so he would be familiar with some of these challenges that the church of Jerusalem would have. And that leads us to this next section. This is setting up for us this section in verses 18-26 where we’ll be dealing with more difficulties of uniting the church in Jerusalem and joining with Paul’s teachings of what he’s been teaching with the traditions of the Jews who had been in Jerusalem and how to bring all that together. We’ll get a chance to look at that, but Mnason of Cyprus, he would be one of these more Greek-speaking Jews because he was from Cyprus, and he would have knowledge and background in these difficulties. So, verse 17; “After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.” The end of the third missionary journey; the brethren embrace Paul and Luke and all of what’s happened on the third missionary journey, and we have now arrived in Jerusalem.

So, let me end with an encouragement and an exhortation to each of us. May we commit ourselves to serve the Lord as Paul did regardless of the difficulty that might lie ahead. There’s difficulties that are coming in our life. They’re probably nothing like the difficulties that Paul encountered, but if he could persevere and he could be steadfast and immovable, so can we in faith, serving the Lord not ourselves.