



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

Paul In Rome

Scripture: Acts 28:11-31 (also see 2 Corinthians 2:14-16)

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 2:14

“Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”

For My Family:

After spending the winter in Malta, Paul was once again on his way to Rome. Some Christians heard that Paul was coming and went to meet and welcome him as he was getting closer to the city, which was a great encouragement to Paul. We should always be on the lookout to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ. There are so many things that can discourage us in the world. Our words are powerful. There are a lot of hearts that are heavy with worry, anxiety, and fear, but Proverbs tells us that a good word makes the heavy heart glad (Proverbs 12:25). Maybe you can encourage a missionary family today! Head over to <http://missions.ccpilly.org/supported-missionaries/> to learn how.

As God had promised (Acts 23:11; 27:24), Paul finally arrived in Rome. He met with the Jewish leaders and told them his story. The Jews who had originally accused Paul never sent word to Rome, but these Romans Jews had at least heard of the recent spread of Christianity. Paul talked with them from morning until night about who Jesus was and how the Old Testament pointed to His coming. This created division and arguing among the Jews, as it had in other cities. Some believed and some did not. Paul quoted Isaiah and told them that some people hear but don't understand, and some see but don't perceive. Jesus tells us in the parable of the sower that this is because some people have hard hearts that won't receive God's Word, and John 3:19 says that men love darkness rather than light. They don't want to turn from their sin because they enjoy doing bad things! We are reminded that only God can transform people's hearts and draw them to Himself (John 6:44).

During the two years Paul was a prisoner of Rome he wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. Though we aren't told in Acts, it is believed that after Paul stood before Caesar Nero, he was released and continued to travel and share the Gospel until he was imprisoned by Rome a second time. During his second imprisonment he was not given the same freedom as before, and many of the Christians who were a help to him abandoned him. It was during this time that he wrote the letters to Timothy and Titus.

History tells us that sometime around AD 67, Nero had Paul put to death, but the story of Acts (God's story) continues. The Gospel has spread all over the world and still transforms lives today! God is working through you and me and Christians all around the world! Like Paul, everywhere we go, we give off the fragrance of Christ. Some receive it, and others reject it, but our goal remains the same: to live for Jesus day by day, share His love with the world around us, and to one day stand before Him and hear Him say, “Well done!”

Questions for Young Children:

What was Paul's reaction when the Christians met him on his way to Rome?

Paul preached the Gospel, not only to the Jews, but to who else?

Did God's work stop after Paul died?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

How did the Jewish leaders in Rome react to Paul's testimony?

What does it mean to have a hard heart and how can we guard our own hearts from growing hard?

Read 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 and explain what it means to be the fragrance of Christ. What do you think it means to be the aroma of life to some and the aroma of death to others?