



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Week of May 17, 2026

Acts 21:27-40

27 When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, **28** crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place. Moreover, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” **29** For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. **30** Then all the city was stirred up, and the people ran together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. **31** And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. **32** He at once took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. **33** Then the tribune came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He inquired who he was and what he had done. **34** Some in the crowd were shouting one thing, some another. And as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. **35** And when he came to the steps, he was actually carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, **36** for the mob of the people followed, crying out, “Away with him!” **37** As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek? **38** Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?” **39** Paul replied, “I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.” **40** And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying:

1. When you face difficulties and trials, how quickly do you assume that you are not in the center of God's will and that God is sending you a message? Why might a person assume such a thing and what does this tell us about how we understand God's use of suffering and pain?
2. The enemies of the gospel used the Jews' deep rooted hatred of the gentiles to ignite the mob to kill Paul because they so strongly disagreed with him. Obviously this is an extreme example, but human nature has not changed over time and culture. How do we see this same attitude even within the church today? In other words, what is at the root of such hatred and why do you think people resort to such drastic actions against those with whom they disagree?
3. How are Christians supposed to be different? What is it about the gospel, Jesus, God, and His character that allows followers of Christ to be different from the rest of humanity?
4. The sovereignty of God and the fact that He is always in control, even when we don't understand His ways, should help the believer to have a poise, peace and presence even in the midst of turmoil and pain. Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. From our passage this week as well as from passages such as 1 Peter 3:13-16, what do we learn about how God can use even pain and suffering for His glory and our good?
6. If God asked you to go through tremendous pain and suffering so that you could become more like Jesus and glorify Him, would you do so? Why or why not? Do you think our pain and suffering can glorify God? Are they necessary to become more like Jesus? Explain your answers.