

## Small Group Questions: UNCOMMON & IRONIC

Acts 21:27–36

1. Last week did you make a conscious effort to gather all the facts before jumping to conclusions?
2. Why was unity of the church so important to Paul?
  - a. What did Paul hope to gain by participating in this ritual of purification?
3. How many days were required for the purification ritual? See Acts 21:27
4. Jews from the province of Asia (Ephesus), like many other Jews from around the world, came to Jerusalem for Pentecost.
  - a. Why did these particular Jews have such animosity toward Paul?
5. The Jewish Temple was the most important symbol of their law and tradition. Paul had written about the temple in 1 Cor. 3:16. (Please read)
  - a. Why would Paul's writing have been offensive to the Jews?
  - b. If Paul was saying that we are God's temple, would there be a need for sacrifices any longer?
6. It's human nature to follow the majority. Acts 21:30 says that the city was aroused and the people came running from all directions. Did the crowd have all the facts when they came together and started beating Paul?
7. Near the end of Paul's purification, some Jews took offense at Paul.
  - a. What prompted their reaction against Paul?
  - b. What were their charges against him?
  - c. Were their charges entirely accurate?
8. What similarity do you see between the accusations against Stephen in Acts 6:13, and those against Paul in Acts 21:28?
9. When Paul was captured and being beaten, why were the gates to the temple closed?
10. When Luke documents the temple gates being shut, this is the last time the temple is mentioned in the book of Acts.
  - a. What significance is there with the temple gates slamming on the Apostle Paul and his message of salvation to the Gentiles?
  - b. In Luke 21:5-6 Jesus prophesied about the coming destruction of the temple. How did the temple gates being closed on Paul symbolize the beginning of the end for the temple?
11. Acts 21:37—Paul had been severely beaten and was about to be taken into the barracks when he asked the commander if he could speak. Paul had his wits about him even during this time of high anxiety. During trouble, usually what's inside comes out. How do you react or respond when you are under attack?
12. Why did the crowd want to kill Paul? Was it legal?
13. When Paul was bound with two chains, what prophecy did this fulfill? See Acts 21:10-11, 33
14. Look at Luke 23:18 and Acts 21:36. What similarities do you see between these two passages?
15. Describe where the different parts of Jerusalem and the temple were located: Antonia Fortress; Gentile Court; Temple
16. Within the Temple complex identify: the court of women, the court of men, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy Place.

### Next Steps:

- I will not confuse "playing religion" with faithfully following God.
- I am so thankful that Jesus was willing to make common people (the defiled) uncommon (holy)!