

The Acts of the Spirit
ORCHESTRATING OPPOSITION

ACTS 21:27–36

“THE MOB”

JANUARY 12, 2025

SUMMARY

Pastor Joey said that crisis causes us to ask all kinds of questions. Questions like:

God, why is this happening?

God, how are you going to use this?

God, what am I supposed to do?

These are all valid and important questions for our wrestling with God. But Pastor Joey said that perhaps the most important question isn't why, what, or how; it is “where?” Where, Lord, are you sending me to be an everyday missionary in your kingdom?

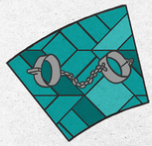
That's what Pastor Joey wants from us today: to see that crisis isn't a question; it's a new direction.

We see this clearly in Paul's journey. Paul's calling to proclaim Jesus to both Jews and Greeks is drastically cut short when he returns home to Jerusalem. There, in the hotbed of religious tension, he is accused of being a heretic and sentenced to a citizen's death in the Jewish temple. As is their way, Rome intervenes to restore peace, taking Paul into custody, where he will remain through the end of the book of Acts.

In one event, Paul's ministry changed forever, but not his calling. Paul no longer is a church planter. Paul no longer debates in the temples and two forums. Paul now writes letters and shares his faith with Roman guards from a jail cell. God's will for Paul, no matter his circumstances, is to pursue his calling in new and unforeseen ways until the end.

We can be sure that Paul had many questions for God and human emotions to process with him. However, one thing is sure: Paul saw this crisis as a new direction from God. He had been re-assigned.

What does this mean for us? When a crisis comes, we are allowed to talk to God about our questions and hurts. However, we can trust him and his character, and if the crisis is there, He is using it not to change our calling but to change our direction/application of how we pursue it.



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DISCUSSION

A crisis is never fun. It disrupts our plans and often confuses our calling. However, learning how we naturally respond to crises will help us understand what growth steps we need to take to respond more productively.



This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

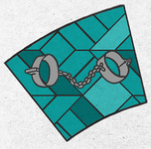
Group facilitator: Please feel empowered to use only the questions that are helpful for the context of your group.

- What is a crisis you are facing or have faced recently?
- Which of the following is your dominant stress response to this crisis and why?
 - Fight- Desire to overcome and subdue
 - Flight- Give up and find a new game to plan.
 - Freeze- Pretend even happening
- What does that reveal about how you relate to God's sovereignty?
- What would help you to be more resilient and purpose-driven amid this crisis?

Extract the Truth

Read the text: Acts 21:27-36

- What jumped out to you from the text?
- Based on what you know from our sermon series, why was it so difficult for the Jews to accept Paul, and knowing this, why would Paul even attempt to return to Jerusalem?
- In addition, Paul was returning home after a challenging but highly successful mission trip. What do you think it felt like for Paul to go through this, and what might he have been tempted to believe sitting in a Roman cell?
- As we can see, Paul goes on to have a different but equally fruitful ministry that encourages churches from afar and reaches Roman elites. What did Paul understand about his calling that allowed him to accept this new direction God was about to send him on?



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Experience Transformation

Our big takeaway isn't to stop asking God the "why, what, and how" questions. As his children, we must allow ourselves to wrestle with our Father and be ministered to by Him. But the last question we should ask is "What new direction are you sending me in?"

- Why is that the last question we should ask, and how does it help our mindset about the crisis we face?
- Thinking about the crises you mentioned earlier, how is God at work redirecting you through it?
- What is one thing you need to do as a result of reading this text?

**PREPARE FOR
NEXT WEEK:**

Read Acts 21:37-22:22

