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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 58

HIS LAST DAYS – PART 1

The Book of Acts ends with Paul imprisoned under “house arrest” in his rented house. He was released probably sometime during 64 A.D. He remained free to travel again for a couple of years. We have no record of his movements, but there is speculation and some tradition.

Some inferences can be made from his last epistles written after his release. Such is the case in I Timothy 1:3 where he appears to have gone back to Ephesus where he left Timothy to be a pastor. Paul went on to Macedonia where he had planted churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. He also escorted Titus to the island nation of Crete where he and Barnabas had established works during his first missionary journey. He left Titus to be a pastor there and mentioned plans to spend a winter at Necropolis.

It is very likely, and tradition supports it, that this was also the time when Paul made his first and only trip into Spain, probably about 65 A.D. Romans 15:24 and 28 shows his plan. It is written very shortly before the start of his capture and journey to Rome. He, knowing of the prophecies of being bound and sent to Rome, wrote to them ahead of that journey. In Romans 15, he spoke of going to Spain after leaving Rome.

What we see in the period of freedom of 64 to 66 A.D. is that he was making final preparations for the security of the churches he had planted by visiting them one last time. He wanted to make sure they had stable pastors most of whom were personally mentored by him.

That is the true work of an apostle, establishing new works and raising up leaders for them. That still holds true today. One who claims today to be an apostle but has neither established new works nor raised up others into the fivefold ministry is not an apostle at all. He is a fraud.

According to Ephesians 4:11, the fivefold ministry consists of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. All five are still here today although some churches only officially recognize pastors and evangelists. These five are Jesus’ gifts to the church body, and he does not take away the gifts given. God is not an “Indian Giver.” However, we are to test those in such offices to assure they are rightly dividing the word of truth. Do not be deceived just because they “sound good.” Let the Bible and Holy Spirit be your “yardstick” to measure them by.