

## **“The Danger of a False Rumor”**

### **Acts 21:17-36, ESV**

**INTRODUCTION:** By definition, a rumor is a piece of unverified information, story, or gossip circulating among people without confirmation or solid evidence. Paul, as he moved from place to place, faced one crisis after another. His was not an easy calling, nor cush assignment. He was beaten with rods in one town and stoned in another. He was cast into prison. He had been exposed to death many times. Paul would often manage to escape only to get to the next town and face an even more hair-raising crisis than before. In this text, Paul is the victim of a vicious, false, dangerous rumor.

**It Is Helpful to See This Text in Two Sections:**

#### **1). Believers Rejoicing in What Only God Can Do (v. 17-26).**

- ❖ Luke informs the reader that Paul and his entourage were warmly and gladly received (v. 17).
- ❖ Paul visits **James** (the brother of Jesus and the leader of the Jerusalem church) and reports on what **God** has done among the Gentiles through Paul’s ministry (v. 18-19).
- ❖ THOUSANDS OF **JEWES** have **believed** (v. 20).
- ❖ Yet, amidst the jubilation, we are told of a dangerous **rumor** that had begun to circulate among the Christians from the Jewish community
- ❖ There were essentially THREE **false** charges:

1). Paul taught Jewish converts to **forget** about the law of God (v. 28).-BOGUS!

2). Paul taught Jewish converts to **despise** the temple (v. 28).-BOGUS!

3). Paul taught Jewish converts to **forsake** their heritage (v. 21).- BOGUS!

- ❖ What did Paul do in response (v. 22-26)? Basically, Paul went with these four men and was **purified** with them in order to stop the mouths of the slanderous critics who were spreading these false rumors.

**Application:** Only **God** can change a heart. Only God can save. Only God can impart life to those dead in their trespasses and sins. Only God can forgive sin.

#### **2). The Asian Jews Stirring Up the Crowds Against Paul (v. 27-36).**

#### **APPLICATION:**

1). What an episode!- **False** rumors can do much harm to reputations, livelihoods, and even lives.

2). **Distortions** of the truth are harmful.

3). Sadly, people tend to believe what is **screamed** the loudest and most often, regardless of the degree of truthfulness.