

Sermon Discussion Guide:

Rumors, Reputation, and Repair

Sunday, November 5, 2023

Scripture: **Acts 21:17-26**

Series: **The Spirit & The Church**

OVERVIEW

Many of us like to say we don't care what people think when in reality the opposite is often true. American culture encourages an independent, maverick approach to living life. As much as we'd like to imagine ourselves immune to the effects of a damaged reputation, deep down we care immensely how we are perceived. Sometimes it is good to ignore the bullies and just do what is right. At other times we may have brought shame to our good name, and we need to repent of those things that invoked the criticism of our neighbors. In either case, **Jesus saves us from what people think of us.**

CORROBORATING TEXTS

Luke 8:38-39, Proverbs 16:38, Ecclesiastes 7:1, Proverbs 22:1, 1 Peter 2:21-24, 2 Peter 2:24, Romans 8:31

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Recount a time when you were misunderstood, or when your words and actions were misconstrued. Share how you responded and what came of it.
2. Read Acts 21:17-26 and discuss the significance of this passage in the context of redemptive history and the larger narrative recorded in the book of Acts.
3. What elements of the rumors about Paul's teachings (v. 21) were true and which ones were false? What are likely some of the reasons he was misunderstood?
4. Paul's teaching appeared foolish to the world, making it ripe for misunderstanding. Summarize his message. *[God's plan to save the whole world, including Gentiles, has long been prophesied but only became clear with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This gospel declares that righteousness before God comes only by faith in Jesus and not by the law. The law is holy, righteous, and good and by it no man can justify themselves because of our corrupt nature. Instead, the law shows us our need for Jesus Christ, brings a level of civility to the world by showing what is right, and guides the believer in the ways they should strive to please God now that they are freed from the bondage and penalty of sin.]*
5. List and discuss the three practical ways Pastor Joe suggested we can apply Jesus' saving power in this area. *[1.) Let Christ define you, 2.) Let Christ lead you, 3.) Let Christ judge you.]*
6. Paul was eager to tell fellow believers what God was doing in his life (not so much what he himself was doing). Reflect on what God is doing in your life and share with your group.