

March 17, 2024 Acts 21:15-25 "Rumors"

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Rumor definition: a currently circulating story or report of uncertain or doubtful truth.

He said, she said = gossip. This is always damaging and always sinful.

Consider the source-reliable? Ulterior motifs? Jealousy? Just plain evil?

Consider the character of the accused. Does this fit???

The elders in Jerusalem: informed all involved in the situation at hand and made plans to dispel the uncertain/doubtful rumor. Conciliation between the two groups (Paul and the zealous Jews), was their goal, see **Romans 12:18**.

Make every effort to never have this apply to your life, "The Lord hates six things; in fact, seven are detestable to him: arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, a lying witness who gives false testimony, and one who stirs up trouble among brothers." **Proverbs 6:16-19**. (CSB) The zealous Jews and Judaizers, were guilty of all of these. When the rumors fly, consider the source and consider the character of all involved.

Paul and company were delivering an offering from Gentile to Jew to be a unity builder, now he is partially participating in a Nazarite vow to demonstrate that he had not abandoned his "Jewishness" as some purported. Meditate on **I Corinthians 9:14-23**. Wrong to say this was not okay, wrong to demand Jewish customs on Gentiles. That decision had already been settled in **Acts 15** as stated here in **21:25**.

When someone comes to you with gossip, say, wait a minute, let's go to that person right now and have this conversation with them present.

Some people do not see themselves as a gossip, they call it a prayer request, or I heard . . . Think: unity, building up, and peacemaker, if this happens to you. Conciliation is a beautiful thing, consider: [Romans 5:10](#); [Colossians 3:13-14](#); [Eph. 4:32](#).

Application:

If you find yourself on the receiving end of the rumor mill, be careful to proceed in a godly manner, not dishing out more of the same in retaliation. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. If you can, like Paul taught, try to be at peace with the guilty party. If someone comes to you saying, I was wrong, forgive them. That is not easy sometimes until you think about just how much the Lord Jesus has forgiven us. See [Romans 12:18](#).

LIVING ON "PURPOSE"

This following outline is by no means exhaustive, just some good places to start!

Purposes: PRIMARY, CORPORATE, INDIVIDUAL. Living out [Acts 20:24](#), "But I consider my life of no value to myself; my purpose is to finish my course and the ministry I received from the Lord Jesus to testify to the gospel of God's grace." (CSB)

PRIMARY:

To worship and glorify God. Consider [Hebrews 13:15-16](#).

CORPORATE:

A good snapshot into this is found in [Acts 2:42](#), "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." (CSB)

INDIVIDUAL

"Ultimately individuals are left to themselves to determine God's purposes for them individually. On the other hand, the understanding of others is significant input in seeking to determine those purposes for oneself." *John B. Polhill*. It is a sure sign of Christian growth for a person to become aware that God has a purpose for their lives and that they care enough about this revelation to pursue the purpose. Write down your "purpose(s)"

ABOUT THAT SACRIFICE . . .

Paul paid the vow cost, was there for the 7 day ceremony (not clear how this was done for this time or any other). People would see Paul there and his participation in this Jewish thing in hopes to dispel rumors that he was anti-Moses. This was a matter of Jewish customs-not salvation.

There were sacrifices involved in this process, see **Numbers 6:1-21**. Was Paul in violation taking part in this? No, he had a clear conscience he says later on (See **Acts 23:1**) and obviously saw it as a **memorial**; like Communion is for us, not a sacrifice as in OT times. There will be memorial sacrifices in the millennial kingdom as well, see: **Isaiah 56:6-8**; **Zechariah 14:16**. For the longest portion of Scripture on this read **Ezekiel chapters 43-46**. **Ezekiel 40** details the future temple where all of the sacrificing will take place. Keep in mind, these sacrifices will only be as a **memorial**, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ's blood is the only blood able to bring the forgiveness of sin. **Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, no other shed blood is required or will suffice.** See **1 John 2:1-2**.

See, gotquestions.org article entitled "*Will there be animal sacrifices during the millennial kingdom?*" By J. Dwight Pentecost