



DATE: 13 April 2024 AM

TEXT: Acts 28:1-16

TITLE: Fenestra

noun: a small opening;
in Latin, "window"

Who also honored us with many honors; and when
we departed, they laded us with such things
as were necessary.

Acts 28:10

INTRODUCTION

- at Trinity, *missions* is a word we are familiar with, and maybe even understand some of the concept

we love "missionaries" but it is likely most of us do not consider their lives outside of our Missions Conference and this week of activities

Hebrews 10:24

And let us consider one another to provoke
unto love and to good works...

**consider = to think deeply; to ponder
something from top to bottom**

**provoke = to sharpen; to come along
side of**

- in this morning's message, I want to open a small window on missions, if you will...

I've been in church for 54 years

I've been in full-time Christian service 32 years

I've pastored for almost 30 years

I've traveled to 12 countries/mission fields

and with that experience, I want to presume
to speak for our missionaries this morning

- in **Acts 28**, we find the Apostle Paul, having survived a raging storm, shipwrecked on the island of Malta ("refuge")

there were 276 people on-board with him

the people on the island were considered to be *barbarians* to those in Paul's party

barbarian was a derogatory term making fun of the way people spoke foreign languages ("bar-bar-bar") cf our "blah-blah-blah"

several events happened during their stay on the island, but at the end, friendships were made and God was glorified, to the extent that:

[they] honored us with many honors; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.

- in this text, I want you to catch a glimpse of what it is like to be a missionary...on deputation and on the field

CONSIDER THE MISSIONARY'S...

1. SERVICE vs 3, 8

verse 3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. **verse 8** And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

the point of these verses is that the missionary is called upon to do many and various tasks in his ministry

NOTE: I am using the masculine "he" but it should be understood that ladies are no less called upon

in **Acts 27**, Paul is not only the hero of the story, but it would appear he was in charge of the journey once the storm took hold

yet, we find Paul out gathering sticks...
he did not send someone else to do it

Paul also dealt with a sick man who had a "bloody flux" ...that sounds terrible, and I could describe it in further detail, but...

Paul was well educated and came from a wealthy background, and still he had a servant's heart

Philippians 1:12

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

Philippians 2:7

[the mind of Christ...] But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

the missionary will be called upon to do any number of things over the course of his ministry:

Acts 18:3 Paul was a tentmaker

he will build buildings, dig graves, cut wood,
serve in a medical capacity

he will grade roads, play with children,
bury villagers, meet with dignitaries,
wrestle with government paperwork

thus, as we see our missionaries this week, dressed in clean clothes and fitting into our culture, **CONSIDER** that soon they will be on the field doing things we might not recognize later on

and for many of these younger missionaries,
you might not recognize them in a few years

CONSIDER THE MISSIONARY'S...

2. SCRUTINY vs 4-6

the people of Malta, like most of the world at that time, were very **SUPERSTITIOUS** people

having been bitten by a snake, they assumed Paul had been cursed as a murderer and would soon die

when he didn't die, they assumed he must be a god and were prepared to worship him

as a pastor, I can testify...some days you are a murderer, some days you are praised

and I don't deserve either...usually

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain...

in **2 Corinthians 11**, Paul had to defend his apostleship to the church there

1 Corinthians 4:13

...we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

for the missionary, he is judged harshly by every church he goes into...by the pastor, the congregation, etc.

single lady missionaries...

missionary kids...

wives

clothes, personality, doctrine, college

NOTE: early in my ministry, I met a missionary who had been in Peru for many years, living at the top of the Andes Mountains...

not only are the missionaries judged by us here at home, but by the people to whom God has sent them...

why are they here?

how long will they stay?

strange language, customs, etc.

CONSIDER THE MISSIONARY'S...

3. SUBMISSION vs 7-10

having met and ministered to these strangers, Paul finds himself in the unique position of being beholden to them

living in their home

receiving gifts from them

Philippians 4:15

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

Acts 9:26-27

And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

in the west, in particular, we are taught from an early age to be independent...

pull yourself up by the boot straps, etc.

the missionary must sell all that he has and then go to churches and ask them for financial support

he must be overwhelmed sometimes by the generosity of churches like ours

or underwhelmed by churches that do not have the vision for missions, etc.

And notice this...

verses 13-16

- as Paul traveled closer to Rome...

Puteoli was 125 miles from Rome

The Appian Forum was 43 miles away

Three Taverns was 33 miles away

...there was an entire church, with at least 26 of the membership named in Romans 16

and only handfuls came to greet Paul