



Sunday Service
Sunday 13th June 2021
The Second Sunday after Trinity
Dangerous Faith (8)
“In every city lies persecution”
Acts 20 : 17 – 38 and 21 : 7 - 14

Introduction

Welcome to St Peter's today as we complete our journey with the Persecuted Church through the Book of Acts in the Bible.

Opening Prayer

Faithful God, whose mercy never fails: inspire our prayer and praise and deepen our faithfulness to you through your Word and Spirit. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Bible reading

¹⁷ From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. ¹⁸ When they arrived, he said to them: 'You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. ¹⁹ I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. ²⁰ You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. ²¹ I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

²² 'And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. ²³ I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. ²⁴ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.

²⁵ 'Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. ²⁶ Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. ²⁷ For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. ²⁸ Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. ³⁰ Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. ³¹ So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

³² 'Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. ³⁵ In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

³⁶ When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed. ³⁷ They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. ³⁸ What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

⁷ We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and sisters and stayed with them for a day. ⁸ Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. ⁹ He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

¹⁰ After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, 'The Holy Spirit says, "In this way the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles."'

¹² When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, 'Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' ¹⁴ When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, 'The Lord's will be done.'

Talk : “In every city lies persecution”

Prayers

Lord, help us to see what living as disciples of Jesus looks like in our world today. Holy Spirit, help us to resist being seduced by power, or wealth, or status but instead to learn from Jesus, whose power was expressed in humility and service, and whose victory was death on the cross. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Almighty God, you have taught us through your Word that all our doings without you are worth nothing: send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our lives the most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, so that all our actions may praise you, Jesus, as Lord and Saviour. In your name we pray. Amen.

Blessing

May God the Holy Trinity make us strong in faith and love, unite us in faith and truth and defend us on every side to faithfully do your will. And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us now and for ever more. Amen.

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbK-QzhYCbTnOpdekn4DXA>

or the Church website : <http://stpeters-elworth.org.uk/>