

Carpe Diem

Acts 28:17-31

Sermon Handout

"He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." Acts 28:30-31

"The last word of the book, *akōlytōs* ("unhindered"), confirms there were no restraints on Paul's preaching... The gospel of the risen and ascended Lord Jesus has overcome all geographic boundaries, social differences, ethnic diversities, human prejudices, gender biases, legal obstacles, and theological barriers... This abrupt but victorious ending compels readers to ask about their own role in this narrative." Patrick Schreiner

What do we perceive as hindrances to openly sharing the gospel and could those hindrances actually be opportunities?

A proper belief in the providence of God, (that God in his wisdom, goodness, and power is orchestrating all things for his glory and our good), should cause us to consider how hard places in our lives may not be hindrances to the gospel but opportunities in disguise.

1. Controversy: Paul Creates Opportunity Out of Controversy. Acts 28:17-28

- Imprisonment Created an Opportunity

"For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain." Acts 28:20 (ESV)

- Controversy Stirred Curiosity

"And they said to him, 'We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against.'" Acts 28:21-22 (ESV)

A negative view of Christianity and the church affords us the opportunity for a clarifying discussion of the life, the teaching of Jesus and the good news of the message of the kingdom of God.

- Division Gave Paul Direction

"And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved." Acts 28:24 (ESV)

Paul didn't take their rejection of him personally. He understood it biblically and missiologically.

2. Accessibility: Paul Creates Opportunity Out of Limited Accessibility. Acts 28:17-28

"He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him..."
Acts 28:30 (ESV)

- He Served Patiently: "He lived there two whole years."

"There's only one condition listed here: 'waiting on the Lord.' Commentators say this is hardly dead time, but an expectant, confident looking to God, where we say, 'Ok God, You set the terms; I am not in control, and I don't have any other help. I will do what you lead me to do, but I am depending on you all the way..." Dan Esters

"For the gospel to penetrate a culture, we must deliver the good news so that people can comprehend its message and experience its power. Just as a missionary studies another language and learns something of the people he or she is called to reach, so also we must seek to understand the people around us in order to find the most effective ways of delivering the gospel." Trevin Wax

- He Served Sacrificially: "at his own expense."
- He Served Hospitably: "and welcomed all who came to him."

"Though this might be read innocently, Paul welcoming all reemphasizes Luke's accentuation on the universality of the church. The book of Acts ends with Paul not in a temple or

synagogue. He is in a house in the Empire. God's presence has expanded past the temple."

Patrick Schreiner

3. Tyranny: Paul Creates Opportunity Out of Tyranny. Acts 28:31

"proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." Acts 28:31 (ESV)

- **What Paul Taught** - "Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ."

"God is a different type of king, a good king. He rules with wisdom, justice, mercy, and self-giving love. God is as patient as he is powerful. He is as beautiful as he is strong. He is as merciful as he is mighty. He's a good king. God's power is guided by his love and is always in line with his character. He is the kind of king who uses his power to bless his people." Jeremy Treat

- **How Paul Taught** - "with all boldness and without hindrance."

What apparent hindrances for you to share Christ may actually be opportunities in disguise?

Carpe Diem — Small Group Discussion Guide

Acts 28:17–31

Opening (5–10 minutes)

Icebreaker:

Share about a time when something frustrating or limiting in your life later turned out to be beneficial.

Transition:

In Acts 28, Paul is under house arrest—yet the gospel advances “without hindrance.” Tonight we’ll explore how what looks like limitation may actually be opportunity.

Read the Passage (5 minutes)

Have someone read **Acts 28:17–31** aloud.

Observation (What do we see?)

1. What stands out to you about Paul's situation in Rome?
 2. Who is Paul interacting with, and how do they respond?
 3. What repeated themes or phrases do you notice?
 4. How would you describe Paul's attitude and approach?
-

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

1. Controversy → Opportunity (vv.17–28)

- Why do the Jewish leaders want to hear from Paul?
- How does opposition or misunderstanding create opportunity in this passage?
- What do you notice about how Paul handles mixed responses (belief vs. rejection)?

Key Insight:

Paul doesn't see controversy as a barrier, but as an opening for gospel clarity.

2. Accessibility → Opportunity (v.30)

- What limitations did Paul have while under house arrest?
- How did he make the most of those limitations?
- What stands out about the phrases:
 - "two whole years"
 - "at his own expense"
 - "welcomed all who came to him"?

Key Insight:

Paul embraced patience, sacrifice, and hospitality as avenues for ministry.

3. Tyranny → Opportunity (v.31)

- What exactly was Paul proclaiming and teaching?

- What is significant about the phrase “with all boldness and without hindrance”?
- How can the gospel be “unhindered” even when Paul clearly isn’t free?

Key Insight:

Earthly restriction does not equal spiritual limitation.

Application (What does it mean for us?)

1. What are some common “hindrances” people feel when it comes to sharing their faith?
 2. Which of these do you personally relate to most right now?
 - Fear of rejection
 - Lack of time
 - Feeling unprepared
 - Difficult circumstances
 3. How might those hindrances actually be opportunities in disguise?
 4. Where has God currently placed you (home, work, neighborhood, relationships) that could be a “house arrest opportunity” like Paul’s?
 5. What would it look like for you to:
 - Be more **patient** in your current season?
 - Be more **intentional** with people around you?
 - Practice **hospitality** as a form of gospel ministry?
 - Speak with more **boldness**?
-

Group Exercise (Optional — 10 minutes)

Have each person answer:

- One “hindrance” I’m facing right now is: _____
- One way it could become an opportunity is: _____

Then pray briefly for each person.

Closing Challenge

Acts ends with an open door:

You are part of the continuing story.

This week, look for one moment where you would normally see a hindrance... and intentionally treat it as a **gospel opportunity**.

Closing Prayer

Pray that God would:

- Help you trust His providence
- Open your eyes to opportunities
- Give you boldness to speak
- Use even limitations for His glory

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