

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Acts 28:21-28**.
- B. The apostle Paul has arrived in Rome (in Acts 28), and the charges made against him never did arrive. As a free man, living in his own rented quarters he begins to teach about the "sect of the Jews" called Christians.
- C. Paul teaches them in a superb way, but runs into trouble with people who will not listen or see the truth. They have dull hearts and closed minds.

I. PAUL'S TEACHING IS SUPERB.

- A. Paul taught the Jews from four major areas of Scripture, but they would not believe his message. Let us more closely examine how he taught them.
- B. The apostle taught in four ways according to Ac. 28:23:
 - 1. The kingdom of God:
 - a. To be a member of the church is to be in the kingdom (Ac. 20:28; Rev. 5:9,10).
 - b. John the Baptist's message (Mt. 3:1-2; Mk. 9:1; Lk. 9:27).
 - c. Jesus uses the terms kingdom and church interchangeably (Mt. 16:18-19).
 - d. It was on the minds of the Jews (Ac. 1:6).
 - 2. Things concerning the Christ:
 - a. Jesus claimed to be God (Jn. 10:30).
 - b. Jesus was resurrected to prove He was Son of God (1Cor. 15:1-6).
 - c. Jesus did miracles to show/prove His divinity (Jn. 20:30-31).
 - d. Jesus was raised by the HS (Rom. 1:3).
 - 3. From the Law of Moses:
 - a. The Jews were to remember the Law (Mal. 4:4).
 - b. The Law is a tutor to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24).
 - c. The Jews had the Law, and should have known it (Rom. 3:1-2).
 - 4. From the prophets:
 - a. Isaiah speaks of the Messiah (Mt. 12:18-21).
 - b. Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10).
 - c. The OT speaks of X (Jn. 5:32).
- C. All of this should be more than enough to convince the Jews of the Messiah-ship of X, but they still refused to believe.
- D. Some did believe but others did not (Ac. 28:24).
- E. Paul, then quotes from Isaiah and tells why they would not respond to the message.

II. DULL HEARTS AND CLOSED MINDS.

- A. There are two basic problems with the Jews, that kept them from believing in the Christ; they refused to hear and they refused to see.
- B. First, they refused to hear.
 - 1. Hearing is essential to salvation. It is by the word of God, that men are informed of His will (Rom. 10:14-17).
 - 2. Some will only listen to satisfy their ears, this is false doctrine (2Tim. 4:3,4).
 - 3. Hearing, in this connotation means to understand. One might hear things far away (or in another room) but not understand what they hear. When one hears the word of God, he makes a conscious effort to understand what he hears.
- C. Secondly, they did not see the truth.
 - 1. This has to do with the prejudice in the minds and hearts of the unbelieving Jews.

2. Jesus, on a previous occasion, told the Pharisees that because they thought they could see, they were blind. The reverse is true, spiritually, the blind who know they are, are able to see (Jn. 9:38-41).
- D. Jesus, warned the church in Laodicea about the same thing, through John (Rev. 3:17,18).
- E. The humorous saying goes, "My mind is made up, don't confuse me with the facts."
- F. May we always be as we pray to be, "with open minds and willing hearts" not with dull hearts and closed minds.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The Bible was not written as a cookbook where you can simply go down the list of ingredients, follow direct, simple instructions and come out with a Xian.
- B. Rather it takes some effort on the part of the reader and learner. He/she needs to come to the Bible with a willing heart and an open mind.
- C. Jesus, "He who has ears let him hear... " on many, many occasions. Which means if you desire it, you can have it. Once a person has a willing heart and an open mind, then the Scriptures are not difficult.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.