

GROWTH GROUP QUESTIONS ONLY

Spring 2024 - Acts Sermon Series - "Witness"
Monday, March 18 - Sunday, March 24 (Week 4)

The sermon titled "Tensions on the Rise," given by Pastor Peter, chronicled the unfolding events in Acts chapter 21:17-26. The sermon explored the tensions between Paul, who was a strong advocate for salvation through grace alone, and believers fervently committed to the Mosaic Law. In the midst of rising Jewish nationalism, Paul's journey to Jerusalem ahead of Pentecost was met with intense conflicts and suspicions of compromise with Gentiles. The situation was intensified by James, the leader of the Jerusalem church, who adhered strictly to the Mosaic Law. In a bid to quell the brewing tensions, James and church elders developed a strategy asking Paul to partake in a Nazarite vow. This tactic aimed to display Paul's observance of the law, dispelling rumors that he had abandoned Moses. Paul agreed to this course of action. However, his participation was for unity's sake, thus making sure not to compromise his doctrine. He chose not to be a stumbling block but instead to show love and be a peacemaker. The main takeaways of the sermon revolved around Paul's example of managing personal passions and beliefs. It emphasized that while upholding the truth is vital, it should not foster division within the church. Thus, believers are called to self-examination in their attitudes and actions to avoid causing harm or disunity. The sermon also advocated for believers to stand firm in their faith, but adjust their actions or preferences to maintain peace within the church, ensuring that the focus remains centered on Christ and The Gospel.

QUESTION #1: In what ways do you see tensions and conflicts arising in the church today due to differences in theological beliefs and cultural practices? How can we navigate these tensions and promote unity?

QUESTION #2: What does it mean to be a peacemaker like Paul? How can we apply his example of adjusting our actions for the sake of love and unity in our own lives?

QUESTION #3: The sermon emphasizes the importance of being zealous for Christ rather than being zealous for specific issues or traditions. How can we ensure that our zeal for Christ remains central and unifying, rather than causing division within the church?

QUESTION #4: How can we strike a balance between standing firm in our beliefs and being open to differing perspectives within the body of Christ?

QUESTION #5: Why is it important to focus on Christ and the gospel above all else? How can this focus help to overcome divisions and promote unity?

