

Take Courage from the Church

Hopson Boutot

“On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.” (Acts 28:15b)

Paul had been falsely accused, publicly beaten, wrongfully imprisoned, storm-tossed, shipwrecked, and snake-bitten. But as he neared Rome, he spent a week with a local church. And he took courage.

Imagine a boxer in a fight. He takes a beating until the bell rings, then he sits on a stool in the corner. His mouthpiece is cleaned, blood and sweat are wiped off his face. He’s given something to drink and his wounds are treated. Meanwhile, he listens as his team speaks to him. When the bell rings again, he’s taken courage by being in the corner.

That’s how we should think about gathering as a church. We’re in the middle of a spiritual battle, and we’re taking a beating. Then Sunday comes, and it’s like sitting in the corner of the boxing ring. We’re washed up, our wounds are treated, and we hear the Word that gives us courage. But just as the stool in the corner is only appealing from inside the boxing ring, so the church is only appealing when we’re in the fight. So stay in the ring and you’ll take courage from the church.

