



PART 1

PAUL IN CHAINS: LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Chapter One

EARNING TRUST

PAUL AT LIBERTY

But Julius seems to have been a noble man, and [Acts 27:3](#) says after just one day's travel, during the first stop, at Sidon, on the very first day of the trip, some seventy miles north on the Mediterranean coast from Caesarea, he **“treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care.”**

[Acts 27:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³**“The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and **receive care.**”**

The expression translated **“receive care”** is a medical term. It indicates that the apostle Paul was probably suffering from some kind of ailment. That isn't any wonder, since he had been a prisoner for so long. Of course, Luke was a physician ([Colossians 4:14](#)), and one of his duties, no doubt, was to care for Paul.

[Colossians 4:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴**“Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and *also* Demas.”**

But something about his ailment warranted a visit ashore. He would not have been able to gain the diet, the rest, and the care he needed while remaining onboard ship. So Julius granted Paul shore leave to be cared for by friends. They ministered to his physical needs, and Paul no doubt ministered to their spiritual needs.

That was certainly unusual. Julius might have sent one or more soldiers to accompany Paul and his band. But for a hot-potato political prisoner like Paul to be given even that much liberty was highly irregular.

After all, Paul had stood before the governor Felix, the governor Festus, and King Agrippa. He had been deemed a serious enough threat to the *Pax Romana*—the peace of the Roman Empire—that he had been kept prisoner for more than two years. He was blamed for riots in the city of Jerusalem. The actual charge brought against him before Felix was that he was “a pestilent fellow” (Acts 24:5 KJV). He was “a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes” (v. 5). His case was now to come before Caesar.

Acts 24:5 (KJV)

⁵“For we have found this man **a pestilent fellow**, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.”

Acts 24:5 (NASB)

⁵“For we have found this man **a real pest** and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.”

You don’t just give that kind of prisoner liberty without good reason. If a Roman soldier ever lost a prisoner because of negligence, he paid with his life. That fact comes into play later in Luke’s account (Acts 27:42–43). And yet here, Julius gave Paul permission to visit friends at Sidon and receive care from them.

Acts 27:42-43 (NASB)

⁴²“The soldiers’ plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none of them would swim away and escape;

⁴³but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land.”

Julius was a top Roman centurion. He was a highly trained soldier—a tough, seasoned fighter with the skills of a commander and the mental attitude of a sergeant. Why would he let a prisoner have liberty after he had been in his custody only one day?

There is only one reason: he trusted him.

Here is the first principle of leadership: *A leader is trustworthy.*

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #1

A LEADER IS TRUSTWORTHY.

Somehow, either while still a prisoner in Caesarea, or in the one day’s journey—or, likely, both—Paul had caused that centurion to believe that he would never do anything that would cost the centurion personally. Julius was convinced Paul would not take the liberty he gave and try to escape. So he let him go to his friends.

It seems Paul had friends everywhere. Of course, he had enemies everywhere too. But he had some friends in Sidon who no doubt had benefited from the influence of Paul’s ministry over the



years. He must have *asked* the centurion for permission to visit those friends. And the centurion let him visit them. He obviously had no fear in giving Paul this unusual degree of liberty and even put him in the hands of a group that could, if they were so inclined, try to help effect his escape.

How did Paul earn Julius's trust so quickly? Scripture doesn't say. Paul was obviously a gracious, godly man. His personal integrity ran deep. **It is possible that the governor**, Festus, who knew Paul's innocence, had assured Julius that Paul could be trusted, and ordered him to treat him courteously.

That this trust had developed is indicated in **Acts 24:23**, because what the centurion did is precisely what the previous governor, Felix, did:

Acts 24:23 (NASB)

²³ **“Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.”**

All this is clear evidence that **Paul had earned a reputation of trust**. Even the governors under whom he was imprisoned **knew he was a man of integrity**. And somehow that trust was communicated to Julius.

Julius could also surely see that Paul's companions, Luke and Aristarchus, were devoted to him. They hadn't abandoned him when he was imprisoned. On the contrary, they were willing to accompany him all the way to Rome, at great personal risk to their own lives. Let's face it: this was not like taking a cruise to Honolulu on a luxury liner. This was a small, clumsy, inhospitable Roman sailing vessel. Quarters were tight and uncomfortable.

Moreover, some historians believe the only way Luke and Aristarchus would have been permitted to accompany Paul on this trip was if they went as slaves. What-ever the terms of their travel, you can be sure the Roman government did not pay their fare. No matter what circumstances opened the door for them to accompany Paul, it was a major personal sacrifice for Luke and Aristarchus. But they did it because of their love for the apostle. They were clearly committed to him.

Paul's friends in Sidon also obviously trusted him. They opened their home to him, even though he was a prisoner. Rather than seeing his captivity as casting doubt on his integrity, they welcomed him and refreshed him. **No one inspires such devotion without being trustworthy.**

Paul also certainly would have treated Julius with the utmost respect. He also must have conversed with him, shown an interest in him, and quickly developed a liking for Julius, and Julius returned that respect. Therefore, by the time they were one day into their journey, Julius already trusted Paul enough to give him liberty.

How does a leader build trust? When people are convinced you will do everything in your power for their good and nothing for their harm, they'll trust you. This centurion obviously was convinced that Paul honestly had his best interests at heart, so he gave him a measure of

CH-110 LEADERSHIP 1

Dr. Eddie Idefonso

Lecture # 4



freedom. He clearly had a high degree of confidence that Paul would not try to escape. If Julius had the slightest concern about whether Paul would come back to the ship voluntarily, he would have kept him under guard on the ship. But Paul had **gained his trust**. **All leadership begins there.**

Paul cared about that man. He was aware of Julius's duty, sensitive to his concerns, and he would not have done anything to discredit or dishonor him, much less jeopardize his life. Thus the power of Paul's character influenced Julius. Paul, the prisoner, **was in effect "leading" Julius, his captor.**

A leader is not someone who is consumed with his own success and his own best interests. **A true leader is someone who demonstrates to everyone around him that their interests are what most occupy his heart.** A real leader will work hard to make everyone around him successful. His passion is to help make the people under his leadership flourish. **That is why a true leader must have the heart of a servant.**

A person cannot be a true leader and operate only for personal fulfillment or personal gain. People whose motives are selfish end up leading nobody, because everyone abandons them. They cannot be trusted. A person in a position of leadership will succeed only as long as people trust him with their futures, with their money, or even with their lives. **Nothing can take the place of trust.** Nothing. A leader you can't trust is no true leader at all. He may be a man in power who can force people to do what he wants, but he is no example of true leadership.

Here's how you can easily recognize genuine leaders: They are the ones surrounded by gifted, capable, diligent, effective people who are devoted to their leader. **That devotion reflects trust.** And trust stems from the selfless way the godly leader uses his own energies and his own abilities in a sacrificial, selfless way. If you can show people you truly have *their* best interests at heart, they'll follow you.

This man was so convinced that Paul would never do anything to bring him harm that he let him go to his friends.

And, of course, Paul came back. He proved himself worthy of Julius's trust. Paul was thereby building *more* trust that would further strengthen his own hand for leadership later in the journey.