

## Acts 29 – Week 9 – Another Chance for Jerusalem – Bible Study Helps

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the importance of personal testimony in evangelism, using the Apostle Paul's experiences in Acts as a primary example. It emphasizes how God uses individual life stories to reach others with the Gospel, highlighting the wisdom needed in sharing one's faith and the assurance of God's protection and guidance in the mission of spreading the Good News.

### Key Points:

- Personal testimony is a powerful tool in evangelism
- Wisdom is needed in how and when to share one's faith
- God prepares the way and provides protection for His messengers
- Every believer's life experiences qualify them to reach specific people
- Trusting God in difficult circumstances is crucial for effective ministry
- The importance of listening to others before tailoring the Gospel message

### Scripture Reference:

- Acts 21:37 - 23:35

### Stories:

- Paul's defense before the Jewish crowd in Jerusalem
- The conspiracy to kill Paul and his nephew's intervention
- The Roman commander's rescue of Paul and his transfer to Caesarea
- Personal anecdotes of experiences in witnessing
- Story of a man who attended a Presbyterian church but didn't understand salvation until encountering a Baptist family

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### Discipleship Questions

How can we apply Paul's example of using his personal testimony as a powerful witnessing tool in our own lives? What aspects of our testimonies might resonate most with different types of people we encounter?

In what ways do we sometimes overcomplicate evangelism, and how can we simplify our approach like Paul did in this passage?

How do you balance being wise and strategic in your Christian witness, like Paul was, while also being bold and uncompromising in proclaiming the truth?

What can we learn from Paul's ability to connect with his audience by emphasizing shared backgrounds and experiences? How might this approach be effective in our own evangelistic efforts?

How does Paul's willingness to face persecution and potential death for the sake of the Gospel challenge our own commitment to sharing our faith?

In what ways do you see modern parallels to the religious leaders' conspiracy against Paul? How can believers navigate opposition to the Gospel in today's world?

How does Jesus' personal encouragement to Paul in the midst of danger speak to God's faithfulness in our own trials and difficulties?

What insights can we gain from the way God used unexpected people and circumstances (like Paul's nephew) to protect and advance His mission?

How does Paul's Roman citizenship and its strategic use relate to the concept of using our privileges or positions for the advancement of the Gospel today?

In what ways does this passage challenge our trust in God's sovereignty and protection when we face opposition or danger in our Christian walk?

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## Discipleship and Small Group Guide

### Opening Discussion:

1. What stood out to you most from this week's sermon on Acts 22-23?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt God was calling you to do something others didn't understand? How did you handle it?

### Key Takeaways:

1. Our personal testimony is a powerful tool for evangelism.
2. We should be wise and strategic in how we share the gospel, like Paul was.
3. God is always working ahead of us, preparing the way for His message.
4. Even in dangerous or difficult situations, God protects and guides His people.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Paul chose to share his personal testimony when given the opportunity to speak to the crowd? How effective do you think this approach was?
2. The sermon mentioned that some people might feel their testimony isn't "dramatic" enough. How would you encourage someone who feels this way about their own story?
3. How did Paul demonstrate wisdom in his interactions with the Roman officials and Jewish leaders? What can we learn from his approach?
4. Discuss a time when you felt God's protection or guidance in a challenging situation. How did this experience impact your faith?
5. The sermon emphasized that God uses our life experiences and connections to reach others. How might God be uniquely positioning you to share the gospel with certain people or groups?

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### Practical Applications:

1. This week, take some time to write out your personal testimony. Practice sharing it in 2-3 minutes.
2. Identify one person in your "sphere of influence" who needs to hear about Jesus. Commit to praying for an opportunity to share with them.
3. Look for ways God might be working "ahead of you" this week. Keep a journal of any unexpected connections or opportunities you encounter.
4. Practice active listening when talking with others, especially about spiritual matters. Remember Paul's example of tailoring his message based on his audience.

### Closing Prayer:

Lord, thank you for the example of Paul and his boldness in sharing the gospel. Help us to be ready to share our own testimonies and to trust in Your protection and guidance. Give us wisdom to recognize the opportunities You provide and courage to speak Your truth. Use us to reach others for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

## **Day 1: The Power of Personal Testimony**

Reading: Acts 22:1-21

Devotional: Paul's powerful testimony before the angry crowd in Jerusalem reminds us of the transformative power of encountering Jesus Christ. Like Paul, each of us has a unique story of how God has worked in our lives. Today, reflect on your own journey of faith. How has Christ changed you? What moments stand out as pivotal in your spiritual growth? Remember, your testimony is a powerful tool for evangelism. Just as Paul shared his story, we too can impact others by authentically sharing how God has moved in our lives. Consider writing down key points of your testimony and pray for opportunities to share it with others who need to hear about God's love and grace.

## **Day 2: Courage in the Face of Opposition**

Reading: Acts 23:1-11

Devotional: Paul's unwavering courage before the council demonstrates the strength that comes from a clear conscience and deep faith in God. Even when faced with physical threats and intense opposition, Paul stood firm in his convictions. In our own lives, we may face situations where our faith is challenged or ridiculed. How can we cultivate the kind of courage Paul displayed? Remember Jesus' words to Paul: "Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." God's presence and purpose for our lives can give us the strength to face any opposition. Today, pray for courage in your daily walk and for those around the world facing persecution for their faith.

## **Day 3: God's Protection in Difficult Times**

Reading: Acts 23:12-35

Devotional: The elaborate plot to kill Paul and his subsequent rescue by Roman soldiers showcase God's sovereign protection over His servants. While we may not face assassination attempts, we all encounter challenges and threats to our well-being or faith. How have you experienced God's protection in your life? Sometimes, like Paul's nephew, God uses unexpected people or circumstances to shield us from harm. Other times, His protection may come through giving us strength to endure difficulties. Today, thank God for His protective hand in your life and pray for those facing dangerous situations for the sake of the gospel.

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### **Day 4: Using Our Circumstances for God's Glory**

Reading: Philippians 1:12-18

Devotional: Paul's ability to use every circumstance, even imprisonment, to advance the gospel is truly inspiring. He saw his chains not as a hindrance but as an opportunity to witness to the palace guard and encourage other believers. In our own lives, we often face situations that seem to limit or frustrate us. How can we adopt Paul's perspective and see these as opportunities for God's work? Consider a current challenge you're facing. How might God want to use this for His glory? Pray for wisdom to see your circumstances through God's eyes and for creativity in using them to share His love with others.

### **Day 5: Confidence in God's Faithfulness**

Reading: 2 Timothy 4:16-18

Devotional: Near the end of his life, Paul reflects on God's faithfulness throughout his ministry. Despite being abandoned by others, he experienced the Lord's presence and strength. This gave him confidence that God would continue to deliver him and bring him safely to his heavenly kingdom. As we journey through life, we too can have this same confidence in God's faithfulness. Reflect on times when you've felt alone or abandoned. How did God make His presence known to you? Even in our darkest moments, we can trust that God is with us, strengthening us for His purposes. Today, pray for a deeper awareness of God's presence in your life and the courage to step out in faith, knowing He will never leave or forsake you.