

Acts 21:37 to Chapter 26 Part 2

A GROWING MOVEMENT

Testimony & Trial

- Our motives are tested by trials and accusations
- Trusting the sovereignty of God (what we think it will look like vs what it looks like)
- Timing (years of false treatment)

Life Group Leaders should read through this material and choose a few questions to talk over in your group. Your group will not have time to cover all the material. The guide is for personal study and for choosing a few questions that you and your life group would like to discuss.


Acts 21:27-22:30

There may have been a part of Paul that expected his message to be received and the power of the Gospel to be evident. Instead he was continually met with opposition. God's will was to have Paul testify to both Jews and Gentiles, to both the common man and to kings. God often used practical means to accomplish His spiritual purpose.

Read Acts 22:22-29

One of the underlying storylines of this section of Scripture is that Paul was a Roman citizen by birth. This is fascinating due to the fact that this means that his parents were Roman citizens. It is unknown how they obtained citizenship as Tarsus was a free city. Yet the fact is that God was at work for His glory before Paul was even born.

It is also interesting to note that Paul had to actively use this fact to his advantage. He could have kept quiet about his heritage, but he was proactive in using his history, life, testimony, and experiences for the advancement of the Gospel.

 **Question: God can use our background and even family heritage as a part of our story in advancing the Gospel. If so, how? Have you seen God use your past or heritage as an avenue to advance the Gospel? If you haven't, how could you possibly use that in the future?**

Acts 22:30-24:27

Paul was proactive in using truth and even his heritage to his advantage. However, as Paul took steps of obedience, he also trusted God with the outcome.

-  **Read Acts 23:16-22** - Paul trusted God's sovereignty in the midst of his imprisonment. Yet Paul still used information that he gathered to help leverage his safety.

At the same time, Paul did not grow frustrated when the truth did not prevail. He spoke up when needed, yet he trusted God with the final result. Being a Roman citizen worked towards his advantage, and hearing of the ambush worked towards his advantage. Paul was still imprisoned for a long period of time despite adequate evidence. In this injustice, Paul remained faithful.

A **Read Acts 24:24-27** - After the truth had clearly been seen, Paul was still left in prison after two years.

Read James 1:2-8

P **Question: How do you handle consistent suffering or injustice in your life? Are you able to celebrate the wins in the midst of the suffering? Are you able to find joy in the Gospel in the mist of even years of waiting?**

Acts 25-26:32

As we see the story of Paul's story unfold, we get to see it from the "birds-eye view." Yet in the day-to-day, there was a lot of suffering, waiting, and the unknown.

A **Read Acts 26:12-18 & Acts 9:10-16**

The prophecies that Paul received from the Lord were exciting. God had chosen him for a huge task and even to stand before kings. Yet in the midst of it, God warned him of suffering. It is easy to get fixated on the spiritual highs and not to be prepared for the spiritual lows.

B **Read 2 Timothy 2:1-7** - This Scripture gives us a good practical steps to take in order to be equipped and ready to fulfill not just the exciting parts of our calling, but the difficult parts as well.

Soldier - Suffering, count the cost.

Athlete - Discipline, consistency in the Word, prayer, and obedience.

Farmer - Perseverance & patience, weathering the storm of hard times.

P **Question: As you consider 2 Timothy 2:1-7, what example sticks out to you the most? The soldier, the athlete, or the farmer?**

Weekly Challenge

When you think of God's will for your life, what comes to mind? Sometimes it is a sense of spiritual excitement or miraculous endings that bring joy and pleasure. It is easy to think of God's will for us as placing us at the center of the story or as the victorious hero. In other words, it is easy to glamorize calling. However, this is not usually the case. This week, take some time to read Acts 21:37-26:32. As you read this section of Scripture it can seem as if it is action packed, yet in reality years pass as we read these passages of Scripture. There was a lot of time spent in loneliness and in prison for Paul. There probably was a lot of time praying to be with the churches and encouraging his brothers and sisters in Christ, yet being stuck in prison.

Memory Verse

Acts 14:21-23 ESV

²¹When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ²³And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.