

Book of Acts

Session 23: Acts 19-28

Paul in Ephesus

1. Read Acts 19:1-22. What effect did the incident with the sons of Sceva have on the Ephesian believers? Discuss the proper role of fear in the life of a Christian.
2. Read Acts 19:23-41. Compare the concerns Demetrius expressed about his goddess (verse 27) to Psalm 115:3–9. What is the difference between a false god and the true God? At times we may think that our God is getting beaten. We may see that morality is eroding and especially that the gospel is being watered down or denied. Since we know God, who is described in Psalm 115, why can we remain calm and unafraid?

Paul in Macedonia and Greece

3. Read Acts 20:1-12. After the riot in Ephesus, Paul decided to leave. Later, when Paul heard of a Jewish plot to attack him on the voyage to Syria, he decided to walk instead. Evaluate: When Paul chose to leave Ephesus and when he avoided the Jewish plot, he showed that he did not trust in the Lord. (See Psalm 118:6 and Luke 4:12.) How do we determine what risks to run as we wish to share the good news of Jesus?
4. Read Acts 20:13-38. What would the consequences have been had Paul not proclaimed the whole will of God? What makes us hesitant to announce certain teachings of the Bible? Why is this dangerous?

Paul Goes to Jerusalem

5. Read Acts 21:1-26. When Paul met with the Christian leaders in Jerusalem, both he and they shared exciting information. What blessings did Paul and the Jerusalem leaders describe? How might we put into practice Paul's example?

Paul Arrested at the Temple

6. Read Acts 21:27-36. When Jews from Asia saw Trophimus, they concluded the worst, assuming that Paul had violated Jewish laws by bringing this Greek into a restricted temple area. Why was it so easy for them to assume the worst about Paul? When are we most likely to assume the worst about individuals? Read 1 Corinthians 13:5–7 and Galatians 6:1, 2. How should we respond when we think someone has done something wrong?

Paul Makes a Defense to the People

7. The digest of Paul's speech to the mob is given above. Look at each section as you answer the following question: How did Paul defend himself against the charges of the Asian Jews?
 - Verses 2–5
 - Verses 6–11
 - Verses 12–16
 - Verses 17–21

Paul Makes a Defense to the Sanhedrin

8. Read Acts 22:30-23:11. How did the Pharisees and the Sadducees differ in their public confessions of faith? On these particular points, which of the groups was correct? How did Paul make use of these conflicting confessions in his defense?
9. What message did the Lord give to Paul the night after his appearance before the Sanhedrin? Why would a visit from the Lord have been especially comforting at that particular time?

A Plot to Kill Paul

10. Read Acts 23:12-35.

Paul Testifies before the Roman Governor

11. Read Acts 24. Discuss the difference between Felix' fear and the fear and sorrow God desires.

Paul Appeals to Caesar

12. Read Acts 25:1-22. Why did Paul appeal to Caesar?

Witness Before Kings

13. Read Acts 25:23-26:11.

Paul Tells of His Conversion

14. Read Acts 26:12-32. What two reactions did Paul receive from his message, and what were his answers? How does this pattern repeat itself today?

Paul's Voyage to Rome

15. Read Acts 27:1-26. As a storm raged and it appeared all on the boat would die, Paul may have recalled God's promise in Acts 23:11. Read that promise and discuss how such words would have given Paul a very different perspective as his boat was tossed and nearly broken by the waves. Read Romans 8:38, 39 and Psalm 46:10, and explain how these words give us a very different perspective as we face difficulties in life.
16. Read Acts 27: 27-44. This short account gives us a view of how God has dealt with the world and will continue to deal with the world until the end of time. Can you see how this account does that?
17. Paul took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of a boatload of unbelievers. How can we give witness to our Savior in how we handle the regular activities of daily life?

Paul in Rome

18. Read Acts 28:1-16. As Paul approached Rome, fellow Christians heard of his coming and went out to meet him. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and literally *took courage* (verse 15). Read Hebrews 10:23-25, and explain why regular contact with fellow Christians is a great blessing.
19. Read Acts 28:17-31. How can we follow in Paul's footsteps?