



North Christian Church

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Self-Guided Study

Topic

The Book of Acts – Chapters 22-24

Background

- See previous Self-Guided Study outlines for additional details
- Paul's arrest and trials: (Acts 21:37-26:32)

Critical Thinking Questions (pre-reading)

- Why were missionaries typically sent out in twos, at least, and sometimes even more? (cp Ecc 4:12)
- How critical was the presence of encouragement in the early church? Who needed to be encouraged, and how? Was playing “second fiddle” a less honorable post?
- Who were consistently the main antagonists to the spreading of the Gospel? (cp Acts 14:2, 16:3, 17:5,13)
- How involved was money, and the loss of it, in creating attacks against Paul and his companions?
- How did Paul choose his companions? How careful was he to not put stumbling blocks before the Jews?
- How strong might the convictions of those leading the early church have been? How boldly did they preach? What was their consistent point of focus in debates?
- Why did the Jews have such hatred for Paul, even though he was one of them and shared their heritage as a faithful Jew and Pharisee?
- Do you see the eternal value of being accused and undergoing trials for the sake of the Gospel? (it's all about the Gospel!)

Reading Outline

- Read chapters 22-24 in the Book of Acts
- Read more deliberately, but never stalling, than you would if you were reading the whole book for big-picture
- Don't lose sight of the overall purpose of the book, the "big-picture" themes, and any sweeping concepts
- Have FUN while reading and do not get frustrated...EVER!
- ALWAYS keep the Gospel reality at the forefront of your mind (eg: remember God's ultimate purpose for authoring the Bible – to reveal His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ)

Post-Reading Questions/Conclusions

- 21:37-40 - Look how Paul's constant respect for authority gave him opportunities for the Gospel. Humility is valuable in all of life's situations, especially because it beckons the grace of God to answer favorably, regardless of circumstances, (Jam 4:6). How can humility towards/respect for authority lead to God's good in our lives? (let's count the ways:)
- 22:1 - What can we learn from the way Paul addressed his enemies here? How can we apply this to our lives? (i.e. what's your attitude towards your fellow countrymen, who are all under the same deceptions of American culture?)
- 22:3-21 - What's the value of telling others your story? And how does this relate to "telling the whole story" of the Gospel?
- 22:3-5 - Why does Paul share with them his religious history and his zealotry for God, even against the Way? Can sharing our past sins get us a "seat at the table"?
- 22:10 - Notice the concern of the new believer, whose heart has changed towards the Lord... he wants to know what God wants him to DO. That's the humble attitude (fruit) in a true believer. Being saved daily, how can we continue to ask our Lord this question, to discover our personal "assignment"? (see the Lord's words to Paul)
- 22:12 - What do you think of this statement about Ananias? Since he's now a believer in Christ, a follower of the Way, why is this important enough to be recorded here in Holy Scripture?
- 22:14 - God has "chosen" you to know His will, just like he did Paul. How does that affect your daily life? or does it?

- 22:16 - What important truths about water baptism can we take from this statement made by Ananias to the new believer Paul? Do you see repentance and faith being "lived out" here, in the act of water baptism??
- 22:17-20 - Does this remind you that "a prophet is not without honor except in his hometown" (Mat 13:57)? And why is Paul sharing that he was "one of them", so to speak?
- 22:21-22 - The Jews cut Paul's story short when he mentions going to the Gentiles. Why such a violent reaction here? Is it just because the Jews were being jealous, acting like an "exclusive" club?
- 22:24-29 - Notice how God prepared Paul for his personal assignment, even when he was an unbeliever (being well-educated in the Law, being a Roman citizen, etc...). Can you think of ways God personally prepared you, before you became a believer, so that you would be better prepared for your personal assignment in His army?
- How do you think Paul's Roman citizenship bought him a "seat at the table" with some? And how did it protect him to be able to do God's work?
- 23:1-5 - Notice again, both Paul's address to his enemies, and his honor for God-ordained authority (ALL authority is God-ordained, even those living in evil). Are we seeing a humble pattern here, to live by? How can we do this?!!
- We are never better than anyone else, just because we've now "seen the light" (Paul didn't see himself as the "great apostle", but as a servant of all). How does remembering where we've come from help us in evangelism/obeying the Great Commission?
- 23:6-10 - What do you think of Paul's strategy here? Why did he take this approach?
- 23:6 - Do you think Paul mentioned "the hope of the resurrection from the dead" to subtly sway some Pharisees to Christ?? (he even got them to consider an angel has spoken to him! vs. 9)
- 23:11 - The Lord spoke to Paul and encouraged him, even though he was in a prison situation. Do you believe/have you ever had the Lord do that for you, personally? Aren't all things possible with God? (why do we limit Him?)
- What are the first words the Lord said to Paul? Why? (Mat 10:17-31, Act 27:23-25) (Consider a concordance search of "do not be afraid" in your own personal studies)

- 23:12-15 - Do you see how "anything goes" in religion? What types of evil do we see here, all in the name of meeting the end goal (in the name of God!)?
- True religion (see James) in the name of the true God doesn't involve violence or conspiracy, but acts of grace, even towards enemies.
- 23:16-24 - God often uses people to deliver us, as extension of His grace. What types of people does God use in this passage??
- We see how God orchestrates things behind the scenes, bringing grace to the humble (Paul). When/how has he done that for you, or for us as a church?
- 23:25-30 - Notice anything strange or inaccurate in the commander's letter to Governor Felix?
- 23:31-33 - We see more privileges/protection granted to a Roman citizen, which God designed from eternity past as a protection for His spokesman. By faith, can we look forward to God providing us a "bodyguard" when we are persecuted maybe even protection from an enemy? (Gen 50:20)
- 23:26,34 - Governor Felix is mentioned as the Governor of Judea during the time of Paul's trial. How encouraging is the historical accuracy of this claim (see footnote for vs. 34)?? And what other key historical accuracies are recorded in the Bible as proof of the perfection of God's Word? (i.e. footnote of 24:1)
- 24:5 - Causing dissension in the Roman Empire was considered treason against Caesar (see footnote). Does this remind you of another time the Jews changed their accusation; from someone breaking their own law to someone committing treason against Caesar, so that the Romans will punish their accused? What does this say about how religion operates and their priorities?
- 24:10-16 - How would you describe Paul's rebuttal? What was his approach to the Governor (another authority figure)? What was his overall attitude?
- 24:17-21 - When you do the right thing, your conscience is clean, and you might be able to plainly state your case one day, without hesitation, because it's true and honest! What's better in this life than being right before God? How would you describe the blessing of being able to live life this way (without the need to cover up unrighteousness)?
- 24:22 - Why do you think Felix was well acquainted with "the Way", Christianity itself?

- 24:23 - Paul was provided protection from the Jews, and at the same time given freedom by the authorities. Is this God's grace following Paul again? Even though Paul had a very difficult commission on his life, God provided enough grace at all times, taking care of His own. (1Co 12:7-10)
- 24:24-25 - Have you ever witnessed to someone and had them become afraid, putting you off until "next time"? How can we avoid that, or should we?
- 24:26 - We never know the motivation of others, and maybe it's good that we don't (and it's none of our business what others think of us!) How does God use the bad motivation of man to His glory in the end?
- 24:27 - The devil's world... should we be surprised? Remember Joseph being forgotten in prison as well (Gen 40:23)? Are you ready to get stuck in prison one day, unjustly, for His Name sake (Rev 2:10)?