

My Witnesses - A Study of Acts Discussion Guide: Week 55 - Acts 22:30-23:11

Summary of this week's teaching: In this week's passage, Paul remains in the custody of the Romans. In an attempt to find out what the ruckus was all about, the tribune demanded that Paul stand before the Jewish Sanhedrin. Paul, unintimidated, declared to them that he had lived his life ("citizenized") before God in good conscience. As we covered last week, citizenship (both as a Roman and citizen of Heaven) seemed to remain on the forefront of Paul's mind. Sadly, the chief priests and elders of the people were not concerned with truth or godliness but with wealth and power. Paul must have sensed this, for instead of continuing to preach the Gospel, he deftly pitted the two major factions of the council against one another. As violence broke out once more, Paul was again brought back to the relative safety of the Roman garrison.

Connect: Relational questions to get conversations started.

1. How many articles of the US Bill of Rights can your group name?

Seed: The Bible, God's inspired Word, is very much like a seed - it contains everything we need to experience life. Please read the following passages of scripture as a group: (perhaps in two different translations) Acts 22:30 - 23:11, Philippians 1:27-30, and 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

1. What lessons can we learn from the behavior of the Sanhedrin as seen in this passage?
2. How ought our heavenly citizenship compel us to behave differently from them?
3. How is it that Paul could truthfully claim that he had "lived my life before God in all good conscience"? How does this jibe with what he wrote in 1 Timothy 1?

Roots: Like subterranean tree roots which extend in all directions searching out water, each believer needs to grow and develop spiritual roots that allow us to make personal connections with our God.

1. The Sanhedrin was allegedly the wisest and most godly group of Jews on earth. How did they end up bent and hard-hearted? Could the same thing happen to a believer? Why or why not?

Trunk: Without trunks, plants may be large, useful, and beautiful, but they are not trees. The same is true for our faith - without it we are not saved and cannot please God. These questions will help us grow our faith in Him.

1. Please reread the 1 Timothy 1 passage. What lessons does this teach us about God's faithfulness to us? How do these lessons impact your faith in Him?

Crown: Crowns are the glory of a tree; the culmination of the roots and trunk working in harmony and can be seen for miles around. The crown of a tree represents the visible portion of our faithlife. These questions will encourage us to apply these principles into our everyday lives.

1. Paul was bold enough for Christ to be unintimidated by the Sanhedrin and wise enough to know that it was an unfruitful time to share the Gospel with them. How can you grow in your boldness for Christ and discernment as to when you can share Christ with others?

THE BOOK OF ACTS