

## Introduction

"During this incarceration, Paul gave six separate defenses of his actions: before the unruly mob at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, Felix, Festus, Herod Agrippa, and the Jews at Rome. Those masterful defenses ably answered the false charges leveled against him—a fact even the Roman authorities acknowledged...Paul's testimony contains two main themes: Jesus Christ's resurrection proves Him to be the Messiah, and Paul's transformed life proves the reality of Christ's resurrection."

John MacArthur

*MacArthur New Testament Commentary on Acts 13–*

This year we are memorizing Ephesians 2. This week's verse is Ephesians 2:16:  
"...and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross,  
by it having put to death the enmity."

28, p. 258

## Day One

*Read Acts 21–22:29; Arrival to Jerusalem and Paul's First Defense*

**NOTE:** Remember that Acts records the formational era of the church and a transitional time from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. The Jewish Christians still practiced the ceremonial aspects of the law, although they (unlike the Judaizers) did NOT teach that this was the means of salvation. Paul's willing participation in the ceremonial aspects of the law are an illustration of the principles of Romans 14:15 and 1 Corinthians 9:19–23.

1. From Acts 21:1–14, what did the disciples at Tyre try to persuade Paul to do, and what was his response?
  
2. According to verses 17–19, what did Paul do when he arrived in Jerusalem?
  - a. As Paul's beliefs directed his behavior, what role do your own convictions about God direct the choices you make? Do you follow your convictions even when you know it will cost you? What steps can you take today to strengthen your convictions to remain steadfast?
  
3. In 21:28, what accusations were leveled against Paul?
  
4. From Acts 22:1–21, summarize briefly the following points Paul makes in his own defense.
  - a. Early life (3–5)
  
  - b. Experience on the road to Damascus (6–11)
  
  - c. Interaction with Ananias (12–16)
  
  - d. What are some ways you can prepare now to faithfully share your own story of salvation? Take time to thank the Lord for His work in your life, and ask for opportunities to share this with those around you.

## Day Two

Read Acts 22:30–23:35; ***Mounting Opposition and Paul's Second Defense***

1. How do you reconcile Paul's actions in 23:3–5 with the instructions for believers in 1 Peter 2:18–23?
  - a. How do you respond when you are mistreated or reviled? How can you better honor the Lord in those times?
2. In Acts 23:6–10 what central doctrine proclaimed by Paul divided the Pharisees and Sadducees?
3. In verse 11, what comfort did Paul receive that encouraged him to hope and assured him that he was in God's will? How did that help prepare him for what was to come?
  - a. How does this account encourage you as you face difficulties or trials in your own life?
4. How do you see God's sovereignty displayed in the events of chapter 23?

## Day Three

Read Acts 24–25; ***Faithful Testimony and Paul's Third and Fourth Defense***

1. In Acts 24:1–9, how did the charges raised by the High Priest and Jewish elders appeal to the interests and concerns of Felix, the Roman governor?
2. From 24:10–21, summarize briefly the key elements of Paul's third defense before Felix.
3. According to verses 24–27, how long was Paul imprisoned under Felix' rule and what was the relationship between the two men?
4. In Acts 25:1–12, Paul delivered his fourth defense before Festus, Felix's successor. Using your Bible's study notes or other resource, why do you think Paul appealed to Caesar in verses 10–11?
5. According to Acts 25:13–27, what did Festus tell King Agrippa was the issue behind Paul's imprisonment?

## Day Four

Read Acts 26; ***Hope of the Promise and Paul's Fifth Defense***

1. In Paul's defense before King Agrippa, why did he say he was on trial, according to verses 6–8?
2. From Paul's defense in Acts 26:1–23, what was the culmination in verses 22–23?
  - a. Why was Christ's resurrection the central theme in Paul's defense to the Roman authorities?
  - b. From Paul's proclamation of Christ's resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:12–58, what does the resurrection teach about the sufficiency of Jesus' sacrifice to pay the price for the sin of mankind?
  - c. How does this highlight God's plan of redemption?
3. What declaration about Jesus caused Festus to accuse Paul of insanity?
4. In verse 27, what was Paul's question to Agrippa and why was it significant? What was the king's response?
  - a. What do you find interesting about this exchange between Paul and Agrippa?

## Day Five

### *Read Acts 27–28; Arrival at Rome and Paul's Sixth Defense*

1. In Acts 27:1 what shift in pronoun takes place, and what does this reveal about Luke, the author of Acts?
2. From Acts 27, describe briefly what takes place and how God's sovereignty was displayed.
  - a. How does this account help fortify your own resolve to trust God when you face difficult circumstances?
3. From Acts 28, what was Paul's ministry on the island of Malta? How do verses 9–10 display the truth of Romans 8:28?
4. According to 28:17–20, why did Paul say that he was on trial?
  - a. Read Acts 1:6; 3:22–24, 13:23–33, 24:15, 26:6, 28:28; Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Micah 5:2; and Titus 2:13. How is Paul's hope seen in these verses, and how do they deepen your

understanding of his faith in Christ and his expectation of the Messiah's return and the kingdom to come?

5. How does Acts 28:23–24 remind you of the mission of the church? Find one or two other references that explain the mission of the church.
  
6. **Dig Deeper:** In Acts 28:26–28, why do you think Paul used this reference from Isaiah that was also quoted by Jesus in Matthew 13:14–15 and John 12:39–40?
  
7. From these final chapters in the Acts of the Apostles, what have you found particularly encouraging and why?