

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 1/12-1/19
Acts 22:1-30



WHATS THE STORY?

After Paul's arrest, he recounts his testimony to the Jewish crowd present. He begins with his personal history, tells of his experience of the risen Christ, and his call to the Gentiles. Paul is taken into custody, ready to appear before the Sanhedrin.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What part of Paul's testimony resonates with your own story of faith?
- Why does Paul's words about the Gentiles anger the Jewish crowd?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: When have you struggled to show empathy to someone?

What does it mean to humanity that we are all equally made in the image of God?

A Deeper Look

In the last chapter we read that Paul had been arrested and was about to take his opportunity to speak to the rioting crowd. Luke adds a note that Paul gives this speech to the Jewish crowd in Aramaic, (21:40) emblematic of Paul's philosophy to meet people on their own terms. Luke also adds that Paul's Aramaic quieted the crowd even more, as if it shocked them that Paul was one of them. Paul begins by explaining his Jewish heritage, telling them that he was born and raised in Tarsus, and studied under Gamaliel, being "thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors." (v3)

Paul then relays his persecution of 'the way' in the past, and says "I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today." (v3), a powerful effort to empathize with a crowd of people who were attempting to murder him. After this, Paul recollects his life altering experience of a post-resurrection Christ and how it led to his meeting with Ananias and his baptism to wash away his sins. (v16) Paul then told the Jewish crowd that Christ spoke to him in a trance and told him that Jerusalem would not accept his testimony. So by direction of Christ, he went out to preach to the Gentiles.

This reignited the crowd and they again called for Paul to be put to death. The Roman commander ordered for Paul to be taken away and flogged, which is to be slashed with sharp objects attached to whips. This was because they blamed Paul for inciting the large riot. However, Paul reveals his Roman citizenship, reminding the Roman soldiers that it was against Rome's law to flog a citizen without due process. The Roman's willingness to flog Paul and the Jewish citizens' anger at Paul's mention of the Gentiles in this chapter highlights humanity's negative predisposition towards outsiders and immigrants.

The commander who put Paul in chains and was about to have him flogged without due process became nervous and released him the next day, calling in the Chief Priests and the Sanhedrin to interrogate Paul in court.