

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with
one another in our homes

Acts 26-27

Read all of Acts 25-26 together (I know it's long, but remember, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17))

These chapters tell the story of Paul telling Festus, who was in charge of his case before this, that he wants to be tried instead by Caesar, who was the leader of all of Rome. Before he goes to Rome, though, Festus has Agrippa, another king but still under Caesar, listen to the accusations against Paul and Paul's defence to get advice on what he should say about Paul to Caesar. Paul then gives his testimony before Agrippa, Festus, and many of the Jewish leaders, telling them about his life before he was saved, his conversion when he was blinded on his way to Damascus, and about his ministry after that. This leads Festus and Agrippa to the conclusion, "this man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (26:32).

Notice three things here: Paul's strong commitment to the Word of God, the sovereignty of God, and the power of the testimony of a transformed life.

1. Look at Acts 26:6-7, 22-23. What was Paul's primary message (which was the reason he was on trial) when he preached the gospel and where did he get this message?
2. Back in Acts 23:11, the Lord promised Paul that he would testify in Rome just as he testified in Jerusalem. How do these chapters show that God is being faithful to this promise? How has all of the book of Acts been leading up to these last chapters?
3. In chapter 26 we basically get a summary of the story of Paul up to this point, but especially his conversion in chapter 9. How does the story of Paul's conversion illustrate the saving power of God?
4. Think about how you might present the gospel, either in a situation similar to Paul's or in your daily life (We did this last week, so don't spend too much time on this point, but move to the next few reflective questions to examine the strengths and weaknesses of how you would present the gospel.)
 - a. Is it evident that you get your message from the same place that Paul did? Does your gospel point people to the Bible or somewhere else?
 - b. How does your testimony or the way you might give the gospel highlight God's sovereignty and his faithfulness to his promises?
 - c. Is it evident that God has changed the trajectory of your life? How are you showing people the power of a transformed life both in the way you live and in your gospel witness?