

# COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with  
one another in our homes

## Acts 22 - John Brewer

In recent passages, we see that Paul knew persecution awaited him, especially in Jerusalem. Some of the others also saw that Paul was to be persecuted and implored him to avoid travel to Jerusalem. Steadfast and mission focused, Paul travels to Jerusalem undeterred. There, Paul was warned of rumors that were circulating which asserted he had been teaching that Jewish converts should give up their observation of Torah law and Jewish customs. It was decided that Paul along with four other men should take part in a ceremonial purification to prove Paul's "Jewishness." Unconvinced, a mob dragged Paul from the Temple accusing him of bringing a Gentile into the Temple. Because of the disturbance, the local tribune (Roman military leader of a small security detail) came, which made the crowd stop beating Paul. As soldiers were carrying Paul away because of his injuries, he asked to address the crowd.

Addressing the crowd who had just been beating him, Paul reminds them of his history as a Jew of high status and how he had violently persecuted the early Christian church. He then tells the narrative of how Christ confronted him and rescued him while he was on his way to persecute Christ's church. They listened to his case until he explained how Christ sent him to witness to the Gentiles. At this, they declared that Paul did not deserve to live. Finally, Paul is taken away by the Romans for violent interrogation, but when they learn that Paul is a Roman citizen, they leave him hastily.

### Three hard things we must do as believers

1. Be faithful with what seems insignificant
2. Be obedient regardless of outcomes
3. Live as exiles

### Discussion

1. Read Isaiah 6:8-10. When Isaiah is called, what does God tell him the outcome of his message will be? What is the outcome of Paul's address in Jerusalem? What does this tell us about our task of spreading the gospel?
2. Read John 1:11. What is John reminding us about Christ, and how does this parallel Paul's message in Jerusalem? We often find it difficult to witness to those of our own tribe (family, work acquaintances, etc.) Why is that, and what can we learn from the example set by Jesus, and from Paul as he followed Jesus' example?
3. Ted used Paul's example to remind us to be obedient regardless of outcomes. In this example, Paul is obedient whether or not the hearers accept the gospel. In general, do we have expectations of outcomes when we think we are obedient? Is our obedience to or satisfaction in

---

Christ conditional? Read Habakkuk 3:17-19. How can we assume a posture of obedience and satisfaction, no matter the circumstance?

4. In this narrative, we see Paul describe himself as a Jew, a Roman, and a follower of Christ. Where is Paul's allegiance? Ted noted that for many of the Jews, nationalistic zeal blinded them from the truth of the Gospel. How do we balance our love of country, loyalty to family, and citizenship in Christ's kingdom?

Reflection: We continually observe that Paul is steadfast and kingdom focused. Read 1 Peter 1:8-9. When we think of Christ's eternal kingdom, do we view it as some far-off fairy-tale story, or do we live like Christ is already on his throne and will bring his kingdom to final fulfillment?