



# WORK OF THE SPIRIT

## Acts Chapters 23 and 24

Lesson 19

### FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. How did Paul's testimony in Acts Chapters 21 and 22 minister to you?
2. Even in trying circumstances Paul felt the presence of Jesus with him. In 2 Timothy 4:16-17 he wrote concerning his trial before Nero, *At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me.* We can also lean into the presence of Jesus when we go through intense scrutiny and trial. In these times, like Paul, we can experience Jesus' peace, wisdom, and strength. Certainly, this reality is seen in Acts 23-24. In these chapters Paul is accused and tried before his hostile opponents. While he remained composed, the opposition turned against one another. Then, when Paul appeared before the Roman governor Felix, he was unintimidated and seized the opportunity to talk about *the Way*.

As you study Acts 23 and 24 this week, take special note of Paul's divine peace, wisdom, and strength in dealing with his accusers. Give a title for each of the sections below:

- a. Acts 23:1-11
  - b. Acts 23:12-35
  - c. Acts 24:1-16
  - d. Acts 24:17-27
3. Take a moment to pray, asking God to fill you with a sense of His divine presence.

*But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul."*

Acts 23:11a

**SECOND DAY:** Read Acts 23:1-11

1. At the end of Acts 22 Paul was released from his bonds and set before *the chief priests and all their council*. What did Paul declare before this *council*? Acts 23:1
2. What happened when Paul said this? Acts 23:2
  - a. Remark on Paul's response from Acts 23:3.
3. When it was pointed out that Ananias was the *high priest* (Acts 23:4), what did Paul say? Acts 23:5
  - a. What do you think of Paul's conduct in this situation?
4. The council Paul appeared before consisted of the religious elite of Israel. The Sadducees were very liberal in their interpretation of the Old Testament and did not believe in a resurrection after death. The other members of the council were Pharisees who strictly adhered to the Old Testament and strongly believed in a resurrection from the dead. Use Acts 23:6-10 to answer the following questions about Paul's inquisition:
  - a. What did Paul declare when he *perceived* there were Sadducees and Pharisees in the *council*? Acts 23:6
  - b. According to Acts 23:7,9 what was the result of his declaration?
  - c. What reason was given for this division in Acts 23:8?
  - d. How did the Roman authorities handle this *great dissension*? Acts 23:10
  - e. How is Paul's demeanor and wisdom an example to you?
5. What happened to Paul *the following night*? Acts 23:11
  - a. What did the Lord say to Paul?
    - (1) How do you think this ministered to Paul?
  - b. Consider Matthew 28:20b and Hebrews 13:5b. Share a time when *the Lord stood by* and ministered to you.

**THIRD DAY:** Read Acts 23:12-35

1. From Acts 23:12-15 describe the *conspiracy* of the Jews against Paul.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Use Acts 23:16-21 to explain how the *conspiracy* was exposed.
  - a. How do you see God's hand at work in this situation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What did the *commander* do in response to the information he received? Acts 23:22-24
  - a. How do you see God turning the tables on Paul's enemies?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. From Acts 23:25-30 recount Claudius' testimony concerning his actions toward Paul.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Using Acts 23:31-35 highlight how God kept His word (Acts 23:11) to Paul.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Choose a word or promise from the Bible that God has spoken to you.

**FOURTH DAY:** Read Acts 24:1-16

1. According to Acts 24:1, what happened *after five days*?
  
2. Felix was a former slave promoted to governor, and was a cruel, oppressive ruler. With this in mind, comment on how Tertullus addressed Felix as he *began his accusation* in Acts 24:2-4.
  
3. From Acts 24:5-6a list the four things of which Tertullus accused Paul.
  
4. Summarize Tertullus' version of what happened in the *temple*. Acts 24:6b-8
  - a. How does this differ from the account in Acts 21:27-36?
  
  - b. The Jewish leaders *assented* to Tertullus' words (Acts 24:9). What does this convey about them?
  
5. Read Acts 24:10-13 and share your impression of the way Paul answered *for himself*.
  
6. Use Acts 24:14-16 to note and comment on:
  - a. Paul's confession (verse 14)
  
  - b. Paul's *hope* (verse 15)
  
  - c. Paul's goal (verse 16)
  
7. What do you find most interesting about Paul's presentation before Felix?

**FIFTH DAY:** Read Acts 24:17–27

1. From Paul's defense before Felix in Acts 24:17–21, record what Paul said about:
  - a. his activity in the *temple* (verses 17–18)
  - b. his accusers (verse 19)
  - c. *wrongdoing* (verse 20)
  - d. his *statement* (verse 21)

(1) What do you find most compelling about Paul's defense?

2. According to Acts 24:22a, why was Felix accountable for what he *heard*?
3. How did Felix conclude the proceedings? Acts 24:22b–23
4. What did Felix do *after some days*? Acts 24:24
5. From Acts 24:25a list and comment on the three things Paul *reasoned* about:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

(1) Link this with John 16:8–11. Why do you think Paul chose these things?

6. Observe Felix's response from Acts 24:25b. According to 2 Corinthians 6:2b and Hebrews 3:7, why is this a dangerous response?
7. What was Felix's underlying motive? Acts 24:26
8. *After two years* Festus replaced Felix as governor (Acts 24:27). We know from history that he was called to task by Caesar for abusing his position and his life ended in shame. How might Felix's life story have been different?

**SIXTH DAY:** Review

1. Share how you see the work of the Holy Spirit in the following events:
  - a. Paul's appearance before the Jewish council (Acts 23:1-11)
  - b. the conspiracy against Paul (Acts 23:12-24)
  - c. Paul's trial before Felix (Acts 24:1-23)
  - d. Paul's audiences with Felix and Drusilla (Acts 24:24-26)
2. Recall a time in your life when you needed to have the assurance of the Lord standing by you.  
Acts 23:11

*I have hope in God.*  
Acts 24:15a