

# WHITE MEMORIAL

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### Men's Bible Study

#### Acts

#### Lesson 10

---

#### Read Acts 21-24

#### 3 Questions:

**Q1:** In Acts 22: 22 it says, "Up to this point they listened to him, but then they shouted, 'Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live.'" Why did the people say this?

**Q2:** In Acts 23 the many dimensions of Paul's life continue to come forward: Roman citizen; Jew; disciple of Jesus. People from all aspects of his life responded. How did people live out their faithfulness (or not) in this chapter? (Paul, Jews – Sadducees and Pharisees, Paul's family, the tribune)

**Q3:** As you read the arguments in Acts 24, what is the real issue?

#### Insights:

**I1:** Willie Jennings (Acts, p. 203) writes:

Paul speaks inside of misperception. The crowd does not see him through the truth of his own words. They only see him through the lies born of diaspora fear. How does one speak in such a situation? This will be the dilemma for countless Christians who will follow Paul, and even for us now. How do we speak when surrounded by rumor and false words, by accusation and complaint? How do we speak dogged by a history of our own doing, of hateful speech and action? The only actual way forward for Christians and for Christianity is testimony. Paul will offer a witness that will also be the self-witness of Jesus. Such witness is never thoughtless.

**I2:** Reflecting on Paul's trials and tribulations in these chapters, N.T. Wright (Acts for Everyone, p. 188) writes:

The **gospel** is all about God putting the world right – his doing so in Jesus, his doing so at the end, and his doing so for individuals in between, as both a sign and a means of what is to come. Luke wants his readers to see the life of the church itself in that same way. We shouldn't expect a comfortable ride. We shouldn't imagine that people will leave us alone, will not challenge us as to what we are doing, as to how our faith belongs in the public world. If we are the people in and through whom God is putting into effect the setting-right that happened in Jesus, and anticipating the setting-right that will happen at the end, we should expect to see that uncomfortable but necessary setting-right going on all over the place, sometimes in martyrdom and sometimes in vindication and acquittal, as the church makes its way in the world.

**I3:** Reflecting on the arguments presented to Felix by Tertullus and Paul in Acts 24, Willie Jennings (Acts, p. 214) writes:

Tertullus and Paul represent intellectual life before cross, resurrection, and the coming of the Spirit and intellectual life after these world-shattering and life-creating realities. Paul now speaks inside the hope of resurrection and as one who yields to the Spirit. His words aim at faithfulness and gesture divine presence. He certainly wants to win, finding justice against false accusations, yet the arch of his discursive work bends toward the resurrected body of Jesus. He speaks in witness to the hope of resurrection.

**Link to Further Study:**

**L1:** Paul before Felix by William Hogarth:

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/392611>