

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, October 21, 2007

Passage: Acts 23

Memory Passage: Hebrews 13:6

TODAY: From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 23:1-5.** How does Paul begin his defense? Why should this have been an important issue for this council?
- (b) How did the High Priest respond to Paul's claim? Why do you think he did this? What contradiction in the priest's behavior did Paul point out (Psalm 58:1-2)? Into whose hands does Paul leave the judgment?
- (c) How should we respond when we are treated wrongly (Romans 12:19)? How is Jesus our perfect example (1 Peter 2:23)?
- (d) How did Paul respond when he learned that he had spoken this to the High Priest? What does this demonstrate about Paul's character and heart to please God?
- (e) Read 1 Peter 3:15-16. How does having a clear conscience help you to be confident in your witness? How does a believer gain a totally clean conscience (Hebrews 9:14)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 23:15- and 1 Peter 3:15-16. Talk about a time when you have been treated wrongly. How have you responded? What kind of response pleases God? How does knowing God is in control enable us to respond rightly? Pray for strength to trust God in situations when you are wronged so that your witness might give glory to God.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 23:6-10.** What did Paul observe about the Sanhedrin? Who were the Sadducees and what did they believe?
- (b) Could a Christian remain a Pharisee? Could a Sadducee? What is the essential difference in these two?
- (c) What does this show us is the essential foundation of Christianity (Acts 13:30-34; Acts 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)?
- (d) Make a list (from 1 Corinthians 15:13-19) of the implications if there is no resurrection. How does the reality of the resurrection give us confidence even when facing dangers (2 Corinthians 1:8-9)?
- (e) What was the attitude of the Pharisees against Paul (Acts 23:9)? Compare their response to that of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34-39.
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 23:6-10 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. What are some ways that Christianity is different from all other religions? How does the resurrection give hope even when facing dire circumstances? Pray for someone who needs to know Jesus as Savior.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 23:11.** What did God do to encourage his servant? What is the first thing that God tells Paul? Jesus also said the same thing to his disciples in John 16:33 and Matthew 14:27. What words of encouragement did he give in those passages?
- (b) What is the basis of our confidence in God (Isaiah 41:10; Hebrews 13:6)?
- (c) What is the basis for our greatest joy (Matthew 9:2; Luke 10:20)? Even if everything else is frustrating in our lives, how can the believer still rejoice?
- (d) How did Paul later echo this same encouragement to the church at Philippi in Philippians 4:4-5? Read Philippians 4:4-9. What does Paul tell them to do so that the peace of God will guard their hearts and minds (make a list)?
- (e) What specific promise does the Lord give Paul that would encourage him in this situation?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 23:11 and Philippians 4:4-9. What are some of the promises that God gives to us that will encourage us in difficult times? Look these up and read them together. Which is most encouraging to you personally? Thank the Lord for the peace and comfort that He has given to you.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 23:12-22.** Paul's life has been in danger many times. Review these in Acts 9:22; 13:50-51; 14:19-20 and 20:19.
- (b) What plan do some of the Jews make to deal with Paul? What shows their zeal? What is the danger of zeal (Romans 10:1-2; Proverbs 19:2)? How had misguided zeal affected Paul (Philippians 3:6)?
- (c) Why would these men be so fanatical (2 Corinthians 4:4)? How do they involve the religious leaders in their plot? What does this show about the real spiritual condition of these leaders? Compare this with Paul's attitude toward deception (2 Corinthians 4:2)?
- (d) How does the Roman commander find out about this plot? Compare this to Esther 2:21-23. How is God's providence seen in little things (Matthew 10:28-31)?
- (e) Read Genesis 50:20. How did Joseph view all that happened? How was God using these circumstances to get Paul to Rome?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 23:12-22 and Genesis 50:20. Talk about the difference between providence and miracles. Which is God's normal way of accomplishing His will? How does that give us confidence in difficulties? Pray that you can rest in His control in the difficulties you face this week.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read Acts 23:23-35.** When do they leave and how large a force is taken? What does this say about the seriousness of this plot?
- (b) What were some of the special blessings and privileges that Paul was given even though he was a prisoner? Where did Paul stay while he was a prisoner at Caesarea?
- (c) How does God care for and provide for His children (Ephesians 3:20)? What is the constant reminder of the Psalms (106:7; 107:1, 34:8, etc.)?
- (d) What did Paul say about the will of God in Romans 12:1-2? How do Psalm 84:11 and Romans 8:28 encourage us in difficulties?
- (e) Read Psalm 52. Compare and contrast the righteous and the wicked mentioned in this psalm. What does the Psalmist say that lasts forever? What is the right response of the saints to these things?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 23:23-35 and Psalm 84:11. Discuss the goodness of God. What does it mean to say that God is good? What are the evidences of His goodness? Can you see His goodness even in bad times? Pray that you might see and give thanks to God for His goodness and mercy that are everlasting.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Acts 23. How should we respond when others treat us badly? How does our confidence that God is ultimately in control help us to respond rightly? How do the promises of God encourage you? What is your favorite promise? Pray for tomorrow's services that God might be trusted and worshiped as Lord of the universe.

DATE: October 21, 2007

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God Is In Control

“But the following night, the Lord stood by him...”