

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

The Holy Spirit as Keeper

Acts 23:11

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: “Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me.”

We read today from Acts 23:11. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit as Keeper?

There is something very encouraging about knowing something about the future. Let me help you understand what I mean.

I like reading books that are a part of a series that includes the same protagonist. For years, I grabbed a Clive Cussler novel for every vacation to see what Dirk Pitt was up to. In high school, I had my Tom Clancy season with Jack Ryan. I’ve shared before that Hieronymus (Harry) Bosch from the novels of Michael Connelly is a favorite of both Kristin and I. I’ve read more than a few Stone Barrington novels written by Stuart Woods, but I’m beginning to tire of the wealth they glamourize. Kay Scarpetta is a character by Patricia Cornwell. The Bones Series written by Kathleen Joan Reichs follows Dr. Temperance Brennan. I could name several others.

Here’s what I have learned as I’ve read these books.

If the character is in a dangerous situation where they might die, they will be okay NO MATTER WHAT. The logic is simple. If they don’t survive, there will be no more books to write. They must live for there to be a sequel. Simply put, the author will not ‘kill off’ their meal ticket.

That makes reading such books less stressful. Each harrowing car chase, each confrontation with the bad guys, each secret plan to ‘end the threat’ that this character poses ends the same way; the protagonist lives to sleuth another day.

In our verse today, Paul gains the sort of knowledge that equips him to anticipate a future beyond any danger he might face. We must imagine that such knowledge gave him no small level of comfort.

*“The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”*

In this next stage of his final journey towards Rome and Caesar, Paul is caught up deeper in the conflicts of Jerusalem. The centurion called him back to the barracks to testify in the presence of the different religious leaders. In the presence of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, he brought up the resurrection, a bone of contention between the two groups. A squabble breaks out. A fight breaks out. A riot breaks out and Paul is nearly torn apart.

That night, while he is alone, Jesus (my text has the quote of our verse in red letters) tells him that he will someday testify in Rome. While these words certainly brought Paul comfort in this moment of turmoil, we must believe that these words returned to Paul in the coming months.

They returned to him in every courtroom as ruler after ruler took their shot at stopping Paul's work for the kingdom. They returned to him in the storm and the shipwreck on his journey across the Mediterranean. They returned to him when he suffered what should have been a fatal snakebite.

"I'm going to be okay. I'm not in Rome yet. Jesus said I was going to get to Rome. I'm not sure how this is going to go, but I'm going to trust. He said it would happen, and I believe it!"

That trust kept Paul in the hands and care of the Spirit through the rest of his life. It can equip us too because, like Paul, we know the end of the story.

Times can be tough and life can be scary, but God has promised us a future that is perfect. Sickness can consume, and suffering can wear us down, but there will be a day when health will flourish, and joy will be made complete. No matter what experience we will go through in the future, any pain will be temporary, and any brokenness will be made whole. It is a little different for us because unlike Paul, our promise is not guaranteed for this life, but it is no less a promise. Since that is true, we can know that God will keep it.

Paul's future equipped him to face his present circumstances with faith. May the future we are promised give us that same sort of trust.

*May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.*

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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