

Acts 23: On Mission, In the Mess

Calvary Chapel Titusville

8/31/25 Pastor Paul Andris

God measures faithfulness by obedience, not outcomes.

Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, "Men [and] brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. (Acts 23:1-2 NKJV)

A clear conscience isn't sinless perfection; it's current surrender.

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 NKJV)

Faithfulness does not guarantee applause.

Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, [you] whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?" And those who stood by said, "Do you revile God's high priest?" Then Paul said, "I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.' " (Acts 23:3-5 NKJV)

***The world has heard enough defensive Christians;
show them what gospel-empowered humility looks like.***

But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Men [and] brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!" And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection--and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. (Acts 23:6-8 NKJV)

Resurrection isn't window dressing. It's central to the Gospel.

And if Christ is not risen, your faith [is] futile; you are still in your sins! (1 Corinthians 15:17 NKJV)
Keep the main thing the main thing. If your witness leans more on "I'm with your team" than "Jesus died and rose," your foundation is sand.

Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees' party arose and protested, saying, "We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God." Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring [him] into the barracks. (Acts 23:9-10 NKJV)

Be known for what you're for—Christ crucified and risen—more than what you're against.
But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome." (Acts 23:11 NKJV)

Presence: "The Lord stood by him." Purpose: "You must also bear witness at Rome."

Heaven measures obedience, not scoreboard optics.

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." (John 6:28-29 NKJV)

Believe, bear witness, and leave results to God.

And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. They came to the chief priests and elders, and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul."

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"Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near." (Acts 23:12-15 NKJV)

***Your weapons are not rage and manipulation;
they're truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, the Word, and prayer.***

"Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. (John 15:20-21 NKJV)

The good news?

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:4 NKJV)

Providence in the ordinary...

So when Paul's sister's son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions to [him] and said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him." So he took him and brought [him] to the commander and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to [him] and asked [me] to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you." Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?" And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. "But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you." So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded [him], "Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me." (Acts 23:16-22 NKJV)

Don't despise "small" deliverances.

And he called for two centurions, saying, "Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night; "and provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring [him] safely to Felix the governor." (Acts 23:23-24 NKJV)

God is flexing

The king's heart [is] in the hand of the LORD, [Like] the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes. (Proverbs 21:1 NKJV)

***The path of obedience may not be easy,
but it will be marked with God's presence, protection, and purpose.***

He wrote a letter in the following manner: Claudius Lysias, To the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. I found out that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him. Farewell. (Acts 23:25-30 NKJV)

If you're in a season of forms, hearings, and waiting rooms, invite Jesus into it.

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He is Lord of letters and deadlines.

Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought [him] by night to Antipatris. The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. When they came to Caesarea and had delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. And when the governor had read [it], he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that [he was] from Cilicia, he said, "I will hear you when your accusers also have come." And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium. (Acts 23:31-35 NKJV)

Don't romanticize the path of obedience.

I have been young, and [now] am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. (Psalm 37:25 NKJV)

Don't mistake delay for denial. Keep walking. The Word of God is not chained.

Obedience over outcomes, Presence over panic, Providence over paranoia.

Jesus stands by you. Take courage; keep testifying.