

## “Proof That Jesus is Your Hope”

Acts 26:22-23

And so, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place: that the Christ would be subject to suffering, that He would be first to rise from the dead, and that He would proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.

1. Discuss the impact of hope.
  - a. How do people respond to hardships when they do **not** have hope? When they **do** have hope?
  
  - b. Share with one another things or people that over the course of your life have served as sources of hope for you.
  
2. Skim through Acts 25:23-26:29
  - a. Why was Paul in this situation? Who had instigated this trial?
  
  - b. Who were the key players in this drama? What roles did they play?
  
  - c. If found guilty, what would be the sentence Paul would have likely faced?
  
  - d. How does Paul use his circumstances as an opportunity for the gospel?
  
3. Read Acts 26:22-23 more closely.
  - a. Upon what sources was Paul drawing as He gave his testimony (cf. esp. v 22)?
  
  
  - b. To whom was Paul willing to testify?

- i. How do people's outward appearances shape our expectations of how they might respond to the gospel?
  - ii. How does Paul's example challenge us to think differently about this?
- c. What three things did Paul say Moses and the Prophets (i.e. the Old Testament) said were going to take place with respect to the Messiah (i.e. the Christ)?

#### 4. Read Isaiah 53

- a. To whom does this passage refer? How do you know this from Isaiah (cf. also Matt. 8:17)?
- b. List the specific ways in which Isaiah says the Messiah would suffer. How did these things take shape in Jesus' life and death experiences?
- c. How did Isaiah say this Servant would respond to this suffering (cf. v 7, 11)? How did Jesus respond to His suffering (cf. Matt. 27:11-14; Hebrews 12:2)?
- d. In what ways was the kind of suffering Jesus experienced similar to yours? In what ways was it different? Why is it comforting to know that Jesus suffered as we do?
- e. How does this connect with Hebrews 2:17-18? How might this give you hope in the midst of your own trials?

#### 5. Read Psalm 16.

- a. Why is David's heart glad (cf. v 9-10)?
- b. David considers himself to be a "holy one" just as you and I are considered "holy ones" or "saints." How is it that we can be confident that our "flesh will dwell securely" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:22)?

- c. How does v 10 connect with Acts 13:32-35?
- d. How does Jesus' resurrection give believers great hope now and for the future?
- e. How much do you think about your future resurrection? How might remembering this future truth help comfort you now in the middle of your hardships or suffering?

6. Read Isaiah 49:5-7

- a. How do these verses connect with Psalm 16:9-10?
- b. How does this passage (esp. v 7) connect with Isaiah 53?
- c. In v 6 what does God say He is going to do for His Servant and for all the nations?
- d. How does this connect with John 8:12?
- e. In what ways has Jesus brought light into your world?

7. Where are you being tempted right now to place your hopes for your life? If you were to obtain whatever you are hoping for, how will your life change? Why will this only provide temporary help?

8. In what ways can you take steps to shift your hopes to Christ? How might you enlist the help of others? How might you become a help to others as they seek to do the same?