



Read Acts 23

Devotional

Paul shared his story before a violent crowd of people. Perhaps a few hearts were softened, and maybe even changed by his message. But mostly his message was greeted with resistance.

Paul could've been bitter about his circumstances. He could have been angry with God. Beaten, attacked, pulled on and almost torn to pieces, Paul was aware of the purpose behind his hardship. In verse 11, the Lord tells Paul, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome." (Acts 23:11)

Paul could have seen his circumstances as a series of bad days. But through each twist in Paul's trial, God made a way for Paul to share his story with as many people as possible. Paul pressed on to finish the race to which he was called. Comfort, safety and personal preference were not considerations. The good news was ever on his lips and the gentle encouragement of a compassionate Father in his ear saying, "Take courage!" Paul had eyes to see the Lord at work in his circumstances and ears to hear God's consistent reassurance of His certain faithfulness.

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God? How does it apply to you?
- 2) How do you see God wanting to use your current circumstances for spiritual benefit, whether it's your own or someone else's?
- 3) What hypocrisy does Paul call out in the high priest in verse 3? Why is it dangerous to say one thing yet do another?

Based on today's reading, what is one thing God is saying to you?