

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 10TH–11TH, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

BEFORE KINGS (ACTS 26:1–11) 25 YEARS OR SO

In Acts 9:15, Paul was told by Jesus that he would witness before kings. Roughly 25 years later, the prophecy would begin to be fulfilled as he stood before King Agrippa.

- Though we may not understand the timing, **if Jesus makes a promise/prophecy, it is certain it will take place** (2 Peter 3:9).

NO DISTRACTIONS

At this point, there was no official trial because procedures in Caesarea ended when Paul appealed to Caesar. This was an informal hearing that became a witness opportunity.

- Because the murderous Jews were absent and Luke was present, Paul had the leisure to present the gospel without interruption.

“I CONSIDER MYSELF FORTUNATE”

The accusations of sedition and defiling the temple were dismissed because Paul lived above reproach. Now, he had a captive audience that he begged “to listen...patiently.”

- **Reaching people for Jesus begins with a good reputation in the community.** Reputation is established by **word and deed**.

THE ONLY REAL HOPE (VS. 6–9)

Paul says two important things: first, that he simply believed in the promise God had given humanity of a Savior, and second, that **he had lived in opposition to Jesus but now realized He was the only hope.**

- **Those who honestly seek realize the things of this world come up short.**

“WHY DO ANY OF YOU CONSIDER IT INCREDIBLE...?”

V. 8 is intriguing. Paul asks Agrippa a rhetorical question about the power of God to raise the dead (Jesus).

- Christians often neglect the power of the Holy Spirit. Interestingly, **we say we believe in the risen Christ but fail to believe God can deliver, heal, and change.**

BRUTALITY IS NOT THE WAY

Vs. 10–11 are another retelling of Paul's life before Jesus. He tells Agrippa that he unsuccessfully used force and fear to promote his beliefs.

- Christians follow a Savior who perfectly embodies truth and love. **We are to draw people to Jesus through love, truth, and hope, not hostility and force.**

TO LIGHT (ACTS 26:12–23) PAUL WAS ON A ROAD

As Paul shared his Damascus Road experience, he mentioned he “saw a light from heaven.”

- Though Paul was wrong, he had a desire for truth and was **moving and searching.** Jesus promises that **if we seek, we will find** (Matthew 7:7), but **we rarely find anything while sitting still.**

“KICK AGAINST THE GOADS”

A goad is a stick used to drive cattle in a certain direction. Jesus used this example to show Paul that he was going the wrong way and that **God wanted to correct his path.**

- Jesus used words like “purpose,” “servant,” “witness,” and “rescue.” He told Paul that he would be used to “open their eyes.”

ALL CHRISTIANS HAVE THIS MISSION

Like Paul, we are all called **to grow in our relationship with Jesus and to eventually share Him with others** so they can also “**turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God,**” “**receive forgiveness of sins,**” and become “**sanctified by faith**” in Jesus.

“NOT DISOBEDIENT TO THE HEAVENLY VISION”

Paul had a revelation that Jesus is the Savior and had humbled himself to Him. He then preached that we must “repent and turn to God” and “**do works worthy of repentance.**”

- Salvation comes from trusting Jesus' work. **When we truly trust Jesus, we do works (fruit) that substantiate our faith** (Matthew 12:33).

STANDING BY TRUTH REGARDLESS OF COST

Because of Paul's allegiance to Christ and the truth of God's Word, he faced many hardships. In those trying times, God always helped him through.

- Paul was willing to suffer for truth because Jesus suffered for our salvation and is the hope for all people.

I WISH (ACTS 26:24–32)

“YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND, PAUL!”

Festus had heard enough and said Paul's faith and Scripture were driving him “mad.” Though Romans were spiritual, Christian beliefs about resurrection were ridiculous to most.

- Ironically, we live in a **world that believes in bizarre things but finds Christianity crazy. This is spiritual tension** (John 3:19).

IT ACTUALLY WORKS

Paul responds with “I'm not out of my mind...On the contrary, I'm speaking **words of truth and good judgment.**”

- There are elements of Christianity that take more faith to believe, but **the application of the teachings of Scripture works in the most logical and practical ways.**

TURNING HIS ATTENTION TO AGRIPPA

Paul discerned that Festus was unwilling to listen, so he turned his attention to King Agrippa, who should have known the prophecies of the Old Testament.

- Nothing God has done has been in secret; therefore, **all who have had access will be held accountable for their responses.**

NOT WILLING TO COMMIT

Agrippa knew the OT and what was right and wrong, but he was unwilling to completely commit because he **cared more about image and lifestyle than surrendering to God.**

- **How many professing Christians have heard the Word and its truth but refuse to completely submit to it?**

THE DESIRE FOR ALL TO KNOW JESUS

Though Paul had been lied about, beaten, unjustly imprisoned, and ridiculed by both Jews and Greeks, his “wish before God” was “that whether easily or with difficulty, not only you but all who listen” would be saved.

- **God is patient and desires all to know Him** (2 Peter 3:9). **This should be our desire too.**

“THIS MAN COULD HAVE BEEN RELEASED”

Paul could have taken an easier path because he hadn't broken any Jewish or Roman laws. But Paul had a mission, and part of that included suffering for Jesus' name (9:16).

- **Our way may seem easier, but in the long run, we lack purpose and will be held into account for neglecting our call.**

SEARCHING

- Paul may not have found truth if he wasn't on a road. This is also true for us. **If we are to discover, we must first desire to search.**
- An honest search for purpose will lead to the Bible. The Bible will lead to truth, some difficult to embrace at first. At this point, one should “test” what they find.

APPLYING AND TESTING

- To the honest and open-minded, **it isn't hard to see that the ways of culture/society consistently leave us divided and lacking.**
- Even if one struggles with the supernatural, **the state of the world should provoke us to look elsewhere for direction.** But which path actually works?
- If one puts forth the effort and reads Scripture objectively, the wisdom it contains will guide them into a more fulfilling life.
- The application of the practical principles found in the Bible will also increase faith because, **when applied, the Bible works on the most fundamental levels.**

DARKNESS BECOMES LIGHT

- When we follow the truth of God's Word, the path in front of us **(life) starts to become more clear. We also learn how to avoid pitfalls and manage life's tensions.**
- In light of biblical truth, we grow in our understanding of the Light (Jesus). **In Him, we learn our value and the hope He offers.**

AND WE SHOULD WANT ALL TO EXPERIENCE HIM

- What we experience in Jesus and the guidance of His Word is not just for us but **for anyone who will listen and respond.**
- Loving people, sharing, and displaying the principles of Jesus is becoming increasingly difficult, but **if we truly love God, we will love those made in His image.**
- Search, Test, Apply, Share