

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Acts Series

These questions are for the **May 16, 2021** sermon, "Certain Points of Dispute." Please read the sermon passage (Acts 25:13-22) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

AS WE RECALL THE PROMISES OF GOD, TRUST HIS WAYS EVEN WHEN . . .

1. Unfair circumstances seem to be prolonged. (13-16)
 - a. Paul's days in prison continue (seemingly) at the whim of the evil, with no end in sight.
 - i. False accusations go unresolved.
 - ii. Those in influence have different motives, but keep Paul incarcerated.
 - b. Yest God remains in complete control. (Is 55:8-9)
 - i. God's ways are mysterious to us, but his promises are certain for us.
 - ii. God promised Paul that he would testify about Jesus in Rome. (Acts 23:11)
2. Essential truths are being disputed. (17-19)
 - a. Festus (the Roman governor) and Agrippa (the Jewish 'king') are now discussing Jesus.
 - i. Is Paul guilty of treason? (loyalty to Jesus, another King)
 - ii. Is Jesus, known to be crucified, now alive? (30 years after Jesus' resurrection)
 - b. Harsh circumstances for Christians forces the whole world to continually discuss Jesus.
 - c. Your faithfulness to Jesus in unfair circumstances forces your circles to discuss Jesus.
3. Threatening people are becoming involved. (20-22)
 - a. A new ungodly government leader rises to power and becomes involved.
 - i. Agrippa is the grandson of Herod, Jewish ornamental "kings" under Rome's rule.
 - ii. Paul entrusts himself to an even more ruthless king (Nero, or "Caesar").
 1. Note: Because God is in control, governmental leaders are not.
 2. Paul boldly trusts God's promises in the face of prison, injustice, threats, unknown timing and possible quicker resolution.
 - b. Note how God uses evil intents from Jewish kings and Roman governors in this situation, just as he did to deliver Jesus to Bethlehem and to the cross.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: Most of us know that, because of Jesus, unfair circumstances will come and even remain for undefined periods of time. But enduring these times requires great faith. Sometimes this suffering involves personal pain (or limitations), or a complete change of plans, dreams, daily routines and sometimes, friends. Yet the Spirit makes it possible for us to faithfully endure and thrive. Discuss how unfairness has grown your faith and faithfulness.
2. Based on #2, above: God doesn't just employ suffering and make something good from it. Suffering is a primary means of spreading the good news about Jesus Christ. Discuss. Note how Paul's unjust treatment required government leaders to discuss Jesus Christ's resurrection.
3. Based on #3, above: The worst-case situations are in God's hands. When Rome rules over God's people in the Promised Land, God is in complete control. When Rome (and Israel) kills babies, and crucifies Jesus, God is in control. Do you believe this? How do you show your belief in your attitudes? Patience? Faithfulness? Mission-focus? And love? How does the resurrection of Jesus Christ fuel your faith and faithfulness?