

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: February 21, 2021

SPEAKER: Joe/Brian

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 26:1-32

### “EMBODYING AND EXPRESSING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE”

#### For individual study or discussion

In his first letter, Peter encouraged his brothers and sisters who were facing persecution.

“Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. ‘Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.’ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” *1 Pet. 3:13-18a*

When Paul appeared before King Agrippa, he could understandably have been cowed by the pomp of the occasion or overwhelmed by exhaustion and frustration after over two years in prison. But Paul was at no loss for words when he motioned with his hand and began his defense. (Acts 26:1)

- 1) In what ways did Paul model the instructions given by Peter?
  - What are the main highlights of Paul’s story? What did he emphasize in sharing how he became a believer in Christ?
  - In what ways did he show respect to Agrippa as he gave his defense?
    - ◊ Is Paul’s defense here a good model for us to follow as we share the gospel with others in the 21st century? If yes, explain how. If no, explain why not.
- 2) In the book of Acts, Paul makes clear over and over again how the good news of the gospel centers on the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead (v. 23, “that the Christ would suffer, and as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles.”)
  - How does Christ’s resurrection vindicate his crucifixion?
  - How does Christ’s resurrection enable us to understand what Christ’s death accomplished?
- 3) Paul did not only share the good news of Christ’s resurrection, however. He also offered a comprehensive list of the benefits of the gospel (see vv. 17-18). What are those benefits and how might you explain them to a nonbeliever?
- 4) It’s not clear from the text why Festus interrupted Paul’s defense and exclaimed, “You are out of your mind, Paul! Your great learning is driving you insane.”
  - Why might he have said this?
  - What makes Christianity seem crazy or insane today? How should we respond to accusers who think Christianity makes no sense?

### Family Dinner Table

Can you give some examples of when you might say to someone, “You are so lucky!?” Maybe, “I heard your teacher didn’t assign any homework tonight. You are so lucky!” Or, “He scored some tickets to the (insert your favorite team) game. Lucky dog!”

It’s not hard for us to see the good circumstances that someone else is enjoying, and if we’re honest, sometimes we feel a little jealous that someone else is enjoying something that we don’t have.

In his address to King Agrippa, Paul begins by saying that he considers himself “fortunate” to stand before the king as he makes his defense. That’s almost, though certainly not quite, the same as saying, “I feel lucky to be here getting to talk to you today.”

Why was Paul so glad to have the opportunity to speak before Agrippa? What about the opportunity fills him with joy? As you think about this, consider how Paul views Agrippa, what Paul believes about God, and what Paul knows about himself and his own life story. Can you think how your heart might be filled with gladness at the thought of telling someone about Jesus?

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Widow’s Harvest

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

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