

**Manik Corea**

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Message 21 of 25

**When Trouble Comes**

**Acts 21:17-23:11**

Introduction

1. Have you ever feared for your life? What are you most afraid of?

2. When trouble comes, the response called for of us who are in Christ is faith, not fear. Today, we are thinking about how God is able to grant us courage to face trials and persecutions, as seen in the life of Paul.

Acts 21:17-36

* Paul has arrived in Jerusalem, and an old issue arises again. Paul is viewed with suspicion by many of the Jewish believers. He is advised by James and the elders to sponsor the Nazarite vows and observe it with four men, as an observant Jew.
* However, a group of Jews who had come for Pentecost from Asia Minor stir up the crowds and falsely accuse Paul. A mob pounced on Paul and took him outside the temple to kill him, but he was rescued by a tribune and soldiers and arrested.

Acts 21:37-22:29

* Paul boldly witnesses to the mob.
* The word “witness” in Greek (see Acts 1:8 for example) is the word ‘martys’ from where we get the word ‘martyr’.
* In Mark 13:9, Jesus told us that “… they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues….and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, **to bear witness** to them.”
* Paul therefore boldly tells his story of conversion and calling to take the Gospel to the Gentiles – Acts 22:1-21. See similar accounts in Acts 9:1-19 and Acts 26:12-23.
* The crowd stop listening when he mentioned ‘the Gentiles.’ What word or issue stops you listening to God?
* Paul is spared flogging by revealing he is a Roman citizen.

Acts 22:30-23:11

* Paul is brought before the Sanhedrin, and reacts to Ananias the high priest asking that he be struck. But Paul is quick to admit he was wrong to respond with anger.
* He gives witness that he is on trial for ‘the hope of the resurrection’ (vs 6), that is of Jesus.
* The Pharisees, who believe in the resurrection of the day and the Sadducees who don’t, were divided on what to do with Paul, and he is once more rescued by the tribune.
* The key verse in this section is Acts 23:11: “The following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.””
* Paul is encouraged by both the presence and the promise of Jesus. He is told to ‘take courage.’
* God will not leave us (Hebrews 13:5) and Jesus has overcome the world, so we can take courage in tribulation (John 16:33).

Conclusion

We need to take courage in Jesus and trust in him, when trouble or persecution comes.

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