



Winter 2022 // WEEK 6

Life Group Questions

Acts: Daring To Be The Church // February 19/20, 2022

Paul: Pawn or Participant? // Acts 25:1-22

## Introduction

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For two years Paul has remained imprisoned in Caesarea without being given a trial. We might imagine him becoming fatigued and frustrated with the process, but Acts 25 gives a glimpse into Paul's focus and faith once again: he is a man on mission to stand before the ruler of the land to give an account of King Jesus.

To think through the main ideas in the sermon and prepare for your discussion together, we invite you to look over the questions below and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. What book or story has had the biggest impact on you (aside from the Bible)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Is it possible to be both strong *and* submissive? Give an example of something or someone with that quality.

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
    - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
    - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
    - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
  
  - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What part of the sermon this week had an impact on the way you view the circumstances you find yourself in today?
  
- 2) Read Matthew 10:16-20 as Jesus explains what awaits those who are sent out in His name. **How** have you seen Paul respond in the way Jesus instructs his followers?

Based on what Jesus said in verse 19-20, what can we assume about Paul's speech and conduct?

Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit giving you words and wisdom to stand up for or share about your faith? Share about that in your group.

- 3) Throughout the book of Acts, Paul has articulated the purpose of his mission (as seen in Acts 19:21; 20:22-24; 23:11). In our passage this week, he again shows that comfort and ease are not his goal, but faithfulness to the call of God to proclaim the gospel to Caesar most certainly is. **What are some possible reasons for Paul to spend so much of his ministry waiting in a jail cell?**

Paul's apparent defeat (imprisonment) by the rulers of the world were instead used by God to expand His kingdom. **How have you seen God use a delay or defeat in your own life to cause refinement of your purpose or to expand His kingdom?**

If you're in a season of waiting right now, what might God be asking you to patiently pursue?

- 4) Just a few years before this ordeal, Paul wrote an encouragement to the church in Corinth. Read his words in 2 Corinthians 6:4-10. **What are the qualities that mark those who “in everything have commended” themselves as servants of God?**

**Based on that, how would you summarize Paul’s view of suffering?**

**Help each other identify one or two practical ways you can begin to view suffering as Paul did.**  
(Hint: the Personal Spiritual Exercises we give each week might give you some ideas.)

### **Prayer** *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

### **Personal Spiritual Exercises**

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Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves – mind, body, spirit – we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts. **Next week in your Life Group, take a few moments to share how either of these exercises may have changed your outlook on your daily life.**

**Soaking In The Word** – to listen, feel, experience the Words washing over you. For most of us, learning is the goal when we read scripture, but in this context, we simply want to hear what God is saying.

**Exercise 1:** Philippians 1:12-20 records some of the benefits Paul has received by living on mission. Read those verses simply to hear the passion and praise that flows from the Holy Spirit in this account.

**Exercise 2:** Read Psalm 24 (or listen on a Bible app if you have one) for 5 days in a row, perhaps from different versions. Make notes about what you hear in the words each time you listen. Do you notice any patterns or repeated themes?