

WEEKLY GAME PLAN

God Is Always Doing More

Read Acts 23:1-3 NIV

Context: Paul grew up knowing that he was a Jewish Pharisee born as a Roman citizen. Now, as an adult, he also knew he was saved by the blood of Jesus. He may have been standing before the Sanhedrin, trying to justify his own life, but he was not going to be mistreated in front of this crowd. He knew his rights and he was going to take full advantage of them. God knew exactly what He was doing when He chose Paul to be His mouthpiece to the Sanhedrin and then to Caesar.

Reflection Question: What is it about you that makes you uniquely qualified to speak to the people God has placed in your life? What experiences have you gone through, what background do you have, that will help you connect with those around you?

Read Acts 23:4-5 NIV, 1 Corinthians 4:12-13 NLT

Context: Paul realized that he had sinned, not just against the high priest, but against God. Paul referenced God's command in Exodus not to insult your rulers. He did not apologize to the priest directly. We can be *in* the right, but be wrong in how we express ourselves. God holds us to a higher standard, because we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit.

Reflection Question: What can you do to be without sin when you are being mistreated? How can you keep from losing your temper and lashing out at the person who is mistreating you?

Read Philippians 2:12 NIV, James 5:16 NLT

Context: Paul was quick to repent when he was shown the error of his ways. He later states that we need to "continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling." This is an ongoing process. We will never be "done" this side of heaven, but it's our responsibility to want the Spirit to change us to be more like Christ.

Reflection Question: How can you get in the habit of confessing your sin as soon as you do it? What keeps you from confessing sin to others/to God? Knowing God wants that close relationship with you, what will you do this week to confess your sin early?

Read Acts 23:6-9 NIV

Context: People won't always know what to make of you when you follow Jesus wholeheartedly. They may misunderstand you. They may accuse you. And because you cannot live out this life perfectly, they may call you a hypocrite. But Christ wants us to be concerned about what He wants from us and what He is calling us to do.

Reflection Question: When have you been misunderstood when you were trying to do the right thing? How did things work out if you tried to defend yourself?

Read Acts 23:10-11 NIV, Acts 9:15, Acts 1:8 NLT, Acts 19:21 ESV, Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Context: We can sometimes read verses like Acts 23:11 and think that just happens to people like Paul. Jesus doesn't actually come and stand near to *us*. But He does. Jesus is near to the broken-hearted. He hears us when we cry out to Him and He comforts us. We have to take courage when we tell others of Him because the enemy will try to fight us at every stage. He does not want us to have the courage to share with others what God has done for us. He wants lies and comfort to keep us scared and quiet. So the Lord stands near us and says, "Take courage!" He has a good plan for you and He will be with you through it until the very successful end.

Reflection Question: Just knowing that the Lord is standing near you this week, what will you do that you have been putting off doing for Him? Who is God showing you that He wants you to talk to, to start that relationship with?

End in prayer. The Lord is near you and He wants to do more with your life.