

BOOK OF ACTS // WEEK 33

Mike Drummond - 5/19/24

GROWING TOGETHER

Talk about a time when you felt unfairly judged and had to rely on God for your strength and words.

And/or

If someone were to document the history of your missionary journey, what might that story look like? Have you ever considered that you are on a “missionary journey” in this life?

GROWING WITH GOD

Read [Acts 25:23-27](#), [Acts 26:1-3, 13-16, 19, 22-29](#), [Acts 9:15](#), [1 Corinthians 15:6](#), [Isaiah 52:14](#), [Isaiah 53:2, 4-5, 7, 10-12](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions) This week’s BIG Idea: True power and significance come not from earthly status or authority but from steadfast faith in Jesus Christ and the courage to witness for Him, even in the face of opposition and societal pressures..

This week’s BIG Idea: *True power and significance come not from earthly status or authority but from steadfast faith in Jesus Christ and the courage to witness for Him, even in the face of opposition and societal pressures..*

Paul was stuck in prison for two years because he wouldn’t bribe Governor Felix to get out, he wouldn’t compromise himself. Instead, Paul spoke to Governor Felix about living right, having self control, and the coming judgment for everyone who doesn’t know Jesus.

- **How does Paul’s story challenge or inspire you when you’re tempted to take the easy way out?**
- **What things can we do to help each other and/or ourselves stick to our values, even when it’s tough?**

In the sermon, we learned about Paul’s trial before Governor Festus and King Agrippa. It wasn’t just a simple meeting; Acts 25:23 tells us it was a grand event with lots of important people trying to show off their power and authority. They made a big show of it bringing in military leaders and prominent men to make Paul look small and weak in comparison. Despite this, Paul stood firm in his faith.

- **Talk about a time you felt outnumbered or intimidated because of your faith or values?**
- **How did you handle it, and what can we learn from Paul’s example to support each other in similar situations?**
- **Did you have to remind yourself that Jesus stood with you or did you already know?**

In the sermon, we talked about how Paul was given a chance to defend himself before King Agrippa. Instead of being bitter or fearful, Paul respectfully addressed the king and expressed that he felt fortunate to be able to speak. He wasn't just trying to secure his freedom; he was genuinely eager to share his story and defend the truth.

- Have you ever had an opportunity to share your faith or beliefs in a difficult or unexpected setting?

- As Christians, how can we emulate Paul's example when speaking to non-believers and those who may not agree with us or have never heard the Gospel?

- How did you approach it, and what can we learn from Paul's respectful attitude in such moments?

In the sermon, Pastor Mike reflected on how Paul's opportunity to defend his faith before King Agrippa and the gathered elites was a fulfillment of God's promise and calling. When Paul first encountered Jesus as he was approaching Damascus, Luke tells us in Acts 9:15 that Jesus told him "This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel" Despite his past as a persecutor of Christians, Paul embraced this calling and found joy in fulfilling God's purpose for his life.

- Have you ever experienced a moment when you felt you were exactly where God wanted you to be?

- How did that assurance impact your actions and feelings at the time?

Pastor Mike reminded us of Jesus' statement to Paul in Acts 26:14, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." This phrase held a profound meaning in Paul's time. Goads were spiked plates used to direct oxen; when oxen resisted, they hurt themselves more. Paul saw this as a metaphor for resisting God's guidance, recognizing it in the testimony of Stephen prior to his stoning at the end of Acts 7, and the emptiness of his reliance of legalism when he was a Pharisee.

- Reflecting on the concept of "kicking against the goads," can you recall a time in your life when you resisted God's guidance or discipline?

- What were the circumstances, and what led you to resist?

- Looking back, how did you eventually come to accept God's direction, and what did you learn from that experience?

The Greek word used to describe Paul's new role as a servant in Acts 26:16 by Jesus is the term "servant" which is translated from "minister," but the Greek word for minister is "Huperetes" (Hoop-ay-ret-ace), meaning "under-oarsman." These were the individuals in the ship's bottom who rowed under the captain's direction, without determining the ship's course. Paul realized he was no longer in control but surrendered to follow Jesus fully. Now, considering this metaphor of being an "under-oarsman" for Jesus,

- How does that term challenge our understanding of control and submission to God in our lives today?

- Identify some ways we can apply this concept to our relationship with Jesus who was and is the ultimate Huperetes (under-oarsman)?

GROWING IN OBEDIENCE & SCRIPTURE

Personal Reflection and Commitment:

- Take time this week for personal reflection on your own journey of faith. Consider moments when you might have resisted God's direction or discipline, akin to "kicking against the goads." Reflect on how you can more fully submit to God's will and direction in your life.
- Life Group Leader: Consider pairing up group members to share their reflections and commitments with each other during the week, fostering a sense of accountability and mutual support in their spiritual growth.

Sharing the Gospel Boldly:

- Just as Paul boldly proclaimed the truth of the Gospel before King Agrippa and Governor Festus, commit to sharing the message of Jesus with those around you, regardless of their response. Recognize that the truth of the Gospel may challenge others, but remain steadfast in presenting it with love and conviction.
- Life Group Leader: Consider organizing community service projects or evangelistic events where members can practice sharing their faith in a supportive environment.

Seeking Truth and Reason in Faith:

- Challenge yourself to seek deeper understanding of biblical truths, the historical evidence for Jesus' life and resurrection, and the philosophical foundations of faith. Allow your faith to be grounded in both conviction and reason.
- Life Group Leader: Consider creating a shared reading list and discuss insights during group meetings.

GROWING IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP

This week's song list if you'd like to worship with your group.

- [This Is Our God](#)
- [Bless God](#)
- [Same God](#)
- [Lord Send Revival](#)

GROWING WITH CATALYST PEOPLE

Be sure to follow Catalyst Church on all the major social media platforms for the latest information and words of encouragement.



