

The
New
Testament
in a Year

Week 10
Acts 22-26

*This week's reflector is
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with Melville United Church in Fergus.*

General Questions for Reflection

You might pick one part of each chapter and think about these questions.

- What does this tell me about God (including Jesus and the Holy Spirit)?
- What does this tell me about our world?
- What does it tell me about me?
- What does it say about following Jesus?
- Is there something here I'd like to learn more about?

Why not use these thoughts to shape your prayer today.

Monday

Acts 22

The Roman Commander at Jerusalem following a near riot at the Temple grants the Apostle Paul the right to speak to his fellow Jews. Paul's words initially quiet the crowd, but when he speaks of his divine commission to preach to the Gentiles (vs. 21) the crowd once again turns violent.

Note: Paul addresses the crowd in Hebrew. He could have spoken in the more cultured Greek and impressed his hearers; instead he speaks the common dialect.

Do we sometimes try to impress people with our words rather than speak the truth in plain love and plain language?

Tuesday

Acts 23

Dual citizenship has its privileges. Our past can often act as good fodder for the future work in Christ's name. This true for Paul and ourselves. *Where might this be true for you today?*

Like any good reformer Paul uses his speech before the Council (the Sanhedrin) to state his cause (resurrection) rather than answer charges against him. The plot against Paul reads like our Lord's!

Wednesday

Acts 24

Paul once again defends himself against charges he is defiling his Jewishness. He again appeals to the resurrection as defence.

The Roman Governor prefigures those in years to come who seek monetary gain in their faith.

Paul never sets aside the hardest parts of the faith to appeal to his accusers.

Are we apt to shun parts of our beliefs when others ridicule or persecute?

Thursday

Acts 25

Paul judiciously appeals to Rome and narrowly escapes a plot to kill him in Jerusalem. God's servant will live to speak another day.

Is discretion the better part of valour? *"The people of this world are wiser than the people of the light."* Is there a time when prudence is called for in our witness?

Friday

Acts 26

Proceedings have a "kangaroo court" air about them: Paul speaks to Festus, Paul appeals to Rome, Festus appeals to Agrippa, Agrippa to Rome.

Perhaps what Luke wants us to understand is the essential quality of Paul's testimony – that he shall carry Jesus' name before "the Gentiles and Kings." (9:15)

When opportunity presents itself, Paul shares his most vivid experiences of God. *How can your experience of God inform your witness in a way that brings new life in the present? What in your life that is well worth repeating?*

One of the earliest uses of the word 'Christian' (vs. 28) in the NT. And it comes from an outsider!