

Name: _____

Date: _____

PAUL IN JERUSALEM AND CAESAREA

“For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.” (Acts 22:15)

Objectives

<i>Knowledge of God’s Will</i>	God gave us the important commission to preach the gospel and defend the truth.
<i>Knowledge of God</i>	God is our living hope.
<i>Good Work</i>	Prepare ourselves to defend the truth by sharpening the tools we have received from God.

A. Paul Is Persecuted in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17–36)

Paul knew that danger and possibly death awaited him in Jerusalem, but that did not stop him from returning. His expectations were fully realized; Paul was dragged from the temple and beaten by the Jews before being arrested by a Roman commander. This was not the first time Paul had been beaten or arrested for preaching, nor was it his last. The Bible tells us, “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:10).

B. Paul Defends the Gospel

1. Before the Jews (Acts 21:37–22:29)
2. Before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30–23:10)
3. Before Felix (Acts 23:11–24:27)
4. Before Festus (Acts 25:1–12)
5. Before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 25:13–26:32)

In each defense, Paul recounted his personal testimony, a major turning point in his life. Its impact led him to hold on to God’s commission firmly, even years after his calling. Paul also defended the gospel by drawing upon his wealth of knowledge and speaking with wisdom. Paul spoke with strength, courage, power, and authority because he not only had knowledge of the Scriptures and the world around him, but also because he had the power of the Holy Spirit.

Life Application: Defending the Truth

In order to defend the gospel as God has called us, it is crucial that we have a firm conviction in our beliefs, and that we understand what it is we believe in. Paul used four tools to defend the gospel:

1. **Personal testimony** – For the opening of each defense, Paul recalled his life before his conversion, God’s calling at Damascus, and the commission given to him by God. Personal testimonies such as these are powerful because they are your own experiences that none can deny.
2. **Knowledge of his audience** – Paul purposely spoke in a way that he knew would connect with the audience. When speaking to the Jews, he spoke in Hebrew. When speaking to political leaders, Paul drew upon his knowledge of them in relation to his defense.
3. **Knowledge of the Scriptures** – As a Pharisee, Paul was well versed in the Scriptures, and he cited this knowledge in his defense before the Sanhedrin and the Jews.
4. **Familiarity with the ways of the world** – Paul knew his rights as a Roman citizen. But more importantly, he knew to use these rights to his advantage.

