

The Church on Mission: Spirit-led Hope in the Resurrection **Acts 23:1-24**

Acts 20:23-24 "...the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city ...imprisonment and afflictions await me... I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God."

John Bunyan wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress* from a prison in Bedford, England.

Martin Luther translated the New Testament into German while hiding in the virtual prison of the Wartburg Castle in Germany.

Martin Luther King Jr. wrote *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, from a jail cell in Alabama.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) chose to join others in prison instead of hiding. He said, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

"I, the preacher...beg to bear my little witness that the worst days I have ever had have turned out to be my best days! And when God has seemed most cruel to me, He has, then, been most kind! ... I am sure that in pain and affliction, the richest, most tender love has been manifested towards me."

"I cannot believe my brother gets all the breaks. He sleeps with whomever he wants, buys whatever he wants and usually doesn't pay for it. He always lands on his feet and I cannot catch a break."
(Church attender)

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I. Resurrection Hope. (Acts 23:1-10)

Relational Wisdom and Sharing our Hope:

1. Christ-like life. (Acts 23:1)

"We're Singing Holy" by: Chris Tomlin

Everything changes here in Your presence
Nothing can stand before Your majesty
So be magnified until earth looks like heaven
Jesus, shine brighter, until the whole world sings

2. Truthful. (Acts 23:2-4)

3. Relationally Respectful and Wise. (Acts 23:5)

4. Purposeful. (Acts 23:6)

5. Gospel Focused. (Acts 23:6)

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II. Resurrection Presence. (Acts 23:11)

Two great fears of life: Loss and Rejection

Matthew 10:28 - "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

III. Resurrection Perseverance. (Acts 23:12-24)

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Discussion Questions for This Week

1. What good has or could come from God's people being in prison?
2. What are some ways in our daily lives we can show the reality of the resurrection to others?
3. Why do you think the hope-filled message of Jesus' resurrection causes such division in the world?
4. Discuss the quote by Robert Smith Jr. "*We don't need a prosperity gospel. We need an adversity gospel.*" Then read Mark 10:45 and Luke 14:33.
5. In what ways is God using you to influence the lives of others in this season of life? What do you hope He does in the future before you go home?
6. Read about the resurrection and use these truths to encourage one another and pray. (John 11:25-26, Acts 4:33, Romans 6:8-11, 8:17, 34, 1 Peter 1:3, 2 Corinthians 5:6-9,17, Colossians 1:13-14, and 1 John 3:2.)