

***Stay at Home  
Bible Study--  
ACTS: The  
Beginning of  
Christianity***

**Session Forty-one  
6/1/2020**

**Acts 23:1-10**

Hey Christ Church!

Welcome to June! My prayer is that we will see great changes in the COVID-19 battle during this month. I pray that we will be able to get back to some sense of normal and will not have to wear the masks much longer! (Personally, I don't like those things! They are too hot!) The task force for re-opening the building will keep working to make the steps go smoothly. As your pastor, I would be heartbroken if any of you got sick from visiting one of the buildings.

But, with all that said. I believe in a great big God who is not only our redeemer, but our protector as well. I believe that God's hand of protection is upon us and will continue as long as we seek to follow Him. Please pray for me and my servant/leadership as we go through this month of trying to discern God's will for us. Pray that Christ UMC will be stronger than ever before as the Lord leads us out of this thing!

**Stay Safe, Pray Always and Press On!  
In Christ's Greater Love,  
Roger**

## **SESSION FORTY-ONE**

**6/1/2020**

### **Acts 23:1-10**

*Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, “My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day.”<sup>2</sup> At this the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near Paul to strike him on the mouth.<sup>3</sup> Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!”*

*<sup>4</sup> Those who were standing near Paul said, “How dare you insult God’s high priest!”*

*<sup>5</sup> Paul replied, “Brothers, I did not realize that he was the high priest; for it is written: ‘Do not speak evil about the ruler of your people.’”*

*<sup>6</sup> Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, “My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead.”<sup>7</sup> When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.<sup>8</sup> (The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees believe all these things.)*

*<sup>9</sup> There was a great uproar, and some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously. “We find nothing wrong with this man,” they said. “What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?”*

*<sup>10</sup> The dispute became so violent that the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them. He ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks.*

1) Paul is brought before the Sanhedrin, the ruling Council of the Jews. Notice that Paul’s approach before the Council was not subtle. He did his best to upset things from the beginning. First, he began by calling them “Brothers” or “friends.” The insinuation was that he was on the same level as the Council members. (A normal beginning when addressing the Council can be seen in Acts 4:8, “Rulers of the people and elders...”). Why do you suppose Paul began that way?

2) When the high priest ordered Paul to be struck, he was breaking the law about striking another Israelite. Paul is quick to point this out and calls the high priest something that could actually be considered a white washed tomb! He then claims that he did not know that Ananias was the high priest. What do you suppose is going on here?

- a) Paul actually did not know that Ananias was the high priest.
- b) Paul had gone absolutely crazy at this point.
- c) Paul knew very well who the high priest was and was making a point like, "I did not think that such a corrupt man could be the high priest of Israel."
- d) Paul was just angry and did not know what he was saying.
- e) Other \_\_\_\_\_.

3) Verses 6 through 10 show that Paul sure knew how to stir things up! In your own words, describe the controversy that Paul began between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. What did the Sadducees believe and what did the Pharisees believe?

4) The friction between the two leading parties was very evident. It is interesting that it was the Roman commander that came in to save Paul from being torn into pieces!

6) If Paul would have known that standing up for his commitment to Jesus Christ would cause all the fuss that you read about in this chapter, would he have still done it?

#### FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

7) How about you? If your standing up for your belief in Jesus would cause such a stir, would you do it?

8) Paul had this commitment to Christ that led to his unconditional availability to God. Think about your own life. What would have to change for you to have that kind of commitment to Christ?

9) Pray that God will give you the courage to stand up for your belief in Jesus, even in times of persecution.