

June 30, 2024



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Class Leader:

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In Memory of Pat Hester

Fearless Witness Acts 26:1-11

Lesson Background and Key Verse

From Enemy to Defender

The book of Acts relates one of the most significant mindset changes made by an individual throughout history. That change involved a man named Saul, who was a deadly enemy of Christianity at first (Acts 7:60b-8:3). But after an encounter with the risen Lord, Saul became Christianity's chief proponent. The specifics of how the change came about are recorded in Acts 9:1-19; 22:3-21; and 26:12-18. Today's lesson is the preface to the third of these accounts.

Saul was converted to Christianity in about AD 34. He subsequently traveled around the Mediterranean world on three missionary journeys, as recounted in Acts 12:25-14:28; 15:36-18:22; and 18:23-21:9. Perhaps desiring to leave his old identity in the past, Saul became known as Paul early in these journeys (13:9). Shortly after the third journey ended in Caesarea Maritima, Paul traveled down to Jerusalem. There he was sighted by enemies who incited a riot to silence him (21:17-29). Paul's subsequent arrest undoubtedly saved his life (21:30-36). The year was probably AD 58.

After another riot or near-riot, Paul used his Roman citizenship to avoid being flogged (Acts 22:22-29). An inquest and a murder plot ensued (22:30-23:22), so Paul was transferred under heavy guard to Caesarea Maritima, about 75 miles road distance from Jerusalem, for trial under Governor Felix (23:23-24:26). That trial was inconclusive, and Paul was held in prison for two years until Governor Festus replaced Felix (24:27).

That change in leadership resulted in another trial (Acts 25:1-9), Paul's appeal to Caesar (25:10-12), high-level consultation (25:13-22), and appearance before King Agrippa II (25:23-27). That's the immediate backdrop to today's lesson; the year was about AD 60

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The Gospel is too good not to share.

COMMENT OF THE WEEK:

During court proceedings, witnesses are more than onlookers or spectators. They are active participants who help determine the outcome of a case. The same is true of our witness for Christ.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

(John 1:7 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread," May 09, 2017)

Series: Hope in the Lord

UNIT 1: Experiencing Hope

NEXT WEEK

No class next week.
Joint Service at 10:30 AM.

Key Verse: Acts 26:6

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

Witness through being Allowed to Speak (Acts 26:1-4)

Witness allowed to respond about self (1-2)

About self to tell about our faith (2 Cor 13:5)

About self to reveal how we had to consider our ways (Ps 119:59)

About self that reveals the returning to the Lord (Lam 3:40)

About self to reveal how we had to judge our actions (1 Cor 11:31)

About self to reveal how we haven't fallen short of God's promises (Heb 4:1)

Witness allowed using patience (3)

Patience because it is one of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)

Patience because it allows us to bear with others (Col 3:12-13)

Patience because it is one of the elements of love (1 Cor 13:4-8)

Patience because it is commanded (Eph 4:2)

Patience because it keeps us from grumbling with others (James 5:7-9)

Witness allowed to respond about past (4)

The past should be passed on to the next generation (Ps 78:1-6)

The past teaches us about hope (Rom 15:4)

The past helps us run the race with perseverance (Heb 12:1)

The godly past should be followed (Acts 3:22-24)

Witness about Accusations (Acts 26:5-8)

Accusations about beliefs (5)

About belief in the promises of God (Rom 4:20-21)

About belief because of ignorance (1 Tim 1:13)

About belief because of weaknesses (2 Cor 12:10)

About belief in strength from the Lord (Eph 6:10)

Accusations about God's promises (6-7)

Accusations that God's promises cannot be trusted through faith (Rom 4:3-5)

Accusations that God's promises cannot be trusted through obedience (Heb 11:8-9)

Accusations that faith and action working together doesn't matter (James 2:20-24)

Accusations that God's promises cannot be trusted about His eternal presence (2 Cor 4:13-14)

Accusations using God's empowerment (8)

About empowerment through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19-22)

About empowerment through God's gifts (1 Peter 4:10)

About empowerment through prophetic messages (1 Tim 4:14)

About empowerment through God's power (1 Cor 2:3-5)

About empowerment through God's grace (2 Cor 12:8-10)

Witness about Past Sins (Acts 26:9-11)

Sins against God and Jesus (9)

Against God and Jesus through godlessness and wickedness (Rom 1:18)

Against God and Jesus through worshiping and serving idols (1 Thess 1:8-10)

Against God and Jesus through rejecting Jesus (John 3:36)

Against God and Jesus through being alienated from God (Col 1:21-22)

Sins against fellow Christians (10)

Against others through greed (Neh 5:7)

Against others through deception (Jer 34:9-11)

Against others through not forgiving (Matt 18:28)

Against others through not being merciful (James 2:13)

Sins of persecutions (11)

Persecutions of imprisonment and hardships (Acts 20:23-24)

Persecutions through making a spectacle (1 Cor 4:9-11)

Persecutions through pressure and fear of life (2 Cor 1:8-11)

Persecutions through insults (Heb 10:33-34)