

Acts 26:1-23 (NIV)

Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.”

So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: ² “King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, ³ and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴ “The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. ⁵ They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. ⁶ And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. ⁷ This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. ⁸ Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

⁹ “I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹ Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them.

¹² “On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³ About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’

¹⁵ “Then I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

“ ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied. ¹⁶ ‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they

may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

¹⁹ "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰ First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. ²¹ That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. ²² But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— ²³ that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles."

BIG IDEA:

We can't offer hope in _____
until our hope in Jesus' _____
grounds our _____.

Gets us out of the _____. (vvs. 5-11)

- Sin is more than bad _____.
- Sin is a _____ condition. (Romans 3:19-20; 10:2-4)

Opens our eyes to the _____. (vvs. 12-15) [cf. Exodus 33:20; 1 Timothy 6:15-16]

- _____ is the _____ of _____ (John 8:1; 14:9)
- _____ Jesus ≠ _____ Jesus

Gives us a _____ to share the _____ with others. (vvs. 16-18)

- Motivation and energy for _____ comes from a changed life. (Ephesians 5:8-10)