



Treasuring God's Word



Dec. 1- 4, 2011

► **Thursday, December 1, 2011**

Read: Acts 17:22-34

Paul is such a masterful evangelist. He draws upon something his hearers will recognize (verses 22-23) and uses it to proclaim the Gospel of Christ Jesus. Note that Paul simply tells the truth about Jesus; he trusts the Holy Spirit to change the hearts of his hearers. ***Prayer starter: Ask the Lord to bless the Apple of His Eye ministry and outreach to Jewish people, based in St. Louis, Missouri.***

► **Friday, December 2, 2011**

Read: Acts 18:1-17

Was Paul worried for his life? Was he afraid that he was just wasting time in Corinth? Note how the Lord came to and encouraged his missionary to the Gentiles in verse 9. Now read Romans 8:31. ***Prayer starter: Take time today to thank God for good friends who love, support and care for you.***

► **Saturday, December 3, 2011**

Read: Acts 18:18-22

A short reading today but containing something that you can think and pray about all weekend. See again verse 21. Paul had completely turned himself and his plans over to the Lord's will. How about you? ***Prayer starter: Do you struggle with praying "Thy will be done, O Lord?" Pray for a stronger faith that puts God and His agenda first and your own agenda for your life in second place.***

► **Sunday, December 4, 2011**

In preparation for worship

Read Psalm 52



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Dec. 5 - 11, 2011

► **Monday, December 5, 2011**

Read: Acts 18:23-28

A new name is introduced in this reading: Apollos. He is a Jewish man from Egypt who became a Christian and, later, a teacher of doctrine. The apostle Paul mentions Apollos several times in 1 Corinthians. Some have speculated that he is the author of the Letter to the Hebrews. **Prayer starter: Give thanks for those in the church – both pastors and lay people – who teach the Word of God.**

► **Tuesday, December 6, 2011**

Read: Acts 19:1-10

Remember that baptism applies the accomplishments of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection to us so that we are saved. Baptism's benefits are forgiveness of sins, being rescued from death and the devil and receiving eternal salvation. **Prayer starter: Do you know the date of your baptism? Offer thanks to God for this means of grace that has brought you into God's kingdom.**

► **Wednesday, December 7, 2011**

Read: Acts 19:11-22

Read verse 11 again. Interesting – we have no record in the New Testament of Paul doing this kind of miraculous ministry except in Ephesus. It would seem that there was a need for this kind of ministry there and so the Holy Spirit empowered Paul to do this healing work. **Prayer starter: Do you know someone who is serving as a caregiver? Pray for those who give of themselves in order to help others.**

► **Thursday, December 8, 2011**

Read: Acts 19:23-41

Life with the apostle Paul is never dull, is it? The people of Ephesus were mighty proud of their temple – it was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. **Prayer starter: Turn to Psalm 121 and use it as your prayer for this day.**

► **Friday, December 9, 2011**

Read: Acts 20:1-12

Even Paul had people fall asleep during his sermons! Again, the Holy Spirit empowered Paul to restore young Eutychus and to give him back his life (bet Eutychus never took another nap while seated in a third story window!). **Prayer starter: Pray today for the President of the LCMS, a wonderful preacher, teacher and theologian, Rev. Matthew Harrison.**

► **Saturday, December 10, 2011**

Read: Acts 20:13-38

Interestingly, the Spirit that was warning Paul about possible trouble and hardship was also compelling him to continue to travel. In this as in all things, Paul trusted that God would lead and guide him in all things. **Prayer starter: Pray today for Pastor Spicer, Pastor Darling, Pastor Pope and Pastor Haak that the Lord would bless their ministries to His people.**

► **Sunday, December 11, 2011**

In preparation for worship

Read Psalm 55



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Dec. 12- 18, 2011

► **Monday, December 12, 2011**

Read: Acts 21:1-16

Even Luke and other travelers begged Paul to stay away from Jerusalem. But Paul was determined to deliver the collection taken by the Gentile churches, even if it meant harm to him. His faith was firmly placed in the Lord. *Prayer starter: As you offer your petitions to the Lord, end each one with the words, "Your will be done, O Lord."*

► **Tuesday, December 13, 2011**

Read: Acts 21:17-40

Just as Agabus had prophesied, Paul was bound and arrested. See verse 27 – this is the same group who opposed Paul (see 13:45; 14:2; 14:19; 17:5; 17:13). *Prayer starter: Ask the Lord to protect missionaries who serve the Lord all over the world from danger and harm.*

► **Wednesday, December 14, 2011**

Read: Acts 22:1-21

Some folks might find themselves speechless after being arrested. Not Paul! He uses this incident to give his testimony to the crowd that has gathered. *Prayer starter: Witnessing is nothing more than telling what God has done in your life. Look for an opportunity to share God's work in you with another person.*

► **Thursday, December 15, 2011**

Read: Acts 22:22-30

The commander assumed that he was dealing with an alien who was a subject of the Roman Empire but not a citizen. That Paul had been taken into custody in this way meant that his civil rights had been violated. *Prayer starter: Pray today for law enforcement officers that they do their work fairly and honestly while being protected by the Lord from evil.*

► **Friday, December 16, 2011**

Read: Acts 23:1-11

The tension scale is on the rise. Many Jewish religious leaders would like to be rid of Paul. Notice how the Lord Himself appears before Paul to minister to and to encourage His missionary. *Prayer starter: Who do you know who is undergoing some kind of persecution. Pray for them today and then look for an opportunity to encourage them.*

► **Saturday, December 17, 2011**

Read: Acts 23:12-22

Luke describes for you in this reading the plot to assassinate Paul. The commander takes the threat seriously, assigning 470 men to guard one man. *Prayer starter: Tomorrow brings us to the final Sunday in Advent. Pray that the Lord will continue to prepare your heart to receive Jesus when He comes again in His mighty power.*

► **Sunday, December 18, 2011**

In preparation for worship

Read Psalm 56



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Dec. 19-25, 2011

► **Monday, December 19, 2011**

Read: Acts 23:23-35

Claudius Lysias doesn't seem to be telling the whole truth. Remember that Paul was bound with chains and later was flogged and questioned. Only then did Claudius learn through the centurion that Paul was a Roman citizen. Paul is now in a strange position – he's not been charged with a crime but is being remanded to a higher authority. **Prayer starter: Pray for those around the world who are in prison or begin persecuted because of their witness for Christ.**

► **Tuesday, December 20, 2011**

Read: Acts 24:1-16

Notice Paul's brave confession of faith – here he is in a hostile setting but still he gladly acknowledges being a follower of *the way*, Christ Jesus. **Prayer starter: Give thanks to the Lord for the hope of salvation that is yours through faith in Jesus.**

► **Wednesday, December 21, 2011**

Read: Acts 24:17-27

Felix was willing to hear Paul tell about Jesus. But Felix wasn't really interested in learning how faith in Jesus brings peace and salvation. Meanwhile, Paul languished in prison. **Prayer starter: Do you know someone like Felix who is waiting for a "convenient" time to hear about Jesus? Pray for that person today.**

► **Thursday, December 22, 2011**

Read: Acts 25:1-12

Verse 7 tells us that many charges were brought against Paul but none that could not be proved. His only offense was that he claimed and proclaimed Christ in a world that was hostile to the Lord. **Prayer starter: Have you invited someone to Christmas Eve or Christmas Day worship? Pray for an opportunity to make that invitation.**

► **Friday, December 23, 2011**

Read: Acts 25:13-22

Interesting, isn't it? Festus, like Gallio (18:14) & Lysias (23:29) can find no crime to charge against Paul. Festus tried to curry favor with the Jewish leaders but realizes that he has no authority to investigate Jewish religious practices. King Agrippa gets the next crack at Paul. **Prayer starter: Pray for our Sunday School children, Choir and Bells as they prepare to bless us at worship tomorrow evening.**

► **Saturday, December 24, 2011**

Read: Acts 25:23-27

Take a look at Luke 21:12-15. Jesus predicted this His followers might encounter situations like the one Paul is in. **Prayer starter: Ask the Lord to bless our three Christmas Eve services tonight. "Christ the Savior is born!"**

► **Sunday, December 25, 2011**

Merry Christmas!

*Joy to the World! The Lord has come!
O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*





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Dec. 26, 2011 – Jan. 1, 2012

► **Monday, December 26, 2011**

Read: Acts 26:1-18

It would be intimidating to step up and speak to someone as powerful as King Agrippa. Perhaps Paul knew Jesus' promise in **Luke 21:12-15**. Notice how Jesus stands at the center of Paul's personal testimony. *Prayer starter: Praise the Lord for the joy of celebrating the Nativity of the Christ child.*

► **Tuesday, December 27, 2011**

Read: Acts 26:19-32

Note Paul's attitude toward King Agrippa. The apostle greatly desires to tell the King about Jesus Christ. Agrippa resists him but Paul doesn't let that get him down. Paul understands that it is the Holy Spirit who converts unbelievers into disciples. Paul's job is to share the Gospel, the means through which the Holy Spirit works. *Prayer starter: Has a person rejected your invitation to hear the good news about Jesus? Keep praying!*

► **Wednesday, December 28, 2011**

Read: Acts 27:1-26

One man on the ship does not panic. Paul remains calm because the Lord had assured him that all aboard would survive for the sake of Paul's mission to Rome. *Prayer starter: Have you received an answer to a recent prayer? Give thanks to God for His grace and love.*

► **Thursday, December 29, 2011**

Read: Acts 27:27-44

Look at verse 43 again – even in a disaster like a shipwreck, God continues to look out for Paul's safety. *Prayer starter: Ask the Lord to send His holy angels to protect you as you travel each day.*

► **Friday, December 30, 2011**

Read: Acts 28:1-16

Even though he is a prisoner and always under guard, Paul still uses the gifts God has given him in order to minister to others. *Prayer starter: What gift do you have that you could put to good use at Life in Christ in 2012? Pray for the Lord's direction and guidance.*

► **Saturday, December 31, 2011**

Read: Acts 28:17-31

Notice that not everyone embraces Paul and his teachings. But that doesn't stop the apostle from firmly standing on the Word of God (verses 26-27). *Prayer starter: Do you need a New Year's Resolution? How about asking the Lord to help you develop a daily Bible reading schedule so that you can stand firmly on the Scriptures as Paul did.*

► **Sunday, January 1, 2012**

Happy New Year!

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

God's blessings and love to you in 2012!

A HAPPY
NEW YEAR