

# ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

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## Study 53: The witness Jesus stands by

**READ** Acts 22:30-23:11 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

Once again Paul finds himself defending Jesus Christ before a hostile Jewish opposition. To ascertain the reason for the riot that took place in the temple, the tribune, Claudius Lysias, brought Paul before the council of the Sanhedrin. In this narrative we are exposed to the human side of Paul, in his humble and wise approach to those who would unjustly condemn him to death. We also witness the comforting support of Jesus as His Lord who stands by Him and promises that “as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome” (23:11).

**Big idea:** The Lord stands by His witnesses whose conscience remains pure before God, whose attitude remains humble before others, and whose hope remains steadfast on Jesus.

### Questions:

1. A. What did Paul mean when he told the council that he had lived his “life before God in all good conscience up to this day” and why would he begin with this?  
  
B. Martin Luther, when tried for heresy, said, “I am bound by the texts of the Bible, my conscience is captive to the Word of God.” What did Luther mean and how important is Scripture to inform and guide our consciences?
2. What did Paul mean by calling Ananias, the high priest, a “whitewashed wall” and was he right in his assessment? See Ezek 13:10-16; Matt 23:27; Lev 19:15.

3. How should Paul have responded to Ananias? See Ex 22:28, Paul’s teaching in 1 Cor 4:12-13, and the example of Jesus in John 18:23 and 1 Pet 2:23.
4. How did Paul respond when informed of his error (vv. 4-5)? Why is it important for us to acknowledge our sins and ask forgiveness, even before our accusers? Do you find this a challenge?
5. A. Read Matt 10:16-18. Explain what Jesus meant for Christ’s witnesses to be “wise as serpents and innocent as doves”?  
  
B. How did Paul show wisdom and innocence before his accusers (vv. 6-10)?
6. What did Jesus do to encourage Paul (v. 11) and does this encourage you?
7. How can we experience Jesus’ reassuring presence on a daily basis?
8. What has been the main takeaway from this lesson and what will you do in response?

### STOP AND PRAY:

**Praise:** God for His mercy and grace in Christ toward under serving sinners

**Thank:** the Lord for his continual presence in your life, especially in times of hardship

**Pray:** that you might continue to inform your conscience through the Word of God