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BIBLIOGRAPHY for scripture references used in handbook

- English Standard Version (ESV) The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.
- New Living Translation (NLT) Holy Bible, New Living Translation, 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust

WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

For those who are new to the SCC lifestyle process, we study and meditate on the passage prior to it being preached, and then continue to sit in the same passage until our cell group meeting. Typically, our cell group meetings follow a few days after the Sunday service, which would conclude your “week” of SCC. The day after your cell group meeting you move to the next week and start reading the new passage.

START MEDITATING ON PASSAGE THE WEEK OF....	SCRIPTURE PASSAGE	CELEBRATION SERVICE
Week 1: Jan. 6-11	Romans 1-3	January 12
Week 2: Jan. 13-18	Acts 21:17-39	January 19
Week 3: Jan. 20-25	Acts 21:40-22:30	January 26
Week 4: Jan. 27-Feb. 1	Acts 23:1-22	February 2
Week 5: Feb. 3-8	Acts 23:23-24:27	February 9
Week 6: Feb. 10-15	Acts 25:1-22	February 16
Week 7: Feb. 17-22	Acts 25:23-26:11	February 23
Week 8: Feb. 24-29	Acts 26:12-32	March 1
Week 9: Mar. 2-7	Acts 27:1-44	March 8
Week 10: Mar. 9-14	Acts 28:1-16	March 15
Week 11: Mar. 16-21	Acts 28:17-31 IMPORTANT: REFLECTION WEEK	March 22

LHAC'S LIFESTYLE ESSENTIALS

The SCC lifestyle encourages us to grow in loving God more fully and loving our world in Christ's name.

LOVING GOD IN SOLITUDE is to retreat to a quiet place, in an attitude of surrender and trust, for an unhurried time of communion with God through His Word, prayer and other spiritual disciplines. Biblical basis: Josh. 1:8, 1 Tim. 4:7, Ps. 91:1, Matt. 6:5-6.

LOVING GOD IN CELL is to gather together, in an environment of love and trust, with a small group of believers who are growing in intimacy with God through the SCC lifestyle, in order to spur one another on to love God more fully through sharing, accountability and prayer. Biblical basis: Prov. 27:17, Heb. 10:24, 1 Thes. 5:11.

LOVING GOD IN CELEBRATION is to gather together as a church family on a weekly basis to worship God and delight in His presence; in song we express our love for Him and through the preaching of the Word we hear His voice. Biblical basis: Ps. 22:22, Heb. 10:25, Rom. 12:4-5.

THE PRACTICE OF “LOVING GOD IN SOLITUDE”

There are 4 key components in the practice of “Loving God In Solitude” that we encourage each person to do on a daily basis:

PRAY. Settle into God's presence by expressing to Him where you are right now. Ask Him to draw near to you as you draw near to Him.

The following is a suggestion. “Father, my desire is to draw near to You and commune with You during this time. Create in my heart and mind a quietness and rest. as I place on You my burdens and concerns, and confess my sins....

Protect this time from interruptions and distractions. Allow this to be more than a discipline, but an encounter with You where I delight in Your presence as You delight in me. Give me ears to hear Your voice as I read Your Word. Teach me, rebuke me, correct or train me so that I will be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16). Holy Spirit fill me with Yourself, refresh my soul and nourish my spirit. My heart's desire is to enjoy loving intimacy with You now and throughout my day. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.”

READ THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE MEDITATIVELY. Sink into the sermon-based scripture for a number of days, until you have plumbed the depths of it. Once you have plumbed its depths, move on to another bible passage (i.e. the complementary passage, or one of your own choosing) and sink into that for the remainder of the week.

- Study the passage of scripture to gain an understanding of the context of the passage and the key point(s) of truth taught in the passage.
- Listen for God's personal word to you through His written Word; attend to and linger over a word/phrase/verse that catches your attention.
- Practice listening prayer by waiting in a receptive posture of openness toward God, asking Him to show you how this word/phrase/verse connects with your life right now.
- Record what God is saying to you.

RESPOND TO GOD IN PRAYER. Allow your God-lead ponderings be a catalyst to prayer, talking to Him about what He has revealed to you. Take time to intercede for your accountability group members.

CONTINUE TO MEDITATE ON THIS WORD/PHRASE THROUGHOUT THE DAY. Allow God to further form, shape and apply these words in your life as you go into your day.

THE SCC WEEKLY PROCESS

WEEK 1

SOLITUDE: READ AND REFLECT ON ROMANS 1-3

SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

As God speaks to you through His Word write down what is impacting you, what He is saying to you personally and/or your response back to Him.

WEEK 1

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

We are introducing this as an option for those who are enjoying sinking into a small portion of Scripture weekly, but also want to see and understand the breadth of Scripture. If you participate in this, you will read the Bible through in 4 years, at a reasonable pace (i.e. 1 chapter per day for 6 days of the week) that will allow you to take time to prayerfully consider what God is saying to you.

- Psalm 40
- Psalm 41
- Psalm 42
- Psalm 43
- Psalm 44
- Psalm 45

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q2: What is God?

God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

WEEK 1
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 1
CELL GROUP MEETING:

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers in Aruba:
Vance and Wendy Sutherland

WEEK 2

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 21:17-39

English Standard Version (ESV)

¹⁷ When we had come to Jerusalem, ^(A)the brothers received us gladly. ¹⁸ On the following day Paul went in with us to ^(B)James, and all ^(C)the elders were present. ¹⁹ After greeting them, ^(D)he related one by one ^(E)the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ^(F)ministry. ²⁰ And when they heard it, they ^(G)glorified God. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed. They are all ^(H)zealous for the law, ²¹ and they have been told about you that you teach all ^(I)the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, ^(J)telling them ^(K)not to circumcise their children or ^(L)walk according to ^(M)our customs. ²² What then is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³ Do therefore what we tell you. We have four men ^(N)who are under a vow; ²⁴ take these men and ^(O)purify yourself along with them and pay their expenses, ^(P)so that they may shave their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself also live in observance of the law. ²⁵ But as for the Gentiles who have believed, ^(Q)we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, [a] and from sexual immorality.” ²⁶ Then Paul took the men, and the next day ^(R)he purified himself along with them and ^(S)went into the temple, giving notice when the days of purification would be fulfilled and ^(T)the offering presented for each one of them. ²⁷ When ^(U)the seven days were almost completed, ^(V)the Jews from Asia, ^(W)seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, ²⁸ crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who ^(X)is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and ^(Y)the law and ^(Z)this place. Moreover, he even brought Greeks into the temple and ^(AA)has defiled ^(AB)this holy place.” ²⁹ For they had previously seen ^(AC)Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. ³⁰ Then all the city was stirred up, and the people ran together. They seized Paul and

New Living Translation (NLT)

¹⁷ When we arrived, the brothers and sisters in Jerusalem welcomed us warmly.

¹⁸ The next day Paul went with us to meet with James, and all the elders of the Jerusalem church were present. ¹⁹ After greeting them, Paul gave a detailed account of the things God had accomplished among the Gentiles through his ministry.

²⁰ After hearing this, they praised God. And then they said, “You know, dear brother, how many thousands of Jews have also believed, and they all follow the law of Moses very seriously. ²¹ But the Jewish believers here in Jerusalem have been told that you are teaching all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn their backs on the laws of Moses. They’ve heard that you teach them not to circumcise their children or follow other Jewish customs. ²² What should we do? They will certainly hear that you have come.

²³ “Here’s what we want you to do. We have four men here who have completed their vow. ²⁴ Go with them to the Temple and join them in the purification ceremony, paying for them to have their heads ritually shaved. Then everyone will know that the rumors are all false and that you yourself observe the Jewish laws.

²⁵ “As for the Gentile believers, they should do what we already told them in a letter: They should abstain from eating food offered to idols, from consuming blood or the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality.”

²⁶ So Paul went to the Temple the next day with the other men. They had already started the purification ritual, so he publicly announced the date when their vows would end and sacrifices would be offered for each of them.

²⁷ The seven days were almost ended when some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the

(AD)dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. ³¹ (AE)And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of (AF)the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. ³² (AG)He at once took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³ Then the tribune came up and arrested him and ordered him (AH)to be bound (AI)with two chains. He inquired who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ (AJ)Some in the crowd were shouting one thing, some another. And as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into (AK)the barracks. ³⁵ And when he came to the steps, he was actually carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, ³⁶ for the mob of the people followed, crying out, (AL)“Away with him!” ³⁷ As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek? ³⁸ Are you not (AM)the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out (AN)into the wilderness?” ³⁹ Paul replied, (AO)“I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.”

Temple and roused a mob against him. They grabbed him, ²⁸ yelling, “Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who preaches against our people everywhere and tells everybody to disobey the Jewish laws. He speaks against the Temple—and even defiles this holy place by bringing in Gentiles.” ²⁹ (For earlier that day they had seen him in the city with Trophimus, a Gentile from Ephesus, and they assumed Paul had taken him into the Temple.)

³⁰ The whole city was rocked by these accusations, and a great riot followed. Paul was grabbed and dragged out of the Temple, and immediately the gates were closed behind him. ³¹ As they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ³² He immediately called out his soldiers and officers and ran down among the crowd. When the mob saw the commander and the troops coming, they stopped beating Paul.

³³ Then the commander arrested him and ordered him bound with two chains. He asked the crowd who he was and what he had done. ³⁴ Some shouted one thing and some another. Since he couldn't find out the truth in all the uproar and confusion, he ordered that Paul be taken to the fortress. ³⁵ As Paul reached the stairs, the mob grew so violent the soldiers had to lift him to their shoulders to protect him. ³⁶ And the crowd followed behind, shouting, “Kill him, kill him!” ³⁷ As Paul was about to be taken inside, he said to the commander, “May I have a word with you?” “Do you know Greek?” the commander asked, surprised. ³⁸ “Aren't you the Egyptian who led a rebellion some time ago and took 4,000 members of the Assassins out into the desert?”

³⁹ “No,” Paul replied, “I am a Jew and a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, which is an important city. Please, let me talk to these people.”

Cross references:

- A) Acts 21:17 : ver. 7; [ch. 15:4]
 B) Acts 21:18 : See ch. 12:17
 C) Acts 21:18 : See ch. 11:30
 D) Acts 21:19 : See ch. 14:27
 E) Acts 21:19 : [Rom. 15:18, 19]
 F) Acts 21:19 : See ch. 1:17
 G) Acts 21:20 : ch. 11:18
 H) Acts 21:20 : ch. 22:3; Rom. 10:2; Gal. 1:14
 I) Acts 21:21 : [James 1:1]
 J) Acts 21:21 : ver. 28
 K) Acts 21:21 : [Rom. 2:28, 29; 1 Cor. 7:19]
 L) Acts 21:21 : [Mark 7:5; Gal. 2:14]
 M) Acts 21:21 : ch. 6:14; 15:1
 N) Acts 21:23 : [ch. 18:18]
 O) Acts 21:24 : ver. 26; ch. 24:18; [John 11:55]
 P) Acts 21:24 : [See ver. 23 above]; [ch. 18:18]
 Q) Acts 21:25 : See ch. 15:19, 20, 29
 R) Acts 21:26 : [See ver. 24 above]; ver. 26; ch. 24:18; [John 11:55]
 S) Acts 21:26 : [Num. 6:13]
 T) Acts 21:26 : [Num. 6:9-12]
 U) Acts 21:27 : [See ver. 26 above]; [Num. 6:9-12]
 V) Acts 21:27 : See ch. 13:50
 W) Acts 21:27 : ch. 24:18; 26:21
 X) Acts 21:28 : ver. 21
 Y) Acts 21:28 : See ch. 6:13
 Z) Acts 21:28 : See ch. 6:13
 AA) Acts 21:28 : ch. 24:6
 AB) Acts 21:28 : See ch. 6:13
 AC) Acts 21:29 : ch. 20:4
 AD) Acts 21:30 : ch. 26:21; [2 Kgs. 11:15]
 AE) Acts 21:31 : [See ver. 30 above]; ch. 26:21; [2 Kgs. 11:15]
 AF) Acts 21:31 : See ch. 10:1
 AG) Acts 21:32 : [ch. 23:27]
 AH) Acts 21:33 : ch. 20:23; [ver. 11]
 AI) Acts 21:33 : ch. 12:6; [ch. 22:29; 26:29; 28:20; Eph. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:16]
 AJ) Acts 21:34 : ch. 19:32
 AK) Acts 21:34 : ch. 22:24; 23:10
 AL) Acts 21:36 : ch. 22:22; [Luke 23:18; John 19:15]
 AM) Acts 21:38 : [ch. 5:36]
 AN) Acts 21:38 : Matt. 24:26
 AO) Acts 21:39 : ch. 9:11; 22:3

WEEK 2

SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

As God speaks to you through His Word write down what is impacting you, what He is saying to you personally and/or your response back to Him.

WEEK 2

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 46
- Psalm 47
- Psalm 48
- Psalm 49
- Psalm 50
- Psalm 51

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q3: How many persons are there in God?

There are three persons in the one true and living God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

WEEK 2
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 2
CELL GROUP MEETING:

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of “Loving God in Solitude”?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to...

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers in Aruba:
Vance and Wendy Sutherland

WEEK 2
GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER (30-45 MINUTES)

Group Members' Accountability Items (& Other Items) to Pray For:

WEEK 3

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 21:40-22:30

English Standard Version (ESV)

⁴⁰ And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, ^(A) motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in ^(B) the Hebrew language, saying:

22 ^(C) “Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you.” ² And when they heard that he was addressing them in ^(D) the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. And he said: ³ ^(E) “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated ^(F) at the feet of ^(G) Gamaliel ^(H) according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, ^(I) being zealous for God ^(J) as all of you are this day. ⁴ ^(K) I persecuted ^(L) this Way ^(M) to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, ⁵ as ^(N) the high priest and ^(O) the whole council of elders can bear me witness. From them I received letters to ^(P) the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

⁶ ^(Q) “As I was on my way and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone around me. ⁷ And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ ⁸ And I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said to me, ‘I am ^(R) Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ ⁹ ^(S) Now those who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me. ¹⁰ And I said, ^(T) ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Rise, and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do.’ ¹¹ And since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus.

¹² “And ^(U) one Ananias, a devout man ^(V) according to the law, ^(W) well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, ¹³ ^(X) came to me, and standing by me said to

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⁴⁰ The commander agreed, so Paul stood on the stairs and motioned to the people to be quiet. Soon a deep silence enveloped the crowd, and he addressed them in their own language, Aramaic.

22 “Brothers and esteemed fathers,” Paul said, “listen to me as I offer my defense.” ² When they heard him speaking in their own language, the silence was even greater.

³ Then Paul said, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, and I was brought up and educated here in Jerusalem under Gamaliel. As his student, I was carefully trained in our Jewish laws and customs. I became very zealous to honor God in everything I did, just like all of you today. ⁴ And I persecuted the followers of the Way, hounding some to death, arresting both men and women and throwing them in prison. ⁵ The high priest and the whole council of elders can testify that this is so. For I received letters from them to our Jewish brothers in Damascus, authorizing me to bring the followers of the Way from there to Jerusalem, in chains, to be punished.

⁶ “As I was on the road, approaching Damascus about noon, a very bright light from heaven suddenly shone down around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’

⁸ “‘Who are you, lord?’ I asked.

“And the voice replied, ‘I am Jesus the Nazarene, the

⁹ The people with me saw the light but didn’t understand the voice speaking to me.

¹⁰ “I asked, ‘What should I do, Lord?’

“And the Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything you are to do.’

me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And ^(Y)at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. ¹⁴ And he said, ^(Z)'The God of our fathers ^(AA)appointed you to know his will, ^(AB)to see ^(AC)the Righteous One and ^(AD)to hear a voice from his mouth; ¹⁵ for ^(AE)you will be a witness for him to everyone of what ^(AF)you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now why do you wait? ^(AG)Rise and be baptized and ^(AH)wash away your sins, ^(AI)calling on his name.'

¹⁷ ^(AJ)"When I had returned to Jerusalem and ^(AK)was praying in the temple, I fell into ^(AL)a trance ¹⁸ and saw him saying to me, ^(AM)'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' ¹⁹ And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another ^(AN)I imprisoned and ^(AO)beat those who believed in you. ²⁰ And when the blood of Stephen ^(AP)your witness was being shed, ^(AQ)I myself was standing by and ^(AR)approving and ^(AS)watching over the garments of those who killed him.' ²¹ And he said to me, 'Go, for I will send you ^(AT)far away to the Gentiles.'"

²² Up to this word they listened to him. Then they raised their voices and said, ^(AU)"Away with such a fellow from the earth! For ^(AV)he should not be allowed to live." ²³ And as they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, ²⁴ the tribune ordered him to be brought into ^(AW)the barracks, saying that he should be ^(AX)examined by flogging, to find out why they were shouting against him like this. ²⁵ But when they had stretched him out for the whips, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to flog ^(AY)a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?" ²⁶ When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and said to him, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."

²⁷ So the tribune came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" And he said, "Yes." ²⁸ The tribune answered, "I bought this citizenship for a large sum." Paul said, "But I am a citizen by birth." ²⁹ So those who were about ^(AZ)to examine him withdrew from him immediately, and the tribune also ^(BA)was afraid, ^(BB)for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that ^(BC)he had bound him.

³⁰ But on the next day, ^(BD)desiring to know the real reason why he was being accused by the Jews, he unbound him and commanded the chief priests and all

¹¹ "I was blinded by the intense light and had to be led by the hand to Damascus by my companions.

¹² A man named Ananias lived there. He was a godly man, deeply devoted to the law, and well regarded by all the Jews of Damascus. ¹³ He came and stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, regain your sight.' And that very moment I could see him!

¹⁴ "Then he told me, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and hear him speak. ¹⁵ For you are to be his witness, telling everyone what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord.'

¹⁷ "After I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the Temple and fell into a trance. ¹⁸ I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, 'Hurry! Leave Jerusalem, for the people here won't accept your testimony about me.'

¹⁹ "But Lord,' I argued, 'they certainly know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. ²⁰ And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.' ²¹ "But the Lord said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!'"

²² The crowd listened until Paul said that word. Then they all began to shout, "Away with such a fellow! He isn't fit to live!" ²³ They yelled, threw off their coats, and tossed handfuls of dust into the air.

²⁴ The commander brought Paul inside and ordered him lashed with whips to make him confess his crime. He wanted to find out why the crowd had become so furious. ²⁵ When they tied Paul down to lash him, Paul said to the officer standing there, "Is it legal for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't even been tried?"

²⁶ When the officer heard this, he went to the commander and asked, "What are you doing? This man is a Roman citizen!"

²⁷ So the commander went over and asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

the council to meet, and he brought Paul down and set him before them.

“Yes, I certainly am,” Paul replied.

²⁸ “I am, too,” the commander muttered, “and it cost me plenty!”

Paul answered, “But I am a citizen by birth!”

²⁹ The soldiers who were about to interrogate Paul quickly withdrew when they heard he was a Roman citizen, and the commander was frightened because he had ordered him bound and whipped.

³⁰ The next day the commander ordered the leading priests into session with the Jewish high council. He wanted to find out what the trouble was all about, so he released Paul to have him stand before them.

Cross references:

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| A) Acts 21:40 : See ch. 12:17 | O) Acts 22:5 : Luke 22:66 (Gk.); 1 Tim. 4:14 (Gk.) | AC) Acts 22:14 : See ch. 3:14 | AR) Acts 22:20 : ch. 8:1; [ch. 26:10]; See Rom. 1:32 |
| B) Acts 21:40 : ch. 22:2; 26:14 | P) Acts 22:5 : ch. 28:21 | AD) Acts 22:14 : [Gal. 1:12] | AS) Acts 22:20 : ch. 7:58 |
| C) Acts 22:1 : ch. 7:2 | Q) Acts 22:6 : For ver. 6-11, see ch. 9:3-8; 26:12-18 | AE) Acts 22:15 : ch. 23:11 | AT) Acts 22:21 : See ch. 2:39; 9:15 |
| D) Acts 22:2 : ch. 21:40 | R) Acts 22:8 : ch. 26:9 | AF) Acts 22:15 : ver. 14; ch. 4:20 | AU) Acts 22:22 : See ch. 21:36 |
| E) Acts 22:3 : ch. 9:11; 21:39; Rom. 11:1; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5 | S) Acts 22:9 : [Dan. 10:7]; See ch. 9:7 | AG) Acts 22:16 : ch. 9:18 | AV) Acts 22:22 : ch. 25:24 |
| F) Acts 22:3 : Deut. 33:3; 2 Kgs. 4:38; [Luke 10:39] | T) Acts 22:10 : See ch. 16:30 | AH) Acts 22:16 : 1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:22; [Ps. 51:2]; See ch. 2:38 | AW) Acts 22:24 : ch. 21:34; 23:10 |
| G) Acts 22:3 : ch. 5:34 | U) Acts 22:12 : ch. 9:10 | AI) Acts 22:16 : See ch. 9:14 | AX) Acts 22:24 : ver. 29 |
| H) Acts 22:3 : ch. 26:5 | V) Acts 22:12 : ch. 24:14 | AJ) Acts 22:17 : ch. 9:26; 26:20 | AY) Acts 22:25 : ch. 16:37 |
| I) Acts 22:3 : [John 16:2; Phil. 3:6]; See ch. 21:20 | W) Acts 22:12 : ch. 10:22 | AK) Acts 22:17 : ch. 3:1; Luke 18:10 | AZ) Acts 22:29 : ver. 24 |
| J) Acts 22:3 : Rom. 10:2 | X) Acts 22:13 : ch. 9:17 | AL) Acts 22:17 : ch. 10:10; 11:5; [2 Cor. 12:1-4] | BA) Acts 22:29 : ch. 16:38 |
| K) Acts 22:4 : ver. 19; See ch. 8:3 | Y) Acts 22:13 : ch. 9:18 | AM) Acts 22:18 : [ch. 9:29] | BB) Acts 22:29 : [ch. 23:27] |
| L) Acts 22:4 : [ch. 5:20]; See ch. 9:2 | Z) Acts 22:14 : See ch. 3:13 | AN) Acts 22:19 : ver. 4 | BC) Acts 22:29 : ch. 21:33 |
| M) Acts 22:4 : ch. 26:10; [ver. 20; ch. 8:1] | AA) Acts 22:14 : ch. 9:15; 26:16 | AO) Acts 22:19 : ch. 26:11; See Matt. 10:17 | BD) Acts 22:30 : ver. 24; ch. 23:28 |
| N) Acts 22:5 : ch. 9:1 | AB) Acts 22:14 : ver. 18; ch. 9:17; 26:16; 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8; [ver. 15] | AP) Acts 22:20 : [Rev. 2:13] | |
| | | AQ) Acts 22:20 : ch. 7:58 | |

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

1. *How does Paul craft his message specifically for this audience and situation? How can this instruct us in how to share our faith?*

2. *Why do you think Paul reveals that he is a Roman citizen? Did he always do this? What can we learn from his example?*

4. *What does this passage teach you about God?*

5. *What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 3

SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

As God speaks to you through His Word write down what is impacting you, what He is saying to you personally and/or your response back to Him.

WEEK 3

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 52
- Psalm 53
- Psalm 54
- Psalm 55
- Psalm 56
- Psalm 57

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q4: How and why did God create us?

*God created us male and female in his own image to know him, love him, live with him, and glorify him.
And it is right that we who were created by God should live to his glory.*

WEEK 3
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 3
CELL GROUP MEETING:

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers in Aruba:
Vance and Wendy Sutherland

WEEK 4

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 23:1-22

English Standard Version (ESV)

23 And looking intently at the council, Paul said, “Brothers, ^(A)I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day.” ² And the high priest ^(B)Ananias commanded those who stood by him ^(C)to strike him on the mouth. ³ Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you, you ^(D)whitewashed ^(E)wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet ^(F)contrary to the law you ^(G)order me to be struck?” ⁴ Those who stood by said, “Would you revile ^(H)God’s high priest?” ⁵ And Paul said, ^(I)“I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, ^(J)‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’”

⁶ Now when Paul perceived that one part were ^(K)Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Brothers, ^(L) am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is ^(M)with respect to the ^(N)hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial.” ⁷ And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees ^(O)say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. ⁹ Then a great clamor arose, and some of ^(P)the scribes of the Pharisees’ party stood up and contended sharply, ^(Q)“We find nothing wrong in this man. What ^(R)if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?” ¹⁰ And when the dissension became violent, the tribune, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away from among them by force and bring him into ^(S)the barracks.

¹¹ ^(T)The following night ^(U)the Lord stood by him and said, ^(V)“Take courage, for ^(W)as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must ^(X)testify also in Rome.”

¹² When it was day, ^(Y)the Jews made a plot and ^(Z)bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the chief priests and elders and said, “We have strictly

New Living Translation (NLT)

23 Gazing intently at the high council, Paul began: “Brothers, I have always lived before God with a clear conscience!”

² Instantly Ananias the high priest commanded those close to Paul to slap him on the mouth. ³ But Paul said to him, “God will slap you, you corrupt hypocrite! What kind of judge are you to break the law yourself by ordering me struck like that?”

⁴ Those standing near Paul said to him, “Do you dare to insult God’s high priest?”

⁵ “I’m sorry, brothers. I didn’t realize he was the high priest,” Paul replied, “for the Scriptures say, ‘You must not speak evil of any of your rulers.’”

⁶ Paul realized that some members of the high council were Sadducees and some were Pharisees, so he shouted, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, as were my ancestors! And I am on trial because my hope is in the resurrection of the dead!”

⁷ This divided the council—the Pharisees against the Sadducees— ⁸ for the Sadducees say there is no resurrection or angels or spirits, but the Pharisees believe in all of these. ⁹ So there was a great uproar. Some of the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees jumped up and began to argue forcefully. “We see nothing wrong with him,” they shouted.

“Perhaps a spirit or an angel spoke to him.” ¹⁰ As the conflict grew more violent, the commander was afraid they would tear Paul apart. So he ordered his soldiers to go and rescue him by force and take him back to the fortress.

¹¹ That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, “Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well.”

bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ Now therefore you, along with the council, give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him before he comes near.”

¹⁶ Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went and entered ^(AA)the barracks and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called one of the centurions and said, “Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him.” ¹⁸ So he took him and brought him to the tribune and said, “Paul ^(AB)the prisoner called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you.” ¹⁹ The tribune took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?” ²⁰ And he said, ^(AC)“The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely about him. ²¹ But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him, who ^(AD)have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready, waiting for your consent.” ²² So the tribune dismissed the young man, charging him, “Tell no one that you have informed me of these things.”

¹² The next morning a group of Jews got together and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. ¹³ There were more than forty of them in the conspiracy. ¹⁴ They went to the leading priests and elders and told them, “We have bound ourselves with an oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. ¹⁵ So you and the high council should ask the commander to bring Paul back to the council again. Pretend you want to examine his case more fully. We will kill him on the way.”

¹⁶ But Paul's nephew—his sister's son—heard of their plan and went to the fortress and told Paul. ¹⁷ Paul called for one of the Roman officers and said, “Take this young man to the commander. He has something important to tell him.”

¹⁸ So the officer did, explaining, “Paul, the prisoner, called me over and asked me to bring this young man to you because he has something to tell you.”

¹⁹ The commander took his hand, led him aside, and asked, “What is it you want to tell me?”

²⁰ Paul's nephew told him, “Some Jews are going to ask you to bring Paul before the high council tomorrow, pretending they want to get some more information. ²¹ But don't do it! There are more than forty men hiding along the way ready to ambush him. They have vowed not to eat or drink anything until they have killed him. They are ready now, just waiting for your consent.”

²² “Don't let anyone know you told me this,” the commander warned the young man.

Cross References:

A) Acts 23:1 : 2 Cor. 1:12; 2 Tim. 1:3; [ch. 24:16; Job 27:5, 6; 1 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11; Heb. 13:18]
 B) Acts 23:2 : ch. 24:1
 C) Acts 23:2 : 1 Kgs. 22:24; Lam. 3:30; Mic. 5:1; 2 Cor. 11:20
 D) Acts 23:3 : [Matt. 23:27]
 E) Acts 23:3 : [Isa. 30:13; Ezek. 13:10-14]
 F) Acts 23:3 : Deut. 25:1, 2; See John 7:51
 G) Acts 23:3 : Deut. 25:1, 2; See John 7:51
 H) Acts 23:4 : [1 Sam. 2:28; Ps. 106:16]

I) Acts 23:5 : [ch. 24:1]
 J) Acts 23:5 : Cited from Ex. 22:28
 K) Acts 23:6 : See Matt. 22:23
 L) Acts 23:6 : ch. 26:5; Phil. 3:5
 M) Acts 23:6 : ch. 24:15, 21; 26:6-8; 28:20
 N) Acts 23:6 : [ch. 2:26, 27]; See Col. 1:5
 O) Acts 23:8 : Luke 20:27; [1 Cor. 15:12]
 P) Acts 23:9 : ch. 4:5; Mark 2:16; Luke 5:30
 Q) Acts 23:9 : [ver. 29]
 R) Acts 23:9 : [ch. 22:7, 17, 18; John 12:29]
 S) Acts 23:10 : ver. 16, 32; ch. 21:34; 22:24

T) Acts 23:11 : ch. 18:9; 27:23
 U) Acts 23:11 : 1 Sam. 3:10
 V) Acts 23:11 : [2 Tim. 4:17]
 W) Acts 23:11 : [ch. 19:21]
 X) Acts 23:11 : ch. 22:15
 Y) Acts 23:12 : ver. 30
 Z) Acts 23:12 : ver. 14, 21
 AA) Acts 23:16 : ver. 10, 32
 AB) Acts 23:18 : See Eph. 3:1
 AC) Acts 23:20 : ver. 14, 15
 AD) Acts 23:21 : ver. 12, 14

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

- 1. What do you make of Paul's interaction with the high priest? Was he right or wrong? In what ways? How does he eventually gain control of himself?*
- 2. What tactic did Paul use in speaking to the council? Why?*
- 3. How did God continue to protect Paul?*
- 4. What does this passage teach you about God?*
- 5. What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 4

SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

As God speaks to you through His Word write down what is impacting you, what He is saying to you personally and/or your response back to Him.

WEEK 4

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 58
- Psalm 59
- Psalm 60
- Psalm 61
- Psalm 62
- Psalm 63

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q5: What else did God create?

God created all things by his powerful Word, and all his creation was very good; everything flourished under his loving rule.

WEEK 4
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 4

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

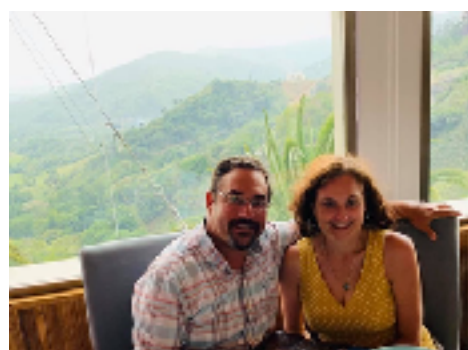
This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to...

How I did with last week's accountability item...

WEEK 4

GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER (30-45 MINUTES)

Group Members' Accountability Items (& Other Items) to Pray For:



Pray for our international workers in the Dominican Republic: Rick and Tammie Romano

WEEK 5

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 23:23-24:27

English Standard Version (ESV)

23 Then he called two of the centurions and said, “Get ready two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night. ²⁴ Also provide mounts for Paul to ride and bring him safely to ^(A)Felix ^(B)the governor.” ²⁵ And he wrote a letter to this effect:

²⁶ “Claudius Lysias, to ^(C)his Excellency the governor Felix, ^(D)greetings. ²⁷ ^(E)This man was seized by the Jews and ^(F)was about to be killed by them ^(G)when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, ^(H)having learned that he was a Roman citizen. ²⁸ And ^(I)desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. ²⁹ I found that he was being accused ^(J)about questions of their law, but ^(K)charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment. ³⁰ ^(L)And when it was disclosed to me ^(M)that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ^(N)ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.”

³¹ So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. ³² And on the next day they returned to ^(O)the barracks, letting the horsemen go on with him. ³³ When they had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him. ³⁴ On reading the letter, he asked what ^(P)province he was from. And when he learned ^(Q)that he was from Cilicia, ³⁵ he said, “I will give you a hearing ^(R)when your accusers arrive.” And he commanded him to be guarded in Herod's ^(S)praetorium.

24 And ^(T)after five days the high priest ^(U)Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before ^(V)the governor their case against Paul. ² And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying:

“Since through you we enjoy much peace, and since by your foresight, ^(W)most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation, ³ in every way and

New Living Translation (NLT)

²³ Then the commander called two of his officers and ordered, “Get 200 soldiers ready to leave for Caesarea at nine o'clock tonight. Also take 200 spearmen and 70 mounted troops. ²⁴ Provide horses for Paul to ride, and get him safely to Governor Felix.”

²⁵ Then he wrote this letter to the governor:

²⁶ “From Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency, Governor Felix: Greetings!

²⁷ “This man was seized by some Jews, and they were about to kill him when I arrived with the troops. When I learned that he was a Roman citizen, I removed him to safety. ²⁸ Then I took him to their high council to try to learn the basis of the accusations against him. ²⁹ I soon discovered the charge was something regarding their religious law—certainly nothing worthy of imprisonment or death. ³⁰ But when I was informed of a plot to kill him, I immediately sent him on to you. I have told his accusers to bring their charges before you.”

³¹ So that night, as ordered, the soldiers took Paul as far as Antipatris. ³² They returned to the fortress the next morning, while the mounted troops took him on to Caesarea. ³³ When they arrived in Caesarea, they presented Paul and the letter to Governor Felix. ³⁴ He read it and then asked Paul what province he was from. “Cilicia,” Paul answered.

³⁵ “I will hear your case myself when your accusers arrive,” the governor told him. Then the governor ordered him kept in the prison at Herod's headquarters.

24 Five days later Ananias, the high priest, arrived with some of the Jewish elders and the lawyer Tertullus, to present their case against Paul to the governor. ² When Paul was called in, Tertullus presented the charges against Paul in the following address to the governor:

everywhere we accept this with all gratitude. ⁴ But, to detain you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. ⁵ For we have found this man a plague, ^(X)one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world and is a ringleader of ^(Y)the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ ^(Z)He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him. ⁸ By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him.”

⁹ The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all these things were so.

¹⁰ And when the governor had nodded to him to speak, Paul replied:

“Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense. ¹¹ You can verify that ^(AA)it is not more than twelve days since I ^(AB)went up ^(AC)to worship in Jerusalem, ¹² and ^(AD)they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or in the city. ¹³ ^(AE)Neither can they prove to you what they now bring up against me. ¹⁴ But this I confess to you, that according to ^(AF)the Way, which they call ^(AG)a sect, ^(AH)I worship ^(AI)the God of our fathers, believing everything ^(AJ)laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, ¹⁵ ^(AK)having ^(AL)a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be ^(AM)a resurrection ^(AN)of both the just and the unjust. ¹⁶ So I always ^(AO)take pains to have a ^(AP)clear conscience toward both God and man. ¹⁷ Now ^(AQ)after several years ^(AR)I came to bring alms to ^(AS)my nation and to present ^(AT)offerings. ¹⁸ While I was doing this, they found me ^(AU)purified in the temple, without any crowd or tumult. But ^(AV)some Jews from Asia— ¹⁹ ^(AW)they ought to be here before you and to make an accusation, should they have anything against me. ²⁰ Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council, ²¹ other than this one thing ^(AX)that I cried out while standing among them: ‘It is with respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.’”

²² But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of ^(AY)the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the

“You have provided a long period of peace for us Jews and with foresight have enacted reforms for us. ³ For all of this, Your Excellency, we are very grateful to you. ⁴ But I don’t want to bore you, so please give me your attention for only a moment. ⁵ We have found this man to be a troublemaker who is constantly stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the cult known as the Nazarenes. ⁶ Furthermore, he was trying to desecrate the Temple when we arrested him. ⁸ You can find out the truth of our accusations by examining him yourself.” ⁹ Then the other Jews chimed in, declaring that everything Tertullus said was true. ¹⁰ The governor then motioned for Paul to speak. Paul said, “I know, sir, that you have been a judge of Jewish affairs for many years, so I gladly present my defense before you. ¹¹ You can quickly discover that I arrived in Jerusalem no more than twelve days ago to worship at the Temple. ¹² My accusers never found me arguing with anyone in the Temple, nor stirring up a riot in any synagogue or on the streets of the city. ¹³ These men cannot prove the things they accuse me of doing.

¹⁴ “But I admit that I follow the Way, which they call a cult. I worship the God of our ancestors, and I firmly believe the Jewish law and everything written in the prophets. ¹⁵ I have the same hope in God that these men have, that he will raise both the righteous and the unrighteous. ¹⁶ Because of this, I always try to maintain a clear conscience before God and all people.

¹⁷ “After several years away, I returned to Jerusalem with money to aid my people and to offer sacrifices to God. ¹⁸ My accusers saw me in the Temple as I was completing a purification ceremony. There was no crowd around me and no rioting. ¹⁹ But some Jews from the province of Asia were there—and they ought to be here to bring charges if they have anything against me! ²⁰ Ask these men here what crime the Jewish high council found me guilty of, ²¹ except for the one time I shouted out, ‘I am on trial before you today because I believe in the resurrection of the dead!’”

²² At that point Felix, who was quite familiar with the Way, adjourned the hearing and said, “Wait until

tribune comes down, I will decide your case.”²³ Then he gave orders to the centurion that he^(AZ) should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that^(BA) none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs.

²⁴ After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about^(BB) faith^(BC) in Christ Jesus.²⁵ And as he reasoned^(BD) about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, “Go away for the present.^(BE) When I get an opportunity I will summon you.”²⁶ At the same time he hoped^(BF) that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him.

²⁷ When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius^(BG) Festus. And^(BH) desiring to do the Jews a favor,^(BI) Felix left Paul in prison.

Lysias, the garrison commander, arrives. Then I will decide the case.”²³ He ordered an officer to keep Paul in custody but to give him some freedom and allow his friends to visit him and take care of his needs.

²⁴ A few days later Felix came back with his wife, Drusilla, who was Jewish. Sending for Paul, they listened as he told them about faith in Christ Jesus.

²⁵ As he reasoned with them about righteousness and self-control and the coming day of judgment, Felix became frightened. “Go away for now,” he replied. “When it is more convenient, I’ll call for you again.”

²⁶ He also hoped that Paul would bribe him, so he sent for him quite often and talked with him.

²⁷ After two years went by in this way, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And because Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jewish people, he left Paul in prison.

Cross references:

A) Acts 23:24 : ver. 26; ch. 24:2; 25:14
 B) Acts 23:24 : ver. 33; ch. 24:1, 10; 26:30; See Luke 20:20
 C) Acts 23:26 : ch. 24:1
 D) Acts 23:26 : See ch. 15:23
 E) Acts 23:27 : ch. 21:27
 F) Acts 23:27 : [ch. 21:32, 33]
 G) Acts 23:27 : [ch. 21:32, 33]
 H) Acts 23:27 : [ch. 22:25-29]
 I) Acts 23:28 : ch. 22:30
 J) Acts 23:29 : ch. 18:15; 25:19
 K) Acts 23:29 : ch. 25:25; 26:31; 28:18; [ver. 9]
 L) Acts 23:30 : ver. 20
 M) Acts 23:30 : ver. 12; See ch. 9:24
 N) Acts 23:30 : ver. 35; [ch. 24:19; 25:16]
 O) Acts 23:32 : ver. 10, 16
 P) Acts 23:34 : ch. 25:1
 Q) Acts 23:34 : ch. 21:39
 R) Acts 23:35 : ver. 30
 S) Acts 23:35 : See Matt. 27:27
 T) Acts 24:1 : [ch. 21:18, 27, with ver. 11]
 U) Acts 24:1 : ch. 23:2
 V) Acts 24:1 : ch. 23:24

W) Acts 24:2 : ch. 23:26; Luke 1:3
 X) Acts 24:5 : See Luke 23:2
 Y) Acts 24:5 : ver. 14; ch. 5:17; 15:5; 26:5; 28:22
 Z) Acts 24:6 : ch. 21:27-29
 AA) Acts 24:11 : See ver. 1
 AB) Acts 24:11 : ch. 8:27; John 12:20
 AC) Acts 24:11 : ch. 20:16
 AD) Acts 24:12 : [ch. 25:8]
 AE) Acts 24:13 : ch. 25:7
 AF) Acts 24:14 : ver. 22; See ch. 9:2
 AG) Acts 24:14 : ver. 5
 AH) Acts 24:14 : 2 Tim. 1:3; [ch. 27:23; Luke 1:74; Rom. 1:9; Heb. 9:14; 12:28]
 AI) Acts 24:14 : See ch. 3:13; 22:3
 AJ) Acts 24:14 : ch. 26:22; 28:23; [Rom. 3:21]
 AK) Acts 24:15 : See ch. 23:6
 AL) Acts 24:15 : Titus 2:13; [Gal. 5:5]
 AM) Acts 24:15 : Luke 14:14
 AN) Acts 24:15 : See Dan. 12:2
 AO) Acts 24:16 : [1 Tim. 4:7, 15]
 AP) Acts 24:16 : 1 Cor. 10:32; Phil. 1:10; [Jude 24]; See ch. 23:1
 AQ) Acts 24:17 : [ch. 20:31]

AR) Acts 24:17 : Rom. 15:25-28, 31; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-4; 9:1, 2, 12; [Gal. 2:10]
 AS) Acts 24:17 : ch. 26:4; 28:19
 AT) Acts 24:17 : [ver. 11; ch. 20:16]
 AU) Acts 24:18 : ch. 21:26; 26:21
 AV) Acts 24:18 : ch. 21:27
 AW) Acts 24:19 : See ch. 23:30
 AX) Acts 24:21 : See ch. 23:6
 AY) Acts 24:22 : ver. 14; See ch. 9:2
 AZ) Acts 24:23 : [ch. 28:16]
 BA) Acts 24:23 : [ch. 27:3]
 BB) Acts 24:24 : See ch. 20:21
 BC) Acts 24:24 : Gal. 2:16; [Rom. 3:24]
 BD) Acts 24:25 : [Titus 2:12, 13]
 BE) Acts 24:25 : ch. 17:32; [2 Tim. 4:2]
 BF) Acts 24:26 : [ver. 17]
 BG) Acts 24:27 : ch. 25:1; 26:24
 BH) Acts 24:27 : ch. 25:9; [ch. 12:3; Mark 15:15]
 BI) Acts 24:27 : ch. 25:14; See Luke 21:12

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

1. *What charges are being brought up against Paul? Are they true?*

2. *How does Paul answer those charges?*

3. *What do these charges have in common with modern day accusations against Christians?*

3. *What does this passage teach you about God?*

4. *What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 5
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 5

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 64
- Psalm 65
- Psalm 66
- Psalm 67
- Psalm 68
- Psalm 69

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q6: How can we glorify God?

We glorify God by enjoying him, loving him, trusting him, and by obeying his will, commands, and law.

WEEK 5
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 5
CELL GROUP MEETING: RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 MINUTES)

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...

WEEK 6

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 25:1-22

English Standard Version (ESV)

25 Now three days after Festus had arrived in ^(A)the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ² And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews ^(B)laid out their case against Paul, and they urged him, ³ asking as a favor against Paul that he summon him to Jerusalem—because ^(C)they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way. ⁴ Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to go there shortly. ⁵ “So,” said he, “let the men of authority among you go down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them bring charges against him.”

⁶ After he stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day he took his seat on ^(D)the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought. ⁷ When he had arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him ^(E)that they could not prove. ⁸ Paul argued in his defense, “Neither ^(F)against ^(G)the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor ^(H)against Caesar have I committed any offense.” ⁹ But Festus, ^(I)wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, “Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried on these charges before me?” ¹⁰ But Paul said, “I am standing before Caesar’s ^(J)tribunal, where I ought to be tried. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you yourself know very well. ¹¹ If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death. But if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can give me up to them. ^(K)I appeal to Caesar.” ¹² Then Festus, when he had conferred with his council, answered, “To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you shall go.”

¹³ Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus. ¹⁴ And as they stayed there many days, Festus laid Paul’s case before the king, saying, ^(L)“There is a man left prisoner by Felix, ¹⁵ and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews laid out

New Living Translation (NLT)

25 Three days after Festus arrived in Caesarea to take over his new responsibilities, he left for Jerusalem, ² where the leading priests and other Jewish leaders met with him and made their accusations against Paul. ³ They asked Festus as a favor to transfer Paul to Jerusalem (planning to ambush and kill him on the way). ⁴ But Festus replied that Paul was at Caesarea and he himself would be returning there soon. ⁵ So he said, “Those of you in authority can return with me. If Paul has done anything wrong, you can make your accusations.”

⁶ About eight or ten days later Festus returned to Caesarea, and on the following day he took his seat in court and ordered that Paul be brought in. ⁷ When Paul arrived, the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem gathered around and made many serious accusations they couldn’t prove.

⁸ Paul denied the charges. “I am not guilty of any crime against the Jewish laws or the Temple or the Roman government,” he said.

⁹ Then Festus, wanting to please the Jews, asked him, “Are you willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there?”

¹⁰ But Paul replied, “No! This is the official Roman court, so I ought to be tried right here. You know very well I am not guilty of harming the Jews. ¹¹ If I have done something worthy of death, I don’t refuse to die. But if I am innocent, no one has a right to turn me over to these men to kill me. I appeal to Caesar!”

¹² Festus conferred with his advisers and then replied, “Very well! You have appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar you will go!”

¹³ A few days later King Agrippa arrived with his sister, Bernice, to pay their respects to Festus. ¹⁴ During their stay of several days, Festus discussed Paul’s case with the king. “There is a prisoner here,” he told him, “whose case was left for me by Felix. ¹⁵ When I was in Jerusalem, the leading priests and Jewish

their case ^(M)against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him. ¹⁶ ^(N) answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone ^(O)before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him. ¹⁷ ^(P) So when they came together here, I made no delay, but on the next day took my seat on ^(Q) the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case of such evils as I supposed. ¹⁹ Rather they ^(R) had certain points of dispute with him about their own religion and about ^(S) a certain Jesus, who was dead, but whom Paul asserted to be alive. ²⁰ Being at a loss how to investigate these questions, I ^(T) asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding them. ²¹ But ^(U) when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of ^(V) the emperor, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to Caesar.” ²² Then ^(W) Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” said he, “you will hear him.”

elders pressed charges against him and asked me to condemn him. ¹⁶ I pointed out to them that Roman law does not convict people without a trial. They must be given an opportunity to confront their accusers and defend themselves.

¹⁷ “When his accusers came here for the trial, I didn’t delay. I called the case the very next day and ordered Paul brought in. ¹⁸ But the accusations made against him weren’t any of the crimes I expected. ¹⁹ Instead, it was something about their religion and a dead man named Jesus, who Paul insists is alive. ²⁰ I was at a loss to know how to investigate these things, so I asked him whether he would be willing to stand trial on these charges in Jerusalem. ²¹ But Paul appealed to have his case decided by the emperor. So I ordered that he be held in custody until I could arrange to send him to Caesar.”

²² “I’d like to hear the man myself,” Agrippa said. And Festus replied, “You will—tomorrow!”

Cross references:

A) Acts 25:1 : ch. 23:34
 B) Acts 25:2 : ver. 15
 C) Acts 25:3 : See ch. 9:24
 D) Acts 25:6 : ver. 10, 17; See Matt. 27:19
 E) Acts 25:7 : ch. 24:13
 F) Acts 25:8 : [ch. 24:12; 28:17]; See ch. 6:13
 G) Acts 25:8 : John 7:19; 19:7
 H) Acts 25:8 : John 19:12
 I) Acts 25:9 : ch. 24:27
 J) Acts 25:10 : ver. 6, 17
 K) Acts 25:11 : ch. 26:32; 28:19
 L) Acts 25:14 : ch. 24:27

M) Acts 25:15 : ver. 2, 3
 N) Acts 25:16 : ver. 4, 5
 O) Acts 25:16 : [John 7:51]; See ch. 23:30
 P) Acts 25:17 : ver. 7, 24
 Q) Acts 25:17 : ver. 6, 10
 R) Acts 25:19 : ch. 18:15; 23:29
 S) Acts 25:19 : [ch. 17:18]
 T) Acts 25:20 : ver. 9
 U) Acts 25:21 : See ver. 11
 V) Acts 25:21 : ver. 25
 W) Acts 25:22 : See ch. 9:15

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

1. *How do the charges against Paul differ from the last passage? Why?*

2. *Why does Paul claim his right to appeal to Caesar?*

3. *What does this passage show you about relating to civil authority?*

4. *What does this passage teach you about God?*

5. *What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 6
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 6

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 70
- Psalm 71
- Psalm 72
- Psalm 73
- Psalm 74
- Psalm 75

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q7: What does the law of God require?

Personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience; that we love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength; and love our neighbour as ourselves. What God forbids should never be done and what God commands should always be done.

WEEK 6
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 6
CELL GROUP MEETING: RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you as you lived the SCC lifestyle. Is God inviting you to.....

- Focus on your practice of “Loving God in Solitude”?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

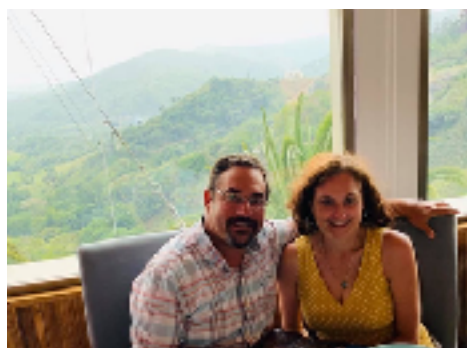
This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...

WEEK 6

GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER (30-45 MINUTES)

Group Members' Accountability Items (& Other Items) to Pray For:



Pray for our International Workers in the Dominican Republic: Rick and Tammie Romano

WEEK 7

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 25:23-26:11

English Standard Version (ESV)

²³ So on the next day ^(A)Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. ²⁴ And Festus said, “King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom ^(B)the whole Jewish people petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, ^(C)shouting that he ought not to live any longer. ²⁵ But I found that ^(D)he had done nothing deserving death. And ^(E)as he himself appealed to ^(F)the emperor, I decided to go ahead and send him. ²⁶ But I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write. ²⁷ For it seems to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to indicate the charges against him.”

26 So ^(G)Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense:

² “I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am going to make my defense today ^(H)against all the accusations of the Jews, ³ especially because you are familiar with all the ^(I)customs and ^(J)controversies of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴ ^(K)“My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among ^(L)my own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews. ⁵ They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that ^(M)according to the strictest ^(N)party of our ^(O)religion I have lived as ^(P)a Pharisee. ⁶ And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in ^(Q)the promise made by God to our fathers, ⁷ ^(R)to which ^(S)our twelve tribes hope to ^(T)attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope ^(U)I am accused by Jews, O king! ⁸ Why is it thought ^(V)incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

New Living Translation (NLT)

²³ So the next day Agrippa and Bernice arrived at the auditorium with great pomp, accompanied by military officers and prominent men of the city. Festus ordered that Paul be brought in. ²⁴ Then Festus said, “King Agrippa and all who are here, this is the man whose death is demanded by all the Jews, both here and in Jerusalem. ²⁵ But in my opinion he has done nothing deserving death. However, since he appealed his case to the emperor, I have decided to send him to Rome.

²⁶ “But what shall I write the emperor? For there is no clear charge against him. So I have brought him before all of you, and especially you, King Agrippa, so that after we examine him, I might have something to write. ²⁷ For it makes no sense to send a prisoner to the emperor without specifying the charges against him!”

26 Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You may speak in your defense.”

So Paul, gesturing with his hand, started his defense:

² “I am fortunate, King Agrippa, that you are the one hearing my defense today against all these accusations made by the Jewish leaders, ³ for I know you are an expert on all Jewish customs and controversies. Now please listen to me patiently!

⁴ “As the Jewish leaders are well aware, I was given a thorough Jewish training from my earliest childhood among my own people and in Jerusalem. ⁵ If they would admit it, they know that I have been a member of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of our religion.

⁶ Now I am on trial because of my hope in the fulfillment of God’s promise made to our ancestors.

⁷ In fact, that is why the twelve tribes of Israel zealously worship God night and day, and they share the same hope I have. Yet, Your Majesty, they accuse me for having this hope! ⁸ Why does it seem incredible to any of you that God can raise the dead?

⁹ “I used to believe that I ought to do everything I could to oppose the very name of Jesus the

9 ^(W)“I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of ^(X)Jesus of Nazareth. ^(Y)And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority ^(Z)from the chief priests, but ^(AA)when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. ^(AB)And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them ^(AC)blaspheme, and ^(AD)in raging fury against them I ^(AE)persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Nazarene. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Indeed, I did just that in Jerusalem. Authorized by the leading priests, I caused many believers there to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. ⁽¹¹⁾ Many times I had them punished in the synagogues to get them to curse Jesus. I was so violently opposed to them that I even chased them down in foreign cities.

Cross references:

A) Acts 25:23 : ver. 13; ch. 26:30
 B) Acts 25:24 : ver. 2, 7
 C) Acts 25:24 : ch. 22:22
 D) Acts 25:25 : See ch. 23:29
 E) Acts 25:25 : ver. 11, 12
 F) Acts 25:25 : ver. 21
 G) Acts 26:1 : See ch. 9:15
 H) Acts 26:2 : ch. 25:7, 19; [ver. 7]
 I) Acts 26:3 : See ch. 6:14
 J) Acts 26:3 : See ch. 18:15
 K) Acts 26:4 : [Gal. 1:13]
 L) Acts 26:4 : ch. 24:17; 28:19
 M) Acts 26:5 : ch. 22:3
 N) Acts 26:5 : See ch. 24:5
 O) Acts 26:5 : James 1:26, 27
 P) Acts 26:5 : ch. 23:6
 Q) Acts 26:6 : See ch. 13:32
 R) Acts 26:7 : [ch. 2:33; Heb. 10:36; 11:13, 39]
 S) Acts 26:7 : Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; James 1:1; Rev. 21:12; [Ezra 6:17]
 T) Acts 26:7 : Phil. 3:11
 U) Acts 26:7 : ver. 2
 V) Acts 26:8 : [ch. 17:3; 1 Cor. 15:12]
 W) Acts 26:9 : 1 Tim. 1:13; [John 16:2]; See ch. 3:17
 X) Acts 26:9 : ch. 22:8
 Y) Acts 26:10 : See ch. 8:3
 Z) Acts 26:10 : ver. 12; ch. 9:1, 2, 14, 21; 22:4, 5
 AA) Acts 26:10 : See ch. 22:20
 AB) Acts 26:11 : ch. 22:19
 AC) Acts 26:11 : See ch. 13:45
 AD) Acts 26:11 : ch. 9:1
 AE) Acts 26:11 : ch. 22:5

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

1. *Why does Luke describe Agrippa and Bernice's appearance? How does that contrast with Paul's (see 26:29)? Why is this emphasized?*
2. *What is the significance of Festus being unsure what to write about Paul?*
3. *What is the "hope" that has Paul on trial (vv.6-8)?*
4. *What does this passage teach you about God?*
5. *What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 7
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 7

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 76
- Psalm 77
- Psalm 78
- Psalm 79
- Psalm 80
- Psalm 81

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q8: What is the law of God stated in the Ten Commandments?

You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below—you shall not bow down to them or worship them. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Honor your father and your mother. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony. You shall not covet.

WEEK 7
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 7
CELL GROUP MEETING: RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you during these times. Is God inviting you to...

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...

WEEK 7
GROUP ACCOUNTABILITY & PRAYER (30-45 MINUTES)

Group Members' Accountability Items (& Other Items) to Pray For:



Pray for our International Workers in the Dominican Republic: Rick and Tammie Romano

WEEK 8

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 26:12-32

English Standard Version (ESV)

¹² “In this connection ^(A)I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³ At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. ¹⁴ And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me ^(B)in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ ¹⁵ And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and ^(C)stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, ^(D)to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, ¹⁷ ^(E)delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—^(F)to whom I ^(G)am sending you ¹⁸ ^(H)to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from ^(I)the power of Satan to God, that they may receive ^(J)forgiveness of sins and ^(K)a place among those who are sanctified ^(L)by faith in me.’

¹⁹ “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to ^(M)the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but declared first ^(N)to those in Damascus, ^(O)then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also ^(P)to the Gentiles, that they should ^(Q)repent and ^(R)turn to God, performing deeds ^(S)in keeping with their repentance. ²¹ For this reason ^(T)the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. ²² ^(U)To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so ^(V)I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what ^(W)the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: ²³ ^(X)that the Christ ^(Y)must suffer and that, ^(Z)by being the first ^(AA)to rise from the dead, ^(AB)he would proclaim ^(AC)light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴ And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, ^(AD)you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind.” ²⁵ But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, ^(AE)most excellent Festus, but I am speaking ^(AF)true and ^(AG)rational words. ²⁶ For ^(AH)the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am

New Living Translation (NLT)

¹² “One day I was on such a mission to Damascus, armed with the authority and commission of the leading priests. ¹³ About noon, Your Majesty, as I was on the road, a light from heaven brighter than the sun shone down on me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell down, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is useless for you to fight against my will.’

¹⁵ “‘Who are you, lord?’ I asked.

“And the Lord replied, ‘I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting. ¹⁶ Now get to your feet! For I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant and witness. Tell people that you have seen me, and tell them what I will show you in the future. ¹⁷ And I will rescue you from both your own people and the Gentiles. Yes, I am sending you to the Gentiles ¹⁸ to open their eyes, so they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Then they will receive forgiveness for their sins and be given a place among God’s people, who are set apart by faith in me.’

¹⁹ “And so, King Agrippa, I obeyed that vision from heaven. ²⁰ I preached first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that all must repent of their sins and turn to God—and prove they have changed by the good things they do. ²¹ Some Jews arrested me in the Temple for preaching this, and they tried to kill me. ²² But God has protected me right up to this present time so I can testify to everyone, from the least to the greatest. I teach nothing except what the prophets and Moses said would happen— ²³ that the Messiah would suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, and in this way announce God’s light to Jews and Gentiles alike.”

²⁴ Suddenly, Festus shouted, “Paul, you are insane. Too much study has made you crazy!”

persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.” ²⁸ And Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade me to be ^(A)a Christian?” ²⁹ And Paul said, “Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day ^(AJ)might become such as I am—except for ^(AK)these chains.”

³⁰ Then the king rose, and ^(AL)the governor and Bernice and those who were sitting with them. ³¹ And when they had withdrawn, they said to one another, ^(AM)“This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment.” ³² And Agrippa said to Festus, ^(AN)“This man could have been set ^(AO)free if he had not appealed ^(AP)to Caesar.”

²⁵ But Paul replied, “I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. What I am saying is the sober truth. ²⁶ And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak boldly, for I am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner! ²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do —”

²⁸ Agrippa interrupted him. “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?”

²⁹ Paul replied, “Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that both you and everyone here in this audience might become the same as I am, except for these chains.”

³⁰ Then the king, the governor, Bernice, and all the others stood and left. ³¹ As they went out, they talked it over and agreed, “This man hasn’t done anything to deserve death or imprisonment.”

³² And Agrippa said to Festus, “He could have been set free if he hadn’t appealed to Caesar.”

Cross references:

A) Acts 26:12 : For ver. 12-18, see ch. 9:3-8; 22:6-11
 B) Acts 26:14 : ch. 21:40; 22:2
 C) Acts 26:16 : Ezek. 2:1; Dan. 10:11
 D) Acts 26:16 : See ch. 22:14, 15
 E) Acts 26:17 : [ch. 12:11; 1 Chr. 16:35; Jer. 1:8, 19; 15:20]
 F) Acts 26:17 : See ch. 9:15
 G) Acts 26:17 : [Rom. 11:13; 1 Tim. 2:7]
 H) Acts 26:18 : Isa. 35:5; 42:7
 I) Acts 26:18 : See Luke 22:53; 1 Cor. 5:5
 J) Acts 26:18 : See ch. 5:31
 K) Acts 26:18 : See ch. 20:32
 L) Acts 26:18 : [ch. 15:9; 2 Thess. 2:13]
 M) Acts 26:19 : ver. 13
 N) Acts 26:20 : ch. 9:19, 20
 O) Acts 26:20 : ch. 9:26-29; 22:17-20
 P) Acts 26:20 : See ch. 13:46
 Q) Acts 26:20 : See ch. 2:38
 R) Acts 26:20 : See ch. 14:15
 S) Acts 26:20 : Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8
 T) Acts 26:21 : ch. 21:27, 30, 31; 24:18
 U) Acts 26:22 : 2 Cor. 1:10; [Heb. 13:5, 6]
 V) Acts 26:22 : [Eph. 6:13]

W) Acts 26:22 : See ch. 10:43; 24:14
 X) Acts 26:23 : [Luke 24:26; Heb. 2:10]; See ch. 3:18
 Y) Acts 26:23 : [John 12:34]
 Z) Acts 26:23 : 1 Cor. 15:20, 23; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5
 AA) Acts 26:23 : Rom. 1:4
 AB) Acts 26:23 : [Eph. 2:17]
 AC) Acts 26:23 : ver. 18; See Luke 2:32
 AD) Acts 26:24 : ch. 12:15; [ver. 8; ch. 17:32; 2 Kgs. 9:11; Jer. 29:26; Mark 3:21; John 10:20; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:14; 4:10]
 AE) Acts 26:25 : See ch. 24:2
 AF) Acts 26:25 : [2 Pet. 1:16]
 AG) Acts 26:25 : [2 Cor. 5:13]
 AH) Acts 26:26 : [ver. 3]
 AI) Acts 26:28 : ch. 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16
 AJ) Acts 26:29 : [1 Cor. 7:7]
 AK) Acts 26:29 : See ch. 21:33
 AL) Acts 26:30 : See ch. 23:24
 AM) Acts 26:31 : See ch. 23:29
 AN) Acts 26:32 : ch. 28:18
 AO) Acts 26:32 : ch. 25:11; 28:19
 AP) Acts 26:32 : See ch. 9:15

WEEK 8
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 8

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 82
- Psalm 83
- Psalm 84
- Psalm 85
- Psalm 86
- Psalm 87

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q9: What does God require in the first, second and third commandments?

First, that we know and trust God as the only true and living God. Second, that we avoid all idolatry and do not worship God improperly. Third, that we treat God's name with fear and reverence, honouring also his Word and works.

WEEK 8
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 8

CELL GROUP MEETING: RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you during these times. Is God inviting you to...

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers Ken and Claire

WEEK 9

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 27:1-44

English Standard Version (ESV)

27 And when it was decided ^(A)that ^(B)we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan ^(C)Cohort named Julius. ² And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by ^(D)Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. ³ The next day we put in at Sidon. And ^(E)Julius ^(F)treated Paul kindly and ^(G)gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for. ⁴ And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. ⁵ And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. ⁶ There the centurion found ^(H)a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board. ⁷ We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone. ⁸ Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

⁹ Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even ^(I)the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, ¹⁰ saying, “Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with ^(J)injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.” ¹¹ But the centurion paid more attention to ^(K)the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. ¹² And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

¹³ Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore.

¹⁴ But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, ^(L)struck down from the land. ¹⁵ And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶ Running food,

New Living Translation (NLT)

27 When the time came, we set sail for Italy. Paul and several other prisoners were placed in the custody of a Roman officer named Julius, a captain of the Imperial Regiment. ² Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was also with us. We left on a ship whose home port was Adramyttium on the northwest coast of the province of Asia; it was scheduled to make several stops at ports along the coast of the province.

³ The next day when we docked at Sidon, Julius was very kind to Paul and let him go ashore to visit with friends so they could provide for his needs. ⁴ Putting out to sea from there, we encountered strong headwinds that made it difficult to keep the ship on course, so we sailed north of Cyprus between the island and the mainland. ⁵ Keeping to the open sea, we passed along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, landing at Myra, in the province of Lycia. ⁶ There the commanding officer found an Egyptian ship from Alexandria that was bound for Italy, and he put us on board.

⁷ We had several days of slow sailing, and after great difficulty we finally neared Cnidus. But the wind was against us, so we sailed across to Crete and along the sheltered coast of the island, past the cape of Salmone. ⁸ We struggled along the coast with great difficulty and finally arrived at Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea. ⁹ We had lost a lot of time. The weather was becoming dangerous for sea travel because it was so late in the fall, and Paul spoke to the ship’s officers about it.

¹⁰ “Men,” he said, “I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on—shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well.” ¹¹ But the officer in charge of the prisoners listened more to the ship’s captain and the owner than to Paul. ¹² And since Fair Havens was an exposed harbor—a poor place to spend the winter—most of the crew wanted to go on to Phoenix, farther

under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. ¹⁷ After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would ^(M)run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. ¹⁸ Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day ^(N)to jettison the cargo. ¹⁹ And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰ When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

²¹ Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, ^(O)you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this ^(P)injury and loss. ²² Yet now I urge you to ^(Q)take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. ²³ For this very night ^(R)there ^(S)stood before me ^(T)an angel of the God ^(U)to whom I belong and ^(V)whom I worship, ²⁴ and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; ^(W)you must stand before Caesar. And behold, ^(X)God has granted you all those who sail with you.' ²⁵ So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. ²⁶ But ^(Y)we must ^(Z)run aground on some island."

²⁷ When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. ²⁸ So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. ²⁹ And fearing that we might ^(AA)run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. ³⁰ And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered ^(AB)the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, ³¹ Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." ³² Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

³³ As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without having taken nothing. ³⁴ Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for ^(AC)not a

up the coast of Crete, and spend the winter there. Phoenix was a good harbor with only a southwest and northwest exposure.

¹³ When a light wind began blowing from the south, the sailors thought they could make it. So they pulled up anchor and sailed close to the shore of Crete.

¹⁴ But the weather changed abruptly, and a wind of typhoon strength (called a "northeaster") burst across the island and blew us out to sea. ¹⁵ The sailors couldn't turn the ship into the wind, so they gave up and let it run before the gale.

¹⁶ We sailed along the sheltered side of a small island named Cauda, where with great difficulty we hoisted aboard the lifeboat being towed behind us. ¹⁷ Then the sailors bound ropes around the hull of the ship to strengthen it. They were afraid of being driven across to the sandbars of Syrtis off the African coast, so they lowered the sea anchor to slow the ship and were driven before the wind.

¹⁸ The next day, as gale-force winds continued to batter the ship, the crew began throwing the cargo overboard. ¹⁹ The following day they even took some of the ship's gear and threw it overboard. ²⁰ The terrible storm raged for many days, blotting out the sun and the stars, until at last all hope was gone.

²¹ No one had eaten for a long time. Finally, Paul called the crew together and said, "Men, you should have listened to me in the first place and not left Crete. You would have avoided all this damage and loss. ²² But take courage! None of you will lose your lives, even though the ship will go down. ²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me, ²⁴ and he said, 'Don't be afraid, Paul, for you will surely stand trial before Caesar! What's more, God in his goodness has granted safety to everyone sailing with you.' ²⁵ So take courage! For I believe God. It will be just as he said. ²⁶ But we will be shipwrecked on an island."

²⁷ About midnight on the fourteenth night of the storm, as we were being driven across the Sea of Adria, the sailors sensed land was near. ²⁸ They dropped a weighted line and found that the water was 120 feet deep. But a little later they measured again and found

hair is to perish from the head of any of you.”³⁵ And when he had said these things, he took bread, and ^(AD)giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat.³⁶ Then they all ^(AE)were encouraged and ate some food themselves.³⁷ (We were in all 276 ^(AF)persons in the ship.)³⁸ And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, ^(AG)throwing out the wheat into the sea.

³⁹ Now when it was day, ^(AH)they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore.⁴⁰ So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach.⁴¹ But striking a reef, ^(AI)they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf.⁴² ^(AJ)The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape.⁴³ But the centurion, ^(AK)wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land,⁴⁴ and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that ^(AL)all were brought safely to land.

it was only 90 feet deep.²⁹ At this rate they were afraid we would soon be driven against the rocks along the shore, so they threw out four anchors from the back of the ship and prayed for daylight.

³⁰ Then the sailors tried to abandon the ship; they lowered the lifeboat as though they were going to put out anchors from the front of the ship.³¹ But Paul said to the commanding officer and the soldiers, “You will all die unless the sailors stay aboard.”³² So the soldiers cut the ropes to the lifeboat and let it drift away.

³³ Just as day was dawning, Paul urged everyone to eat. “You have been so worried that you haven’t touched food for two weeks,” he said.³⁴ “Please eat something now for your own good. For not a hair of your heads will perish.”³⁵ Then he took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, and broke off a piece and ate it.³⁶ Then everyone was encouraged and began to eat—³⁷ all 276 of us who were on board.³⁸ After eating, the crew lightened the ship further by throwing the cargo of wheat overboard.

³⁹ When morning dawned, they didn’t recognize the coastline, but they saw a bay with a beach and wondered if they could get to shore by running the ship aground.⁴⁰ So they cut off the anchors and left them in the sea. Then they lowered the rudders, raised the foresail, and headed toward shore.⁴¹ But they hit a shoal and ran the ship aground too soon. The bow of the ship stuck fast, while the stern was repeatedly smashed by the force of the waves and began to break apart.

⁴² The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to make sure they didn’t swim ashore and escape.⁴³ But the commanding officer wanted to spare Paul, so he didn’t let them carry out their plan. Then he ordered all who could swim to jump overboard first and make for land.⁴⁴ The others held on to planks or debris from the broken ship. So everyone escaped safely to shore.

Cross references:

- A) Acts 27:1 : ch. 25:12, 25
 B) Acts 27:1 : See ch. 16:10
 C) Acts 27:1 : See ch. 10:1
 D) Acts 27:2 : See ch. 19:29
 E) Acts 27:3 : ver. 43
 F) Acts 27:3 : ch. 28:2
 G) Acts 27:3 : [ch. 24:23; 28:16, 30]
 H) Acts 27:6 : ch. 28:11
 I) Acts 27:9 : Lev. 16:29-31;
 23:27-29; Num. 29:7
 J) Acts 27:10 : ver. 21
 K) Acts 27:11 : Rev. 18:17 (Gk.)
 L) Acts 27:14 : [Mark 4:37]
 M) Acts 27:17 : ver. 26, 29
 N) Acts 27:18 : Jonah 1:5; [ver. 38]
 O) Acts 27:21 : ver. 10
 P) Acts 27:21 : ver. 10
 Q) Acts 27:22 : ver. 25, 36
 R) Acts 27:23 : ch. 18:9; 23:11
 S) Acts 27:23 : 2 Tim. 4:17
 T) Acts 27:23 : See ch. 8:26
 U) Acts 27:23 : Ps. 119:94; Dan.
 5:23
 V) Acts 27:23 : [Dan. 6:16]; See ch.
 24:14
 W) Acts 27:24 : ch. 23:11
 X) Acts 27:24 : [Gen. 18:26; 19:21,
 29; Ezek. 14:14]
 Y) Acts 27:26 : ch. 28:1
 Z) Acts 27:26 : ver. 17, 29
 AA) Acts 27:29 : ver. 17, 26
 AB) Acts 27:30 : ver. 16
 AC) Acts 27:34 : 1 Sam. 14:45; 2
 Sam. 14:11; 1 Kgs. 1:52; Luke
 21:18; [Matt. 10:30]
 AD) Acts 27:35 : See Matt. 15:36
 AE) Acts 27:36 : ver. 22
 AF) Acts 27:37 : ch. 2:41; 7:14;
 Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 3:20
 AG) Acts 27:38 : [ver. 18]
 AH) Acts 27:39 : [ch. 28:1]
 AI) Acts 27:41 : [2 Cor. 11:25]
 AJ) Acts 27:42 : [ch. 12:19]
 AK) Acts 27:43 : ver. 3
 AL) Acts 27:44 : ver. 22

WEEK 9
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 9

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 88
- Psalm 89
- Psalm 90
- Psalm 91
- Psalm 92
- Psalm 93

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q10: What does God require in the fourth and fifth commandments?

Fourth, that on the Sabbath day we spend time in public and private worship of God, rest from routine employment, serve the Lord and other, and so anticipate the eternal Sabbath. Fifth, that we love and honor our father and our mother, submitting to their godly discipline and direction.

WEEK 9
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 9

CELL GROUP MEETING: RESPONSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you during these times. Is God inviting you to...

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers
Ken and Claire

WEEK 10

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 28:1-16

English Standard Version (ESV)

28 After we were brought safely through, ^(A)we then learned that ^(B)the island was called Malta. ² ^(C)The native people showed us unusual ^(D)kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold. ³ When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. ⁴ When ^(E)the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, ^(F)“No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, ^(G)Justice has not allowed him to live.” ⁵ He, however, ^(H)shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, ^(I)they changed their minds and ^(J)said that he was a god.

⁷ Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. ⁸ It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and ^(K)prayed, and ^(L)putting his hands on him, healed him. ⁹ And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. ¹⁰ They also honored us greatly, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.

¹¹ After three months we set sail in ^(M)a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead. ¹² Putting in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. ¹³ And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴ There we found ^(N)brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵ And ^(O)the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, ^(P)Paul thanked God and took courage. ¹⁶ And

New Living Translation (NLT)

28 Once we were safe on shore, we learned that we were on the island of Malta. ² The people of the island were very kind to us. It was cold and rainy, so they built a fire on the shore to welcome us.

³ As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand. ⁴ The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, “A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live.” ⁵ But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. ⁶ The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn’t harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god.

⁷ Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. ⁸ As it happened, Publius’s father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him. ⁹ Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. ¹⁰ As a result we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip.

¹¹ It was three months after the shipwreck that we set sail on another ship that had wintered at the island—an Alexandrian ship with the twin gods as its figurehead. ¹² Our first stop was Syracuse, where we stayed three days. ¹³ From there we sailed across to Rhegium. A day later a south wind began blowing, so the following day we sailed up the coast to Puteoli.

¹⁴ There we found some believers, who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome.

¹⁵ The brothers and sisters in Rome had heard we were coming, and they came to meet us at the Forum on the Appian Way. Others joined us at The Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he was encouraged and thanked God.

when we came into Rome, ^(Q)Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.

¹⁶ When we arrived in Rome, Paul was permitted to have his own private lodging, though he was guarded by a soldier.

Cross references:

- A) Acts 28:1 : [ch. 27:39]
- B) Acts 28:1 : ch. 27:26
- C) Acts 28:2 : ver. 4; Rom. 1:14; 1 Cor. 14:11; Col. 3:11
- D) Acts 28:2 : ch. 27:3
- E) Acts 28:4 : ver. 2
- F) Acts 28:4 : [Job 4:7; Luke 13:2, 4; John 9:2]
- G) Acts 28:4 : [Num. 32:23; Amos 5:19; 9:3]
- H) Acts 28:5 : Mark 16:18; Luke 10:19
- I) Acts 28:6 : [ch. 14:11, 19]
- J) Acts 28:6 : [ch. 8:10; 14:11]
- K) Acts 28:8 : ch. 9:40; [James 5:14, 15]
- L) Acts 28:8 : See Mark 5:23
- M) Acts 28:11 : ch. 27:6
- N) Acts 28:14 : See John 21:23
- O) Acts 28:15 : [See ver. 14 above]; See John 21:23
- P) Acts 28:15 : [Rom. 1:9-12]
- Q) Acts 28:16 : [ch. 24:23; 27:3]

OPTIONAL: STUDY HELP QUESTIONS:

1. *How did the horrible experience of the shipwreck lead to much good on Malta?*
2. *What do you observe about Paul's attitude during this frustrating and painful time?*
3. *Why did seeing the Roman Christians give courage to Paul? What did this tell him about how his letter to them was received?*
4. *What does this passage teach you about God?*
5. *What does this passage teach you about yourself?*

WEEK 10
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 10

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 94
- Psalm 95
- Psalm 96
- Psalm 97
- Psalm 98
- Psalm 99

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q11: What does God require in the sixth, seventh and eight commandments?

Sixth, that we do not hurt, or hate, or be hostile to our neighbour, but be patient and peaceful, pursuing even our enemies with love. Seventh, that we abstain from sexual immorality and live purely and faithfully, whether in marriage or in single life, avoiding all impure actions, looks, words, thoughts, or desires, and whatever might lead to them. Eighth, that we do not take without permission that which belongs to someone else, nor withhold any good from someone we might benefit.

WEEK 10
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

WEEK 10
CELL GROUP MEETING:

Prayerfully consider your practice of Solitude over the previous week, as well as how God spoke to you during these times. Is God inviting you to...

- Focus on your practice of "Loving God in Solitude"?
- Take a step of obedience?
- Repent from a sin?
- Trust and rest in a truth?
- Or something else?

This coming week God is inviting me to..... / My response to God's invitation is to....

How I did with last week's accountability item...



Pray for our International workers Ken and Claire

WEEK 11 (REFLECTION WEEK)

SOLITUDE: STUDYING OF & MEDITATING ON ACTS 28:17-31

English Standard Version (ESV)

17 After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, “Brothers, ^(A)though I had done nothing against our people or ^(B)the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. ^(C)When they had examined me, they ^(D)wished to set me at liberty, ^(E)because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. ^(F)But because the Jews objected, I was compelled ^(G)to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against ^(H)my nation. ^(I)For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is ^(J)because of ^(K)the hope of Israel that I am wearing ^(L)this ^(M)chain.” ^(N)21 And they said to him, “We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of ^(O)the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. ^(P)22 But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this ^(Q)sect we know that everywhere ^(R)it is spoken against.” ^(S)23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening ^(T)he expounded to them, testifying to ^(U)the kingdom of God and ^(V)trying to convince them about Jesus ^(W)both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. ^(X)24 And ^(Y)some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved. ^(Z)25 And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: ^(AA)“The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

26 ^(AB)“Go to this people, and say,
^(AC)“You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.”
27 ^(AD)For this people’s heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed;
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and ^(AE)turn, and I would heal them.’

New Living Translation (NLT)

17 Three days after Paul’s arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, “Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. ⁽¹⁾18 The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. ⁽²⁾19 But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. ⁽³⁾20 I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come.” ⁽⁴⁾21 They replied, “We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here. ⁽⁵⁾22 But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere.” ⁽⁶⁾23 So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul’s lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. ⁽⁷⁾24 Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe. ⁽⁸⁾25 And after they had argued back and forth among themselves, they left with this final word from Paul: “The Holy Spirit was right when he said to your ancestors through Isaiah the prophet,

26 ‘Go and say to this people:
When you hear what I say,
you will not understand.
When you see what I do,
you will not comprehend.
27 For the hearts of these people are hardened,
and their ears cannot hear,
and they have closed their eyes—
so their eyes cannot see,
and their ears cannot hear,
and their hearts cannot understand,

28 Therefore let it be known to you that ^(X)this
^(Y)salvation of God ^(Z)has been sent to the Gentiles;
^(AA)they will listen.”

30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense,
 and ^(AB)welcomed all who came to him,
 31 ^(AC)proclaiming ^(AD)the kingdom of God and teaching
 about the Lord Jesus Christ ^(AE)with all boldness and
^(AF)without hindrance.

and they cannot turn to me
 and let me heal them.’

28 So I want you to know that this salvation from God
 has also been offered to the Gentiles, and they will
 accept it.”

30 For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his
 own expense. He welcomed all who visited him,
 31 boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and
 teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one
 tried to stop him.

Cross references:

A) Acts 28:17 : [ch. 25:8]
 B) Acts 28:17 : ch. 6:14; 15:1; 21:21
 C) Acts 28:18 : ch. 26:31, 32
 D) Acts 28:18 : See ch. 23:29
 E) Acts 28:19 : ch. 25:11; 26:32
 F) Acts 28:19 : ch. 24:17; 26:4
 G) Acts 28:20 : See ch. 23:6
 H) Acts 28:20 : [Luke 2:25]
 I) Acts 28:20 : ch. 26:29
 J) Acts 28:20 : Eph. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:16; See ch. 21:33; Phil. 1:7
 K) Acts 28:21 : ch. 22:5
 L) Acts 28:22 : See ch. 24:5
 M) Acts 28:22 : Luke 2:34; [1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16; 4:14, 16]
 N) Acts 28:23 : [ch. 17:2, 3]
 O) Acts 28:23 : ver. 31
 P) Acts 28:23 : [ch. 19:8]
 Q) Acts 28:23 : ch. 8:35; 24:14; 26:22
 R) Acts 28:24 : [ch. 14:4; 17:4, 5; 19:9; 23:7]
 S) Acts 28:25 : Matt. 15:7
 T) Acts 28:26 : Cited from Isa. 6:9, 10
 U) Acts 28:26 : Matt. 13:14, 15; Mark 4:12; [Luke 8:10]
 V) Acts 28:27 : [John 12:40; Rom. 11:8]
 W) Acts 28:27 : See Luke 22:32
 X) Acts 28:28 : ch. 13:26
 Y) Acts 28:28 : Ps. 67:2; Isa. 40:5; Luke 2:30; 3:6; [Rom. 11:11]
 Z) Acts 28:28 : See ch. 13:46
 AA) Acts 28:28 : John 10:16; [ch. 13:48; Matt. 8:11; 21:43]
 AB) Acts 28:30 : [Phil. 1:13]
 AC) Acts 28:31 : [ch. 8:12; 20:25]
 AD) Acts 28:31 : ver. 23; See Matt. 12:28; 13:19
 AE) Acts 28:31 : See ch. 4:29
 AF) Acts 28:31 : [Phil. 1:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:9]

WEEK 11
SOLITUDE: REFLECTION EXERCISE

FOCUS OF REFLECTION WEEK

Every 10 weeks (approx.) we will have an opportunity to reflect back on the weeks we journeyed with God, to remember what He has said to us and reflect on where His fingers are pressing into our lives. This week is called our REFLECTION week. Reflecting back, or remembering, is a biblical principle (i.e. Ps. 105:4-6, Ps. 63:6, Ps. 77:11-12, Ps. 143:4-6) that helps us see and understand where God has been working in our heart and life. At one point in time, Jesus said to His disciples, "Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? Don't you remember?" (Mark. 8:17b-18). We don't want to be like the disciples who couldn't see or understand because they did not "remember". Remembering brings clarity and perspective. It gives us a foundation on which to move forward. Over the past number of weeks God has spoken to you, He has impressed on your heart certain truths, He has prompted you to take certain action steps. Without taking time to remember and reflect back on these things we will forget the particulars and have a hard time seeing the bigger picture of God's activity in our lives; how the particulars of our journey of growth connect with His broader purposes in our lives.

Therefore, this week we will take time to remember the journey we have been on with God over the last number of weeks and through this you will have an opportunity to....

- See a common thread(s) or similar pattern(s) in the things God has said to you;
- See a big picture of what God is doing in your life;
- Gain a new perspective on where God has you and how He is wanting to transform you

Anticipate that God will lead you to discern something significant through "remembering" that will help you to more fully join Him as He moves you toward greater Christ-likeness. "Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent" (Rev. 3:3a).

**REFLECTION EXERCISE
TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE YOUR NEXT CELL GROUP MEETING**

1. **Take time to read through your journal and accountability entries, particularly God's weekly invitations to you and your responses from week 1 to 10** As you do this look for common themes and/or patterns, how God has been working in your life and areas you have grown in, as well as areas over which you still need to find victory. You may find it helpful to read with a highlighter in hand.
2. **Then, answer the follow questions:**

What did you see as you read through your material? In a few sentences encapsulate a common theme or thread in what God has been saying to you / a persistent area of struggle that keeps cropping up week by week / an area of growth that you can celebrate / an "aha" moment / etc.

Based upon what you have discovered from your reflection exercise, consider what God's invitation to you is. Write down your response, a way that you can more fully join Him in what He is doing in your life.

Father, I see where you have been, and continue to be, at work in my life and I will join You in this by.... _____

A NOTE TO THE LEADERS:
This reflection exercise is a very important part of the process of hearing from God and responding back to Him. It requires unhurried time for each person to share, interact with one another and prayer for each person specifically. Therefore, you are encouraged to allocate sufficient time to the accountability portion of your meeting (approx. 15-20 minutes per person). Depending on the size of your accountability groups, you may need to invest your full cell group meeting to this.

WEEK 11
SOLITUDE: JOURNALING

WEEK 11

OPTIONAL: CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

- Psalm 100
- Psalm 101
- Psalm 102
- Psalm 103
- Psalm 104
- Psalm 105

OPTIONAL: JOURNALING FOR CHRONOLOGICAL READING OF GOD'S WORD

OPTIONAL: THE NEW CITY CATECHISM

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

PART 1 - God, Creation and Fall, Law

Q12: What does God require in the ninth and tenth commandments?

Ninth, that we do not lie or deceive, but speak the truth in love. Tenth, that we are content, not envying anyone or resenting what God has given them or us.

WEEK 11
CELEBRATION: SERMON NOTES

How will what I heard impact my life this week?

