



BAND of BROTHERS

SPRING SERIES 2026 – WEEK 10

### To Caesar You Shall Go!

*“...let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council, other than this one thing 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.’”*

– Acts 24:20-21 ESV

- **A hopeless situation**

- Paul has been...falsely accused
  - beaten by his own people
  - threatened with death
  - interrogated by the Romans
  - and shipped off to Rome
- Listen to what he said to the Roman governor Felix
  - He has been accused by the Jews
  - He has been imprisoned by the Romans

*“I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, and **I have the same hope in God as these men themselves have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.**” – Acts 24:14-15 NLT*

- Paul had discussed this hope before
 

*“My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. **I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead.**” – Acts 23:6 NLT*
- Paul is **hopeful** because of this **hope**
  - He doesn’t mention salvation
    - forgiveness of sins
    - justification
    - sanctification
    - redemption

or eternal life

- His hope is in **the resurrection**
  - Paul insists that this is his hope and...  
...the reason he is on trial
  - Yet, what were the accusations against him?

#### **Romans 24:5**

He is a plague (*loimos* – a pestilence)

He stirs up riots among the Jews *everywhere*

He is the ringleader of a *dangerous* sect

He tried to profane the temple

**They never bring up the resurrection**

- Yet, what did Festus tell King Agrippa?  
*“When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about **a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive.**”* – Acts 23:6 NLT
- This goes back to chapters 22-23
  - ~ The Tribune took Paul to the High Priest
  - ~ He was seeking a crime to charge Paul with

*The commander wanted to find out exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews. So the next day he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the members of the Sanhedrin to assemble. Then he brought Paul and had him stand before them.* – Acts 22:30 NLT

#### The Sanhedrin

- ~ 71 members
- ~ The supreme Jewish religious and judicial counsel
- ~ Made up of Sadducees and Pharisees

#### Sadducees

- ~ Wealthy, aristocratic & political class
- ~ Held the majority of seats on the council
- ~ Cooperated with the Romans
- ~ Denied ...God’s involvement in daily life
  - ...angels and demons
  - ...the afterlife
  - ...and the resurrection of the dead

#### Pharisees

- ~ Middle-class businessmen
- ~ Despised the Romans

- ~ Believed in...God's role in everyday life
  - ...angels and demons
  - ...the afterlife
  - ...and the resurrection of the dead

*Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. **I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead.**" When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. (The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, and that there are neither angels nor spirits, but the Pharisees believe all these things.) There was a great uproar, and some of the teachers of the law who were Pharisees stood up and argued vigorously. "We find nothing wrong with this man," they said. – Acts 23:6-8 NLT*

*"I believe everything that is **in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets**, and I have the same hope in God as these men themselves have that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked." – Acts 24:14-15 NLT*

- ~ The resurrection was not a **new concept**
- ~ It was a **long-standing promise of God**
- ~ The Law and the Prophets predicted it

#### **Luke 24:44-45**

- ~ Jesus has resurrected
- ~ He has appeared to His disciples
- ~ Now He instructs them one last time

*Then he said, "When I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me **in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms** must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand **the Scriptures**. – Luke 24:44-45 NLT*

- ~ This was not the first time

*Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. **On the third day he will rise again.**" The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about. – Luke 18:31-34 NLT*

- ~ But post-Pentecost, it all made sense

- **Peter's first sermon**

- The Holy Spirit came
- The disciples were filled
- The crowd was perplexed
- And Peter took advantage of the situation

*"Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

***"But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."** – Acts 2:22-24 NLT*

- Peter quotes the Hebrew Scriptures
- He uses the writings of the prophet Joel

*"In the last days, God says,*

***I will pour out my Spirit on all people'...***

*"Even on my servants, both men and women,*

***I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy'....***

*"And everyone who calls*

*on the name of the Lord **will be saved.**"* – Joel 2:17, 18, 21 NLT

- An 800-year-old prophecy
- Fulfilled by Jesus' resurrection
- Just as He had promised

*"If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. – John 7:38-39 ESV*

- First, He had to be...**crucified, buried,**  
...and bodily **resurrected,**  
...so He could **appear, ascend,**  
...and then be **glorified**

***"But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.....God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."** – Acts 2:32-33 NLT*

- Peter quotes a Psalm of David  
*“I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is **at my right hand**, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, **you will not let your holy one see decay.**”* – Psalm 16:25-27 NLT

- Peter was not speaking of himself

*“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch **David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.** But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. **Seeing what was to come, he [David] spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah,** that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.”* – Acts 2:29-33 NIV

- **The remarkable reality of the resurrection**

- “He is risen!”
  - This phrase no longer phases us
  - There’s no shock value attached to it
  - Its improbability escapes us
  - And its implications don’t impress us
- It’s early Sunday morning
  - The two women arrive at Jesus’ **tomb**
  - His **body** is missing
  - And their grief only **intensifies**
  - But the angel gives them **good news**

*“Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. **He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead,** just as he said would happen. Come, see where his body was lying.”* – Matthew 28:5-6 NLT

- They were looking for a **dead** Jesus...  
 ...but He was **alive**
- They had heard Jesus’ **promise**...  
 ...but had failed to **believe**
- They had viewed His death as the **end**...  
 ...but it was just the **beginning**

- **It is finished!**

- Jesus’ final words on the cross:  
*Later, knowing that everything had now been finished...Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.* – John 19:28, 30 NLT

**tetelestai** –

- An accounting term: “Paid in full”
- Jesus paid mankind’s sin debt with His life
- That phase of God’s plan was complete
- He had suffered and died

*“The Son of Man **must suffer** many things and **be rejected** by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and **be killed**, and on the third day **be raised.**” – Luke 9:22 ESV*

- **The hope of the resurrection...**

...motivated Paul’s mission,  
...permeated his message,  
...and fueled his passion for the gospel

*Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.*

*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared... – 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 ESV*

*Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

*But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. – 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 ESV*

- **Discussion Questions:**

Why should the fact that Jesus is alive help us face tomorrow with more hope and less fear?

“If Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins.”  
Discuss how this statement by Paul should motivate rather than depress us?

What do John 14:1-4 and Jesus’ resurrection have in common, and what difference should it make?



A MESSAGE OF HUMILITY AND  
HOPE FROM THE LIFE OF PAUL

# THE *CHIEF* OF SINNERS

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SPRING SERIES 2026 – WEEK 11 HOMEWORK

## WEEK 11 – Locked up, but not down

Paul finds himself under house arrest in Rome, awaiting a trial before Nero, the Roman Emperor. But he is far from perturbed or anxious about his state of affairs. During his lengthy two-year imprisonment, Paul writes a series of letters to the churches he had helped to launch. In this lesson, we will examine the key themes and doctrines found in these prison epistles.

- Read through pages 269-273 of the PDF containing Ken's Devotional™ on the Book of Acts.
- Read Acts 28:11-30. With this final chapter of the book of Acts, we are reaching what appears to be the end of Paul's life. Luke almost closes out his book in an abrupt manner, leaving his readers to wonder what ever happened to the apostle Paul. As you read these closing verses, write down what jumps out at you about Paul's mental and emotional state after 2 years of waiting for a trial date before the emperor.
- Read 2 Corinthians 11:21-29. Below, make a list of all the "trials and tribulations" Paul faced in his two decades of ministry.

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. What do you think God means when tells Paul, “My power works best in weakness”?

Where have you seen that proven true in your own life?

- During his more than two years of confinement in Rome, Paul wrote a series of letters to some of the churches he helped to launch. Read the following passages and write down how you think Paul’s God-ordained imprisonment prepared him to write what he did.

Ephesians 3:14-19

Ephesians 4:29-32

Ephesians 5:15-16

Philippians 2:14-16

Philippians 3:12-14

Colossians 1:24-26

Colossians 3:15-17

Colossians 4:2-6

Philemon 1:1-3