

The Plot Against Paul

1. Christ's Enemies Hate Paul Enough to Assassinate Him (12-15).

2. God Uses Paul's Unnamed Nephew to Preserve Him (16-21).

3. God Uses a Pagan Official to Save Him Again (22).

CONCLUSION: Why is this passage here? To explain Paul's transfer from Jerusalem to Caesarea? Sure that is part of it. But why the inclusion of the details without even naming Paul's nephew? God is showing us how He works through all these details to preserve and protect His people. He does so not just so that we can be safe, but so that we can testify about Christ. He uses anonymous boys and government officials to establish exactly what He has ordained to accomplish. Let us praise Him and trust Him with every detail of our lives!

Romans 8:28-39

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? *If God is for us, who can be against us?* He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. *For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Esther 4:13-17

Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And *who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish.” Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

Philippians 3:7-11

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. *For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things* and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

What is your confidence? Not just what you *say* is your bedrock. *What do you cling to when all else fails?* God's faithfulness to His people is most clearly on display at the cross of Christ. He gave everything to rescue and redeem us just as He promised. It is also beautifully on display through the details of how He delivers Paul here, working not through miraculous wonders, but through people doing what they ought to do.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ. Ask Jesus to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday Morning

READ **Acts 23:12-22; Romans 8:28-39; Esther 4:13-17; Colossians 3:12-17.** DISCUSS How does God use all things to accomplish His purposes? How does this passage comfort you? Challenge you? PRAY "Lord Christ, teach us to trust that Your ways are perfect. Enable us to trust in Your sovereign care for us."

Sunday Evening

Come join the *Young Adults' Fellowship* tonight at 6pm. Pray for them!

Monday

READ **Acts 23:12-22; John 15:18-27; Luke 24:44-49.** DISCUSS Why does the world hate us? What are we supposed to do? What does it mean to testify or give witness to Christ? Why do we need the Holy Spirit to do it? MEDITATE on **Romans 8:38-39.** PRAY, "Lord Jesus, thank You for entrusting us with Your truth. Embolden us to live and proclaim it with Your Holy Spirit."

Tuesday

READ **Acts 23:12-22; Romans 8:28-39; Ephesians 1:18-23.** DISCUSS What do we know? Why does Paul pray for those in Ephesus to have their eyes opened? How are these related? Ask the Lord to enable us to know the hope of our calling. MEDITATE on **Romans 8:38-39.** PRAY, "Lord, Your surpassing greatness works all things together for Your purposes. Teach us to trust You completely."

Wednesday

READ **Acts 23:12-22; Esther 4:13-17; Psalm 37:1-11**. DISCUSS, How was Esther to use her position? Why? How are we? How is it the same/different? What does it mean to “*befriend faithfulness*” (v. 3)? MEDITATE on **Romans 8:38-39**. PRAY “Lord, thank You for raising up queens like Esther and anonymous boys like Paul’s nephew. Enable us to be faithful and do as You command us day by day.”

Thursday

READ **Acts 23:12-22; Colossians 3:12-17; First Corinthians 10:31-11:1**. DISCUSS, What are we supposed to do? *How* are we supposed to do it? What are you wrestling with today? MEDITATE on **Romans 8:38-39**. PRAY “Lord, You call us to trust You and to demonstrate that through obedience. Make us faithful, Lord Christ, in all that we think, say, and do.”

Friday

READ **Acts 23:12-22; Romans 8:28-39; Esther 4:13-17; Colossians 3:12-17**. DISCUSS, How has God been teaching you from these passages this week? REJOICE if Christ has given you the honor to be identified among His people! MEDITATE on **Romans 8:38-39**. PRAY for renewal and revival across our land.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the worship service tomorrow. *There will be both the in-person and live-stream services available.* READ **Acts 21:1-23:35**. Invite others to join you for either *in-person or live-stream service* tomorrow. Ask Jesus to be glorified in our testimony of Him.

Romans 8:38-39

*“For I am sure that neither death nor life,
nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus
our Lord.”*