SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

Acts

Chapter 24

Go Away for the Present

MEMORY VERSE · ACTS 24:16

"In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in Acts 24

Paul stood in a courtroom with lies told about him and a corrupt judge over him, and he still had a clear conscience and a living hope. Felix had power and comfort, and he trembled. This week God asks you to keep short accounts with Him and with people — and not to put Him off "for the present."

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The full Deep Dive, the O·I·A study and the slides for this chapter are on the Acts study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

Lies and Flattery

READ · ACTS 24:1–9

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Who came to accuse Paul, how did Tertullus speak about Felix, and what three things did he say about Paul (24:1–6)?

REFLECT

Tertullus praised Felix for bringing "much peace" (24:2) to get what he wanted. When have you buttered someone up to get your way — or been fooled because someone flattered you?

REFLECT

Paul was called "a real pest" and a troublemaker (24:5), and most of it was false. What false things have been said about you, and what do you do with the anger or shame they leave behind?

RESPOND — TODAY

Today, speak plainly and honestly to one person you would normally try to impress — no flattery, just the truth said kindly.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 24:16)

DAY 2 OF 5

The Way and a Clear Conscience

READ · ACTS 24:10–16

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What facts did Paul give to answer the charges, and what three things did he confess about what he believes and how he lives (24:11–16)?

REFLECT

Paul admitted what was true — "this I admit to you" (24:14) — and denied only what was false. When you are accused, is it hard for you to own the part that is true? Why?

REFLECT

Paul said, "I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men" (24:16). Is there anything right now between you and God, or between you and another person, that needs to be dealt with?

RESPOND — TODAY

Before you sleep tonight, ask God two questions — Is anything between me and You? Is anything between me and another man? — and do the next right thing about whatever comes up.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 24:16)

DAY 3 OF 5

On Trial for the Resurrection

READ · ACTS 24:17–21

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Why did Paul say he came to Jerusalem, how was he found in the temple, and what did he say was the real reason he was on trial (24:17–21)?

REFLECT

Paul came to Jerusalem to "bring alms to my nation" (24:17), and he was arrested anyway. When has doing the right thing landed you in trouble, and how did you respond?

REFLECT

Paul said, "For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today" (24:21). How would believing that you will rise from the dead change the way you face your own court dates, release dates or hard news?

RESPOND — TODAY

Read Acts 24:15 out loud and thank God by name for the hope of the resurrection — then tell one person why it matters to you.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 24:16)

DAY 4 OF 5

Go Away for the Present

READ · ACTS 24:22–25

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What three subjects did Paul talk about with Felix and Drusilla, how did Felix react, and what did he say (24:24–25)?

REFLECT

Paul talked about "righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come" (24:25) — exactly what Felix needed to hear. Which of those three does God keep pressing on you, and why do you think it is that one?

REFLECT

Felix "became frightened" and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you" (24:25). What have you been putting off with God, telling yourself you will deal with it later?

RESPOND — TODAY

Name the one thing you have been putting off with God, write it down, and take the first step on it today — not "when I find time."

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 24:16)

DAY 5 OF 5

Two Years of Waiting

READ · ACTS 24:26–27

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What was Felix really hoping for when he sent for Paul, how long did Paul stay in custody, and why did Felix leave him there (24:26–27)?

REFLECT

Felix kept talking with Paul for two years but was really hoping for money (24:26). How can a man stay close to spiritual things and still keep his heart closed to God?

REFLECT

Paul waited two years on a man who would not do the right thing (24:27). Where are you stuck waiting on someone else's decision, and what does faithfulness look like for you while you wait?

RESPOND — TODAY

Pray for the person whose decision you are waiting on — by name — and ask God for patience and a clean heart toward him or her today.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 24:16)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Tertullus used flattery and half-truths, and Paul answered with facts and a confession (24:2–6, 10–16). What does it look like for us as men to tell the truth about ourselves when it would be easier to spin it?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Paul worked at keeping a clear conscience "both before God and before men" (24:16). What could we do as a group to help one another keep short accounts this week?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

Felix felt the fear of God and still chose to wait (24:25). Why do we put God off, and how can we encourage a brother who keeps saying "later"?

MY PRAYER

Father, I do not want to tell You "Go away for the present," so today I bring You the thing I have been putting off and…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · ACTS 24:16

"In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men."