SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

Acts

Chapter 25

I Appeal to Caesar

MEMORY VERSE · ACTS 25:19

"but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in Acts 25

Paul has sat in custody for two years, his enemies still want him dead, and the men in power keep treating his life as a favor to hand out. This week watch how God keeps His promise through all of it — and ask yourself whether Jesus is to you a dead man in a story or a living Lord you can talk to today.

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

Malice That Waits

READ · ACTS 25:1–5

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What did the chief priests ask the new governor to do, and what were they really planning (25:2–3)?

REFLECT

Two years had passed, and the first thing these leaders brought to Festus was their old plan to kill Paul (25:3). What grudge or resentment have you kept alive for a long time, and what has it cost you?

REFLECT

Festus kept Paul in Caesarea instead of sending him up the road where the ambush waited (25:4–5). Where can you look back and see God protecting you through someone who did not even know he was doing it?

RESPOND — TODAY

Name one person you are holding a grudge against, and pray for him by name today — for his good, not his punishment.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 25:19)

DAY 2 OF 5

I Appeal to Caesar

READ · ACTS 25:6–12

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What did Paul say he had not done, what did Festus offer him, and what did Paul choose instead (25:8–11)?

REFLECT

Festus was "wishing to do the Jews a favor" (25:9) with Paul's life. When have you traded what was right for someone's approval — or been the one traded?

REFLECT

Paul said, "I do not refuse to die," and in the same breath appealed to Caesar (25:11). How can a man be brave and wise at the same time when he is treated unfairly?

RESPOND — TODAY

If you are facing an unfair situation, write down one honest, lawful step you can take — and then give the outcome to God in prayer.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 25:19)

DAY 3 OF 5

A Dead Man, Alive

READ · ACTS 25:13–19

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

When Festus explained the case to King Agrippa, what did he say the argument was really about (25:18–19)?

REFLECT

To Festus, Jesus was just "a dead man" and the whole thing was "their own religion" (25:19). If your coworkers, cellmates or neighbors described Jesus only from watching you, what would they say?

REFLECT

Paul kept insisting that Jesus is "alive" (25:19). What would be different about your day if you really believed Jesus is alive and with you right now?

RESPOND — TODAY

Speak to Jesus out loud today as a living Person — tell Him one thing you are worried about and one thing you are thankful for.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 25:19)

DAY 4 OF 5

At a Loss

READ · ACTS 25:20–22

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What did Festus admit he did not know how to do, and what did Agrippa ask for (25:20, 22)?

REFLECT

Festus was "at a loss how to investigate such matters" (25:20). Where are you at a loss right now, and who could you ask for help instead of pretending you have it figured out?

REFLECT

Agrippa said, "I also would like to hear the man myself" (25:22). Who in your life is curious about Jesus, and how could you give him a chance to hear about Him?

RESPOND — TODAY

Ask one man this week a simple question: "Have you ever thought much about who Jesus is?" — and then listen.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 25:19)

DAY 5 OF 5

Amid Great Pomp

READ · ACTS 25:23–27

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Who came into the auditorium with Agrippa and Bernice, and what did Festus say he had found about Paul (25:23, 25)?

REFLECT

The hall was full of "great pomp" (25:23), and the man who mattered most was the prisoner. Where do you measure your worth by status, money or reputation — and how does God measure it?

REFLECT

Festus admitted Paul "had committed nothing worthy of death" (25:25), but he still kept him in chains. How do you keep trusting God when the people in charge know the truth and still do not make it right?

RESPOND — TODAY

Write down three things about yourself that are true because you belong to Christ, and read them over before you sleep.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ACTS 25:19)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Priests, governors and a king all thought they were in charge of Paul's case, yet the Lord had already said he would witness in Rome (25:12; 23:11). Where have we seen God work His plan through people who were not trying to help?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen to protect himself (25:10–11). When is it right for a Christian to stand up for his legal rights, and when should he let them go?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

Festus thought the resurrection was a side issue (25:19). How would our group talk, pray and treat each other differently if we kept remembering that Jesus is alive?

MY PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are alive and You rule over every court and every officer, so today I bring You the situation I cannot control and ask You to…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · ACTS 25:19

"but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive."