

Pastor's Bible Study  
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church  
December 3, 2009

Acts 24:1—26:32

Paul's chance to share the good news—of the resurrection!

1. In Acts 24 Paul defends himself to Ananias, high priest of the Jewish people. Paul states, "But this I admit to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our ancestors, believing everything laid down according to the law or written in the prophets" (Acts 24:14). What might this tell us about the Old Testament?
2. In Acts 24:15, notice that Paul points to the resurrection in his defense. What does his use of the resurrection tell us about the role of this belief in the lives of Jews and early Christians in first century Christianity?<sup>1</sup>
3. Paul stays in Caesarea for more than two years—under house arrest. After this time had passed, Paul got his chance to defend himself against many "serious charges" made by "the Jews" (Jewish leaders who did not follow Jesus). Evidently, some people claimed that Paul had committed offenses against the law of the Jews, the temple, and the emperor (see Acts 25:8). What do you think it mean to "offend" these things?
4. Paul claimed that he had committed no offense against any of the above. But he gets more specific than that: Paul asserts that he stands trial because of "my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors . . ." According to Acts 26:6-8, what is the "hope" which Paul claims is what the twelve tribes of Israel hope to attain?
5. In Acts 26:9-23, we get yet another version of Paul's testimony of how he came to follow Jesus. What effect might hearing Paul's testimony do for the original hearers of this book? What effect does reading his testimony multiple times have on you?

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<sup>1</sup> For the Apostle Paul's understanding of resurrection, I highly recommend N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008).