



SERMON STUDY GUIDE

MARCH 12, 2017 - PASTOR MARK LACKEY

The God Who Stands with Us

Acts 23

THINK & SHARE

 Questions to get your group talking

Take just a few minutes per person to share: When did you embrace the reality of Jesus Christ with all of your heart—His death and resurrection and invitation to an eternal kind of life? When did grace become real to you? Was it more like Jesus intersecting with your life at a point in time or a longer period where it gradually became clear to you?

STUDY & DISCUSS

 Questions that invite you to dig deeper into the week's material & your own life

A. Why does something so simple as the story of our own journey to faith have an effect on other people? What happens in your own heart when you share your story?

B. Read 2 Corinthians 2:14-16. Notice that it is the aroma of Christ that we give off. What would be some ways that we, as part of Calvary Church, can give off an aroma to those who don't know Christ, especially ways that point people to Him without sidetracking to secondary issues?

C. When Paul says in 2 Corinthians 2:16 that we are not adequate for the task, what does he mean? Now read 2 Corinthians 3:4-5. Why is it important to remember that God is the one who makes us adequate?

D. Think about what the gospel is. In what ways will the gospel offend some people? What is it that people don't want to hear and that rubs them in the wrong way?

"There is a common, worldly kind of Christianity in this day, which many have, and think they have enough—a cheap Christianity which offends nobody, and requires no sacrifice—which costs nothing, and is worth nothing." Mark Dever quoting J. C. Ryle





E. Read Hebrews 11:17-38. Note the transition in verse 32 from people who were delivered *from* their trials to those who were sustained *through* their trials. We prefer to experience the former ourselves, of course, but what is the value of God's people enduring suffering and trials as people in the second group did? Have you ever experienced God's presence in the midst of something extremely difficult?

PRAY & COMMIT Questions for your breakout prayer time and challenges for the rest of your week.

A. The doctrine of God's sovereignty—He is in control and never loses control—has real relevance to our lives. How do you find yourself responding to the idea that God is sovereign over your life and the things you experience? Take some time this week to pray specifically about how this doctrine intersects your life, asking God to remind you that He is in control and He stands with you.

B. What kinds of worries, self-reflections, or rules do you let keep you from talking to others about Jesus? What can you do to confront those hinderances in the coming weeks and embrace the beauty of the gospel not just for yourself but for those around you too?

C. When God's unconditional approval is our motivator and His unconditional love and acceptance the foundation of our sense of self, sharing Christ with others feels essential to our own faith journey (as it should!). Take time to rehearse the gospel by telling yourself what God says about you. This is the truth about who you are because of your faith in Christ.

John 1:12

Romans 8:1

Romans 6:6

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

1 Peter 2:9

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