

# VOYAGER

*Experiences That Shape Our Faith*

**About the Series:** Experiences are powerful and can shape our Christian faith. But experiences should not be what defines our faith. Rather, it should serve to strengthen our faith and affirm what we already know to be the facts of our faith as recorded in the Scriptures. In this sermon series, we explore the journeys of Apostle Paul and how encountering life-changing experiences can teach valuable life lessons to voyagers like us who are on a journey called life.

## Part 16

### Spiritual Conversations

Acts 22:30-23:35 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

#### DISCUSS

Christians often talk in a language that is foreign to those outside the church, using words and phrases such as “fellowship,” “quiet time,” “LifeGroup,” “tithes,” “Lord’s Supper,” “washed by the blood,” and many others. This is confusing to unbelievers and causes us to be misunderstood, and in turn we get scared to talk about spiritual subjects. As followers of Christ, how can we start spiritual conversations with those who need to hear the gospel’s message of hope? Read Acts 22:30-23:35 and discuss the following biblical principles.

#### **A good conscience leads to boldness (v. 22:30-23:5)**

- Why did Paul have to defend himself in front of a fact-finding hearing composed of Jewish religious leaders?
- What gave Paul the boldness to say what he said to defend himself after the high priest Ananias had him struck on the mouth?

- How will having a good conscience in the way you live your life give you boldness to have spiritual conversations?
- Do people who know that you have lived an honorable life know that you have nothing to be afraid of, regardless of the consequences?

#### **Turn the focus away from you and to more important issues (v. 23:6-10)**

- How did Paul wisely take the attention away from himself and bring it to a bigger theological issue? What happened next?
- How would you move the conversation focus away from you and turn it to the bigger issues of life, like salvation, eternal life, lasting peace, real hope, truth, real blessings, purpose in life, and other things, all of which are to help others, if you were in a similar situation?
- Why are these spiritual conversations actually to help others?

#### **Be ready in all circumstances to witness for Jesus (v. 23:11)**

- How did the Lord encourage Paul in the midst of all the mess and anxieties that he was going through? How was he being prepared in all circumstances to witness for Christ?
- How are you getting ready for the opportunities to speak on God’s behalf and to share spiritual things? Do you look forward to opportunities or do you avoid them? Why is that so?
- What questions can you think of that may start spiritual conversations in your life?

#### **God uses circumstances to position you to talk to specific people (v. 23:12-35)**

- How did God save Paul from the hands of the Jews who wanted him killed? How do you think Paul feels given that God had given him opportunities to testify for Jesus to people whom he would otherwise not have had an opportunity to share Jesus with?
- Have you ever had an experience where God led you to someone to talk about spiritual matters? Share with the group.

**REFLECT**

God works through us, sending us out to share His love. Our words and actions are powerful, no matter how seemingly small or insignificant. Perhaps this week the next person you ask, "How are you really doing?" may cause them to turn to Jesus. So be encouraged: Go out and love the exciting life God has planned for you by having spiritual conversations.

**PRAY**

Heavenly Father, thank You for speaking to me about having spiritual conversations with others, for reminding me that You want me to talk with others about You. Lord, help me to live a life with a good conscience that leads to boldness, that I would learn how to turn the focus away from me to more important issues, that I would be ready in all circumstances to witness for Jesus. Help me to sense it when You use circumstances to position me to talk to specific people. Lord, please give me the courage and the wisdom to talk to others about You. In Jesus' precious name. Amen.