

WEEKLY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week of Sunday October 18, 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02

Introduction

03

Discussion Questions

04

Application Questions

05

Questions for Families | Bible Reading Plan

06

Commentary

INTRODUCTION

In **Acts 23:11**, Jesus stands beside Paul during a difficult and uncertain moment, reminding him that he is not alone. Jesus is not promising Paul an easy road or immediate relief from his circumstances; He is inviting him to take courage, trust His presence, and remain faithful. We all face seasons when we are trying to do what is right, yet life does not turn out the way we hoped. In those moments, it can be difficult to trust God when we cannot see what He is doing. This passage challenges us to find our courage in Jesus' presence rather than our circumstances and to take our next faithful step.

Main Passage:

Acts 23:11

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Take Courage

READ ALOUD

Acts 23:1–11

Opening Question: What is something in life that turned out differently than you expected, but taught you something along the way?

- What stands out to you about Paul's circumstances and how he responds?
- What do you notice about what Jesus says and does in verse 11?
- Why do you think Jesus tells Paul to take courage instead of immediately changing his circumstances?
- How might knowing Jesus is with us change the way we respond when life doesn't go as planned?

APPLY

- Where in your life are you struggling to trust God because something isn't changing the way you hoped?
- What makes it difficult to remain faithful when you cannot see the results of your prayers or obedience?
- What's the difference between saying "I trust God" and actually living like you trust Him? What might that look like in your current circumstances?

RESPOND

- What is one specific step of faith or obedience you need to take this week, even if you don't know the outcome?
- Who in your life needs encouragement to keep trusting Jesus, and how can you remind them this week that they are not alone?

DIGGING DEEPER *(optional)*

Acts 23:12–24

- What stands out to you about how God protects Paul through the actions of his nephew and the Roman commander?
- How does Paul's response to the assassination plot demonstrate both trust in God's promise and personal responsibility?
- What does this part of the story teach us about the different ways God can work through ordinary people and circumstances?

PRAY

Invite group members to share areas where they feel discouraged, uncertain, or tired of waiting. Pray for courage to trust Jesus even when circumstances remain difficult. Ask God to help each person recognize His presence, remain faithful, and take their next step of obedience. Thank Jesus for His grace, His faithfulness, and His promise to never abandon those who belong to Him.

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Acts 23:11

- Why do you think Paul might have felt afraid or discouraged?
- What did Jesus say to Paul when he was going through a hard time?
- When do you sometimes feel afraid, worried, or alone?
- What is one way our family can trust Jesus and show courage this week?

For younger children: Remind your children that Jesus loves them and is with them, even when they feel afraid. Encourage them to talk to Jesus and ask Him for help.

For older kids or students: What is one situation at school, at home, or with friends where trusting Jesus might mean making a difficult but right choice?

BIBLE READING PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Scripture to read as you pray this week:

- **Day 1:** Acts 24:1–9
- **Day 2:** Acts 24:10–16
- **Day 3:** Acts 24:17–21
- **Day 4:** Acts 24:22–23
- **Day 5:** Acts 24:24–27

What's Going On?

Acts 23 continues the story of Paul's imprisonment following his return to Jerusalem. Although Paul has faithfully followed Jesus and shared the gospel, he now faces opposition, accusations, and threats against his life.

In the middle of his uncertainty, Jesus stands beside Paul and tells him to take courage. Jesus acknowledges Paul's witness in Jerusalem and assures him that he will also testify in Rome. This moment reveals that Paul's circumstances have not stopped God's purposes.

The following verses describe a plot to kill Paul and how God preserves his life through the actions of his nephew and Roman officials. Paul trusts Jesus' promise, but he also takes practical steps when he learns of the danger.

A Bit of Background

Paul had previously been a Pharisee, a Jewish religious leader who believed in the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees, another influential Jewish group, rejected the resurrection. This disagreement helps explain the conflict in Acts 23:6–10.

Paul's hope was rooted in the resurrection of Jesus, the very message he had been called to proclaim. Even as a prisoner, Paul remained committed to sharing that hope. Jesus' promise that Paul would testify in Rome also connects to the larger mission in Acts 1:8: that the gospel would spread from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.