

Divine Disruption**The Gospel in Motion**[Acts 23:1-11](#)

In this week's passage Paul finds himself in front of the Sanhedrin, defending his position regarding his belief in the resurrection. Ironically, belief in the resurrection was the very reason for his persecution of Christians before his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). In the midst of the commotion, Paul takes the opportunity to speak from his identity as a Pharisee, on trial for his hope in the resurrection. This encourages the Pharisees to defend Paul, which incites anger among the Sadducees (who do not believe in the resurrection). The whole commotion causes Paul to be sent back to the barracks, after the council worries that Paul will be "torn to pieces." Paul once opposed the message of Jesus, yet now he is willing to suffer for his belief in the resurrection. **Have you ever experienced a significant change in perspective or conviction? What can we learn from Paul's willingness to speak boldly about his convictions while navigating a deeply divided audience?**

Resurrection is at the center of this debate and is what drives Paul's life focus. In Romans, he establishes that Jesus is *the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness through the resurrection from the dead*. For Paul, the resurrection was not a one-time occurrence or an abstract symbol. It is a divine disruption – and the single historical pivot point upon which the entire reality of human salvation stands or falls. **The resurrection was the foundation of Paul's faith, mission, and hope. How does Paul's confidence in the risen Christ challenge or encourage your own faith? Where do you see signs of resurrection—new life, restoration, hope, or redemption—in your own life, community, or the world around you?**

The arguments between the Pharisees and Sadducees become so intense that the council fears for Paul's safety and orders him to be taken back to the barracks. *That night, the Lord stood near him and said, "keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome."* (v. 11) As determined as Paul is to stand for the gospel and for his belief in the resurrection, surely he experienced many moments of dismay, isolation, and discouragement. After a day of conflict and uncertainty, the Lord meets Paul with a simple message: "Keep up your courage." **Where in your life do you most need that encouragement today? How does God's encouragement to Paul speak to situations of fear, uncertainty, or discouragement that we face today?**