
Witness Unhindered:
 “How to Live in the Middle of the Story”
 Acts 28: 14b-31

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“We all long for Eden and are constantly glimpsing it: our whole nature is soaked with the sense of exile.” – J.R.R. Tolkien

“The enthusiasms of my conversion have worn off. For whole stretches since the dream, since the baptism, my belief has faltered, my sense of God’s closeness has grown strained, my efforts at living in accord with what I take to be the call of the gospel have come undone.... Once upon a time, I thought I had arrived. Now I have arrived at a middle.” – Lauren Winner, *Still: Notes on a Mid-Faith Crisis*

“In Jesus Christ we witness the long-awaited vindication and effective demonstration of God’s kingship in the world. The coming of Christ is the climax of the whole history of redemption as recorded in the Scriptures. The rightful king has established a beachhead in his territory and calls on his subjects to press his claims ever farther in creation.” – Al Wolters, *Creation Regained*

“Is there nothing to sing about today? Then borrow a song from tomorrow; sing of what is yet to be.” – Charles Spurgeon

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- As our study of the book of Acts draws to a close, what are some of the most memorable parts of the narrative for you?
 - What themes or applications have stuck with you?
 - What is still unclear or begs for more explanation?
- Tolkien describes humanity as “soaked with the sense of exile”.
 - What do you think he means?
 - How does a feeling of exile or estrangement manifest in your life, your work, your relationships?
- Lauren Winner contrasts “having arrived” spiritually and having arrived “at a middle”.
 - What is the difference she is drawing?
 - Where do you find yourself stuck in the middle?
 - What difference does it make that Jesus is king even over the “middle”?
- Al Wolters speaks of Jesus as the rightful king establishing a beachhead in creation and then calling his subjects to build his kingdom.
 - Where do you feel the tension of the “now” of Jesus’ kingship and the “not yet” of his kingdom fully “come on earth as it is in heaven”? Where do you find yourself thinking, “I know Jesus is King, but what about . . .”
 - Conversely, where do you see God’s kingdom advancing – in your own life, in the life of the church, in the larger culture? Where do you see or experience God at work to press his claims ever farther into creation?
- The last word of Acts is “unhindered”. Where are you longing for that in your life? Why?