

STUDY GUIDE:

Foundations - Acts 22

This is My Story

We continue this Foundations following Paul's missionary journey from Athens to Jerusalem.

For Starters

We are going to do things a little backwards today! Because mixing life up is fun. So, for starters read Acts 22: 1-21. What strikes you about Paul's "defense"?

Now Read Revelation 12:10-11. This is a vision that John has of Jesus and his followers and the armies of heaven overcoming evil (and by the way, testimony is just a fancy, Christian word for the story of God's activity in our lives).

- Does it surprise you that the Bible tells us that "we overcome evil through the blood the lamb and through the word of our testimony"?
- What does this practically mean?
- Does this revelation passage shine light onto why Paul's "defense" in Acts 22 might have been powerful?

Sharing our Story:

It is exciting stuff that followers of Jesus overcome evil in this world through the blood of Jesus and by the word of our testimony. We overcome evil. We restore brokenness. We heal ourselves and others with the blood of Jesus and with our story of him in our lives. Do you understand what this means? (that's rhetorical).

I think we are hesitant to share our stories because we often underestimate the power of what God has done in our lives. We tend to believe that our story is nice for us but it doesn't make a difference for other people. So we fall into this trap where we are don't share our faith at all because we think we have to know all these deep theological truths. We think we have to have all the answers or be able to win a debate. But that's simply not true. According to this passage in Revelation what we really need to know is the story of what God has done in our lives.

Do you know your story?

If it doesn't instantly leap to mind, does one of these scenarios describe why?

1. Maybe you have never really thought about how Jesus has been active in your life. You know he's real and you're following him. But you're unclear on how all the pieces fit together.
2. Maybe you aren't paying attention. Perhaps busyness has suffocated your awareness of activity in your life.
3. Now, I'm gonna warn you, the third one's the most challenging so take a deep breath...Maybe you aren't actually surrendering to Jesus in your life. Don't get me wrong. You believe in Jesus. You have accepted on an intellectual level but the truth of the matter, if you're honest, is that you still like your plans better than His.

The truth of the matter is that you'll never be able to share your story unless you just take the leap and do it! So today we are going to challenge you to take the leap! Take time to share your stories with one another. Many of you might be panicking right now it's okay. This is a safe place. And there's no right or wrong! All our stories will be different! Perhaps you have just recently become aware of God's activity in your life. Maybe you have followed Jesus for years! It doesn't matter! If we assume that God's story in our lives is a powerful tool then we should know share it! You have permission to fumble through this!

Ready...Go!

Closure

Sharing our story is a way that we connect with one another and we place ourselves with in that larger story that God has been writing since the Beginning. When we become aware of God's movement in our life and we share that story with other we live the memory of what God has done and is doing in our world! It's powerful stuff. If you're brave I challenge you to this: ask God to allow you to share your story this week. Then send us (Ryan or Dawn) your story telling stories so that we can get excited about what God is doing in our community!

CLOSE IN PRAYER

