



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

Plans and Promises

Scripture: Acts 23:11-35

Memory Verse: Romans 8:31

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

For My Family:

It had been a difficult few days for Paul. He had been attacked by a mob in Jerusalem, captured by the Romans, and given an unfair trial by the Pharisees and Sadducees. He tried to share the Gospel twice, first to the mob and then to the religious leaders, but neither time was his message received. This must have been a challenging time, but the Lord came to Paul that night and encouraged him, telling him that he would get the chance to share the Gospel in Rome (Acts 23:11). This message did more than simply lift Paul's spirits. It was a promise that no matter what happened to him, he would make it to Rome and be able to share the Gospel there.

It didn't take long for this promise to be put to the test. A group of over forty Jewish men plotted to kill Paul. The plan was to trick the Roman soldiers into bringing Paul to the chief priests for another trial. Once the Romans brought Paul out, the men were going to ambush him and kill him. They were so committed to this plan that they all made a promise not to eat or drink anything until they got him. They were serious! It seemed like they would surely succeed, but there was one problem with their plan: God had a different plan.

Now Paul's sister heard about this plot, and she sent her son to warn him. Paul called one of the soldiers, and the soldier brought the boy to the Roman commander. Paul's nephew explained the entire plot, so the commander assigned 470 soldiers to guard Paul on his journey to Caesarea. There, he would stand trial not before the Jewish religious leaders, but before the Roman governor, Felix. The commander wrote a letter to Felix explaining why he had sent Paul to him, and Felix agreed to hear the case. Imagine the looks on the faces of those forty men who had planned to kill Paul when they saw almost 500 soldiers guarding him. They didn't stand a chance! God had protected him.

God promised that Paul would preach the Gospel in Rome, and so nothing could prevent that from happening. It didn't matter if forty thousand men were in on the plot. God's promises cannot be stopped! The Bible is filled with promises God made to people, families, countries, and even the whole world, and not one of those promises has ever been broken. God has made promises to us as well. He promises to always be with us, that nothing can separate us from His love, and that He will come again for us so that we can be with Him forever. Not one promise of God has ever been broken, and so we can trust that all His promises to us will come true as well.

Questions for Young Children:

What did the Lord tell Paul to encourage him?

What did the forty men plan to do?

How did God protect Paul?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

Unbelievers might say about this story that Paul got lucky and that God had nothing to do with Paul being rescued. How would you respond?

What are some other examples in Scripture of promises God made that came true, even when it seemed impossible?

What promises has God made for us today?