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**How Do I Defend Myself?**

Standing strong in faith when persecuted for Christ

Acts 23:12–24:27

*Recognize that you will receive unjust treatment because of your faith in Christ*

Luke’s Account

 Jesus Paul

Prophesies that Jews will deliver him over Receives prophecy that Jews will deliver

to Gentiles when he enters Jerusalem him over to Gentiles when he enters Jerusalem Jerusalem

Enters the temple to purify it Enters the temple with vows of purity

Priests seek to kill him Priests seek to kill him

New party has plot to kill him (Judas) New party has plot to kill him (40 vows)

Romans arrest him and try him Romans arrest him and try him

Jews accuse him of disrupting peace Jews accuse him of disrupting peace

Romans find no guilt to priests’ charges Romans find no guilt to priests’ charges

Roman officials try to please Jews Roman officials try to please Jews

Send Jesus to death Send Paul to Rome

**1 Peter 4:12**

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”

* Some opponents are emotionally convinced you are an enemy (23:12-14, 21)

“To make such an oath, they must have burned with intense hatred against the apostle, a hatred which must have been the accumulation of many years, in some cases probably going back

to their reactions at the time of Paul’s conversion.

**Donald Guthrie**, *The Apostles*

* Some opponents make intricate plans for your demise (23:15)
* Some opponents make false or exaggerated claims of your guilt (24:1-9)

*Rely on God to protect you*

* He protects you with unexpected advocates (23:16-22)
* He protects us with government rules (23:23-30)
* He protects us with human political ploys (24:22-23, 27)

*Ready yourself to explain your faith*

* Expose what is false (24:10-13, 17-20)
* Explain what is true (24:14-16, 21, 24-26)

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