



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

Wednesdays
7.30-8.30PM

ACTS 26

Paul's Defence #5 (King Agrippa)

Paul before Agrippa (1-3): Who is present at the hearing? Why is Paul happy?

Paul's background (4-8): What do we know about Paul's background? What is he being judged for? How does Paul relate his faith to the faith of the fathers?

Paul's 4-part Testimony (9-19): Life before Christ (9-11), Divine Intervention (12-15), Divine commission (16-18), Response to Divine Calling (19)

Paul's closing remarks (20-23): What is the scope of Paul's ministry? What does Paul emphasize in closing? Why were Jews upset with Paul? Who was Paul's trusted ally?

Reaction of Judges (24-32): What was the reaction of Festus? How did Paul boldly confront Agrippa and why is this a great question? How did Agrippa respond? What does Paul's reaction reveal about his heart? What was the conclusion of those who heard Paul?

Personal Reflection: *Paul had a clear four-part testimony ... how about us?*

Paul's Three Missionary Journeys followed by Five Trials and Defense

Before Jewish Crowd (Acts 21, Acts 22)

✓

Before Jewish Council in Jerusalem (Acts 23) ✓

Before Felix in Caesarea (Acts 24) ✓

Before Festus in Caesarea (Acts 25) ✓

Before King Agrippa of Caesarea (Acts 26)

Mob

Teaches against People, Law & Synagogue,
Brings Gentile to Inner Court

Not Guilty

Sanhedrin

Believes and Preaches of Hope and Resurrection

Not Guilty

Felix

Pestilence, Sediton, Ring Leader, Profanes the temple

Not Guilty

Festus

(Offended the Law, Temple, Caesar)

Paul Appeals to Caesar

Paul before Agrippa (1-3)

Who is present at the hearing?

Why is Paul happy?

Apostle Paul before the King

Who is present at the hearing?

- King Agrippa, Governor Festus, Bernice, and others (v.30)

Why is Paul happy?

- another hope for fair hearing and justice
- privilege of presenting to the King (as prophesied in Acts 9) and other prominent people,
- another opportunity to witness

Acts 9:15-16 (NIV) Paul's mission

But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

Paul's Background (4-8)

What do we know about Paul's background?

What is he being judged for?

How does Paul relate his faith to the faith of the fathers?

Apostle Paul's background before conversion

- Born in Tarsus, Tribe of Benjamin
- Pharisee, a faithful Jew
- Taught by Rabbi Gamaliel, great Jewish teacher, in Jerusalem (22:3)
- Persecutor of believers

“I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison” [Acts 22:3,4](#)

* [Also Philippians 3: 4-6](#)

Case against Paul

What is he being judged for? How does Paul relate his faith to the faith of the fathers?

Being judged for the Hope of the Promise made by God unto the Fathers (6, Acts 13:32-33)

The Promise ... is the Promise of Messiah

Promise of Messiah to the Fathers

Genesis 22:18 (**Abrahamic Covenant** ... in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed)

Genesis 49:10 (**Jacob's prophecy** ... The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until **Shiloh** come; and to him shall the gathering of the people be)

While the fathers are dead, **promise will be realized through Resurrection of dead** ... and that is the living and glorious hope of every believer that we will see our Messiah face to face in all glory!

Paul's 4-part Testimony (9-19)

Life before Christ (9-11),
Divine Intervention (12-15),
Divine commission (16-18),
Response to Divine Calling (19)

Part I: Paul's life before Christ (9-11)

- Passionate Jew, blinded by false beliefs
Passion & wrong mission IS Dangerous & Destructive
- Paul's anger wrongly directed against Christians
 - Paul put them in prison, Voted against them when they were sentenced to death Forced them to blaspheme, Pursued them to foreign cities in his rage
- Paul's reflection: I Corinthians 15:9 ... not worthy to be called an apostle as he persecuted the church

Part II: Divine Intervention (12-15)

- Paul's first encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus
- Met the Lord as he was on his way to persecute Christians
- Saw the light from heaven, brighter than noonday
- Heard a personal voice in Hebrew tongue (Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?)
 - ✓ Paul must have understood (a) Jesus is risen (b) persecution of church is really persecution of Christ
 - ✓ Lord loves His church (all believers), which He bought with his own precious blood

Part III: Paul's Divine Commission (16-18, NIV)

“Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to **you** to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. **17** I will rescue **you** from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them **18** to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me”

Paul's Divine Commission (16-18)

- Appointment: by the Lord
- Sent: by the Lord
- Designation: Servant and a Witness (of things seen and to be revealed)

DOING LORD'S WORK

- ✓ Only those appointed by the Lord can do His work
- ✓ We must only preach of what we have experienced and/or is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ [1 John 1:3](#) ... that which we have seen & heard, declare we unto you

Paul's Divine Commission (16-18)

Job Description:

To open eyes that will lead to:

- Light from darkness
- God from the power of Satan
- Forgiveness of sins
- Place among those who are sanctified by faith in me

Perks:

Divine Presence & Protection (17) (example: Acts 16:26, 23:11)

Part IV: Paul's response (19-20)

- On Paul's divine Mission: also read, Acts 9:15-16, 22:14-15
- Paul's response

“I was not disobedient unto the Heavenly vision”

✓ 4-part testimony is the foundation to a fruitful Christian life

Paul's reflection on his Divine calling

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb; and called me by His grace.

To reveal the Son in me, that

I might preach Him
among the heathen”

(Galatians, 1:15-16)

(Jeremiah 1:5)

Paul's closing remarks (20-23)

What was the scope of Paul's ministry?
What does Paul emphasize in his closing?
Why were Jews upset with Paul?
Who was Paul's trusted ally?

Paul's closing remarks

What was the scope of Paul's ministry?

Local and regional (Damascus, Jerusalem, coasts of Judea)

Universal (Jews and gentiles)

What does Paul emphasize in his closing?

Message of True Repentance:

Turning to God + Works supporting repentance

(Faith + Works)

Faith + Fruits (James 2:14-26)

Faith without Works is a **dead faith** or **unfruitful faith** or **inconsequential faith** or **false faith**!

James 2:26

For as the body without the spirit is dead,
so faith without works is dead also.

Does our life reflect faith + works?

Paul's closing remarks

Why were Jews upset with Paul?

- Jews upset with His gospel message to save gentiles and the hope of resurrection
- Jews were waiting for Messiah ... if Messiah had already come, crucified and been resurrected (as Paul preached), it contradicts their fundamental belief and hope. It also seemed like Jews didn't want to share the Messiah with the gentiles!

Who was Paul's trusted ally?

Obtained help of God (21)

Paul's Testimony

“At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. [17](#) But **the Lord stood at my side** and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. [18](#) The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever”

[II Timothy 4:16-18](#) (NIV)

Reaction of Judges (24-32)

What was the reaction of Festus?

How did Paul boldly confront Agrippa and what does the question imply?

How did Agrippa respond?

What does Paul reaction reveal about his heart?

What was the conclusion of those who heard Paul?

Reaction of Festus

Festus ... “You are out of your mind, Paul!” he shouted. “Your great learning is driving you insane.” (24, NIV)

Paul ... I am not crazy, this is the truth, public knowledge, and King knows as well (25,26)

I Corinthians 1:18 ... message of cross is foolishness

✓ Events surrounding the Cross are a historical fact ...No one can deny the truth

Paul and Agrippa

Paul to Agrippa, “do you believe the prophets? I know you do” (27,NIV)

- ✓ **Great question**: Belief in Prophets implies belief in all that is prophesied about Christ ... his birth, death, ascension, and glorious eternal kingdom!

Agrippa to Paul ... Instead of answering, asks a question, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”

What does Agrippa mean by this question?

(KJV ... has a statement, not question ... almost thou persuades me to be a Christian)

Agrippa's response is similar to response of many in today's world to gospel

Why is Agrippa unwilling to accept the truth? Some possible reasons:

- Did not fully understand the truth
 - Understood the truth, but unwilling to believe (denial, Pride)
 - Understood and believee, but unwilling to obey :
 - Afraid of consequences of life as a believer (Paul is in chains!)
 - Ashamed of calling Christ as Savior and Lord publicly
- ✓ Our opinion and arguments do not change the truth!
- ✓ “The fool says there is no God” (Psalms 14:1)

Paul's heart (29)

Paul replied, “Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains”

Conclusion of King, Governor, Bernice and others

NOT GUILTY

(again!)

- But Paul is not released as a decision had been already made by Festus of sending his case to Ceaser

Paul's obedience to his divine mission lead him to the King and Governors

Maybe none of us will meet the Governor or the President but all
Believers can have an audience with God anytime

Ephesians 3: 12 (NIV)

“In him and through faith in him we may approach God
with freedom and confidence”

Personal Reflection

*Paul had a clear four-part testimony
... how about us?*

Sinful PAST

Met CHRIST

New LIFE