

ACTS

THE MISSION OF CHRIST LIVED OUT BY HIS CHURCH

Sunday Morning, April 30, 2023 » Pastor Josiah Kagin

Message Title: Standing before a King

Message Text: Acts 25:13-26:18

Introduction:

Festus, the new Roman governor in Judea, heard Paul's case in Caesarea and discover that the allegations against him were theological, not criminal. Seeing that justice was not likely, Paul appealed to Caesar, whose name was Nero. Festus had a problem. He really did not have any documented criminal charges against Paul that could be sent to Nero for the appeals hearing. Convenient for Festus, King Herod Agrippa II had come for a visit to Caesarea and Festus sought counsel from him. King Agrippa agreed to hear Paul's case in order to help Festus document the charges for Paul's appeal. Paul stood before Agrippa with his freedom resting in his judgement. In reality, if there were no criminal charges, Paul should have been set free. However, this would have caused great tension between Festus and the Jewish leaders. Paul's case was riddled with religious persecution, stalling, injustice and political bias. Yet, we will see that his *demeanor* in the courtroom was respectful and purposeful.

1. Paul was _____ toward Agrippa (1-3)

A. Respectful of His _____ (1-2)

Acts 26:1-2 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: 2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

STRETCHED FOR THE HAND — The gesture spoken of here is a customary form of dignified oratory, designed to show the earnestness of the speaker.—MCB

DEFINITION—HAPPY: blessed

KING AGRIPPA II — a Jew with loyalties to Rome. He ruled Judaea alongside various Roman governors. Bernice was his sister.

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sermon notes



NOTE — Paul showed respect toward King Agrippa in acknowledging his position and showing appreciation for the opportunity to speak.

Romans 13:1–2 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

B. Respectful of His _____ (3a)

Acts 26:3 Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

NOTE — Paul had great knowledge, perhaps even *superior* knowledge of Jewish customs and questions.

Philippians 3:5 ...of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

C. Respectful of His _____ (3b)

Acts 26:3 Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

NOTE — Paul did not demand Agrippa's time, but asked for it.

2. Paul _____ on His Life before Christ (4-11)

A. Paul's Life as a _____ (4-5)

Acts 26:4–5 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

STRAITTEST SECT — strict practice as a Pharisees

Acts 22:3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

Philippians 3:4–6 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised

the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

QUOTE: So famous was Paul as a young rabbi that he could say that “*all the Jews at Jerusalem*” knew his life! —Weirsbe

B. Paul’s _____ in God’s Promise (6-8)

Acts 26:5–8 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: 7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

NOTE — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob hoped for the promise of the Messiah made to them by God and earnestly served day and night hoping for the promise to come.

Romans 4:20 He [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

QUOTE: This Messianic hope had been the red thread running through Jewish history. —Robertson

DEFINITION—INCREDIBLE: unbelievable

QUOTE: No one dared to call in question the overwhelming evidence of the resurrection of Jesus, which proclaimed Him to be the Christ, the Son of God; the only way of getting rid of it, therefore, was to pronounce it incredible.—JFB

C. Paul’s _____ against the Church (9-11)

Acts 26:9–11 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

Acts 9:1–2 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

Galatians 1:13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

3. Paul Recounted His _____ with Christ (12-18)

A. A _____ Encounter (12-15)

Acts 26:12–15 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. 14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

DAMASCUS — 137 miles North East of Jerusalem

DEFINITION—PRICKS: goads used to prod a stubborn animal

NOTE — Jesus identified Himself to Paul as the real object of his persecution.

B. A _____ -Changing Encounter (16-18)

Acts 26:16–18 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

DEFINITION—TO MAKE: to appoint

CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR PAUL'S LIFE—_____. (16)

A minister (servant) and witness

CHRIST'S PLAN FOR PAUL'S LIFE—_____. (17-18)

See Galatians 1:22–24

Conclusion



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