

## I. THE GOVERNOR REPLACED

- A. The plot to kill Paul continues (vs. 2-3)
  - 1. We know that the Jews wanted him dead
    - a. It was an unreasoning hatred – a BLIND hatred
    - b. They didn't care about his opinion, his facts, his experiences
    - c. Let's behave with discernment, other people have other beliefs
      - i. I grew up in a small town on a farm and rarely left
      - ii. The "big city" of Springfield seemed "far away"
      - iii. I left the state once to go visit family ON ANOTHER FARM
      - iv. Now I've traveled to several other countries
      - v. People are all the same, but live different lives
  - 2. No amount of "lived experience" changes the Word of God
    - a. The TRUTH is IMMUTABLE – cannot be changed
    - b. The truth is NOT situational – changing based upon circumstance
      - i. God never changes – HEB. 13:8 – "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."
      - ii. The Word IS God – JOHN 1:1 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
      - iii. The Word is TRUTH – JOHN 17:17 – "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
      - iv. Why else could Jesus say this? - JOHN 14:6 – "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
    - c. God's word TRUMPS all of our opinions
      - i. And it only makes sense – we can only see subjectively
      - ii. But God sees the whole matter from above
      - iii. He sees OBJECTIVELY
  - 3. These "leaders" (so called) were motivated by their self-interest
- B. The forty men who vowed to kill him were very hungry and thirsty by now
  - 1. Two years later – ACTS 23:12-15 – No record of the sudden starvation
  - 2. They were NOT willing to die for their convictions!
  - 3. But (cut to the chase) Paul certainly was! (vs. 11) – REFUSE NOT to die
- C. The enemies took their chance to "inform" him against Paul
  - 1. These are WOLVES – keep a whether eye! Mark them! Remove yourself!
    - a. So many want to let you know something "for your own good"
    - b. They're just "looking out for you" / the office narcissist
    - c. They try to control access to the boss and become invaluable
  - 2. They are always the one that become the "assistant"
    - a. "The boss and I have been talking about your performance"

- b. You'll notice that they NEVER turn loose of any job
- c. They can't get anything done because their fingers are in ever pie!
- 3. These chief priests and religious leaders tried controlled access to God
  - a. They were trying to BROKER a relationship with God
  - b. They were trying to be IRREPLACEABLE to religion (look out!)

## II. THE GOVERNOR'S REACTION

- A. Festus wasn't a fool – He refused to go along with the popular opinion (vs. 4-6)
  - 1. They brought many charges against him (vs. 7)
  - 2. That they COULD NOT PROVE – no evidence
    - a. The best evidence to a charge of “No God”
    - b. Is the evidence of a changed life – a TESTIMONY
    - c. The most important evangelistic tool is simply “what happened”
  - 3. Paul's defense – clear of all charges – he had a GOOD CONSCIENCE
    - a. The Romans generally did not lie or break their word
    - b. They had a strong society of honorable (but pagan) conduct
    - c. During the wars with Carthage, a Senator was threatened with death if he would not tell Rome to Surrender
      - i. He said, I'll return to Rome, but I'll tell them you are weak
      - ii. They said, if you do that, we'll kill you
      - iii. He said, I'll go tell them and come right back to execution
      - iv. And HE DID! Attack now! They're vulnerable
      - v. And then he went back to be killed by Carthage.
- B. He invited them to Caesarea, to speak in front of the accused
- C. Festus wanted the matter over and tried to “expedite” the solution
  - 1. Willing to show the Jews a favor – no impartial judge shows a “favor”
    - a. Paul declared his position succinctly – complete INNOCENCE
      - i. Innocent of the charges brought by the Jews (vs. 10)
      - ii. Willing to DIE for his beliefs if found unjustly guilty (vs. 11)
      - iii. Willing to take his case to the HIGHEST COURT (vs. 12)
    - b. Paul was not willing to sell the Truth short or give ground
    - c. Paul knew now that he would not be given justice in this court
  - 2. While we seek justice in this world, we are not guaranteed it!
    - a. PSA. 44:22 – “Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.”
    - b. MATT. 5:11 – “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”
    - c. MATT. 24:9 – “Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.”
  - 3. Some people seem to relish the idea of being hated for the Gospel
    - a. That is NOT the way we should go, not a fight against MAN

- b. But against principalities – this is a spiritual battle
- c. MATT. 16:25 – “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”

### III. THE GOVERNOR’S REQUEST

- A. Would you be willing to go to Jerusalem? (vs. 9)
  - 1. Come on – just a bend a little and we can get this all cleared up
    - a. I used to think that Paul made a mistake here – honestly!
    - b. I thought, well, he did what he thought was necessary
    - c. He just didn’t know what would happen but didn’t need to appeal
  - 2. If you’ll just play ball, everyone will be happy – NOT TRUE
    - a. You CANNOT make the enemies of the Gospel happy
    - b. UNLESS YOU ELIMINATE THE GOSPEL!!!
    - c. (Say it again!)
  - 3. The devil’s goal is NOT peaceful coexistence with God
    - a. The same is true of the militant Palestinian liberation terrorist
    - b. They do NOT want a “two-state” solution
    - c. They chant “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free”
- B. Would you be willing to COMPROMISE?
  - 1. 1 COR. 16:13 – “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”
  - 2. GAL. 5:1 – “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”
  - 3. Be unmovable and unwaivering!
- C. Be WARY of those who want to “meet you halfway” or “just get along”
  - 1. Those are key words to look out for – the devil OFTEN makes that offer
  - 2. It’s just a job on every other Sunday... It’s just a little social drink
  - 3. Be careful! My saved brother once took a job delivering beer...

### IV. THE GOSPEL REMAINS

- A. Religion tried to bring it down
  - 1. One of the biggest enemies to the Gospel is often RELIGION
  - 2. Focus on the PHYSICAL / SENSUAL / EMOTIONAL
  - 3. Rather than the TRUTH OF GOD! Rather than the BIBLE
- B. The Government tried to bring it down
  - 1. Remember the prophecy given by Jesus to His disciples
    - a. MATT. 10:18 – “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.”
    - b. To Ananias specifically about Paul: ACTS 9:15 – “But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear

my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:"

- c. Festus simply doesn't understand the problem with Paul
- d. Agrippa and Bernice do not understand the problem with Paul
- 2. Throughout History, governments have "licensed" the Gospel
- 3. I need no permission from ANY government to preach the Bible!
- C. The Devil tried to bring it down
  - 1. He started with "yea, hath God said?" – bring doubt on God's Word
  - 2. He thought he could by putting Jesus on the CROSS, but Christ AROSE
  - 3. He can't even keep his own territory!
  - 4. MATT. 16:18 – "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

## V. THE GOSPEL RESOUNDS!

- A. When we stand firm the light shines FULL
  - 1. When we compromise the light is dimmed and obscured
  - 2. Don't hide it under a bushel, NO! I'm going to let it shine!
  - 3. Let it shine 'til Jesus comes, I'm gonna let it shine!
- B. The Gospel will RING LIKE A BELL because of Paul's insistence on HEARING
  - 1. He fulfilled prophecy and MANY heard the Gospel because of it
  - 2. Ring it like a bell! Shout it from the housetops!
- C. The GOSPEL HANGS upon the RESURRECTION of Jesus Christ
- D. Be Saved Today!