

I. GUIDANCE SWORN

- A. Remember where Paul has been by this point:
1. Since Chapter 23, he has been in the Temple
 - a. The Jews came against him
 - b. They lied about him
 - c. They wanted to KILL him
 2. The chief Captain came and saved Paul out of their clutches
 - a. Remember how he was surprised when Paul spoke Greek to him
 - b. He got license to speak to the multitudes and they gave space
 - c. Until he mentioned the word “GENTILES”
 3. Remember the 40 who would not eat or drink until they killed Paul
 - a. Remember how the captain, being warned, took Paul out at night
 - b. Those 40 seemed to still be alive 2 years later in Caesarea!
 4. Remember how Governor Felix could find no fault in him
 - a. But left him bound because he wanted to keep the Jews happy
 - b. And also hoped for a bribe (money to be given)
 - c. Remember Festus came and didn’t know what to do with Paul
 - d. But the Jews remembered and came to tattle on him
 5. Now Paul has spoken before Festus and Festus has punted to Agrippa
- B. Throughout all of this drama and confusion, one thing remains certain!
1. God’s PROVIDENTIAL hand is guiding Paul through it all!
 - a. ACTS 23:11 – “And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”
 - i. Jesus stood before Paul that night and told him
 - ii. He echoes the words told to the other disciples in - MATT. 10:18 – “And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.”
 - iii. The PURPOSE is for a TESTIMONY, an first-hand witness!
 - b. TESTIMONY (Webster’s 1828) - A solemn declaration or affirmation made for the purpose of establishing or proving some fact. Such affirmation in judicial proceedings, may be verbal or written, but must be under oath. testimony differs from evidence; testimony is the declaration of a witness, and evidence is the effect of that declaration on the mind, or the degree of light which it affords.”
 - i. The testimony can be persuasive – the effect on the mind
 - ii. Testimony is only as much evidence as it is ENLIGHTENING
 - c. That’s why the witness of a Cultist isn’t EVIDENCE

- i. “My heart burned within me” – WRONG! no light, no facts
 - ii. “God makes His elect get Saved” – WRONG! no light!
 - iii. “Only the baptized go to heaven” – WRONG! No facts!
- C. God will continue to guide Paul and through this chapter and this book
 - 1. David once stood before King Saul and explained God’s Hand in his life
 - a. 1 SAM. 17:37 – “David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.”
 - b. He describes the ways that God proved Himself trustworthy
 - i. I was seeking God, praying, singing, doing my work
 - ii. A lion came – God delivered me
 - iii. A bear came (bigger) – God delivered me
 - iv. NOW here’s Goliath – why expect anything different?
 - c. But KING SAUL didn’t understand – He had no such experience
 - i. Saul had NEVER sought to fully obey God
 - ii. Therefore, God had never delivered him out of evil
 - iii. David might have been speaking another language!
 - 2. We miss God’s hand in the small things of our lives (forget to praise Him)
 - a. And then we will miss the BIG things too! Not looking for them!
 - b. God is ALWAYS working in the lives of His children!
 - 3. Let’s watch the scene God sets up for Paul in the rest of this chapter!

II. GOVERNOR’S SCENE

- A. Festus is on the horns of a dilemma – he tried to smooth talk his way out
 - 1. But Paul exercised his rights as a Roman citizen (an appeal to Caesar)
 - a. What can Festus TRULY say about it? It is HIS job to rule here.
 - b. He cannot waste the time of Caesar or the empire’s resources
 - c. He MUST give a reason (or he is an incompetent governor)
 - 2. Remember the Romans live by honor to Rome – it is part of their lives
 - 3. That’s why he brings Agrippa in, he desperately needs help!
- B. The pageantry here so great that the Bible even remarks on it (vs. 23)
 - 1. “Great pomp” – two definitions:
 - a. “A procession distinguished by ostentation of grandeur and splendor; as the pomp of a Roman triumph.”
 - b. “Show of magnificence; parade; splendor.”
 - c. The Roman triumph – the only time an army could enter Rome
 - 2. It was MEANT to be impressive, to display wealth and power
 - 3. Perhaps Paul would change his mind and rescind his appeal?
- C. Before all of this, Paul (GOD’S MAN) was brought forth to be tried of the world
 - 1. Christian we are on trial every day before the world
 - 2. We truly are the “lost man’s Bible” – the only testimony people can see
 - 3. Remember that word – testimony is only as good as the facts!

4. Testimony is only evidence when it aligns with the facts and persuades!

III. GENERAL SOLDIER

- A. Festus honors Paul by introducing him as a “man”
 1. Our culture has no idea what this means anymore
 - a. Some people cannot answer the question “what is a woman?”
 - i. Some people use terms like “birthing persons”
 - ii. They DENY science!
 - b. 1 TIM. 6:20 – “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:”
 - c. Ask me 10 years ago: I thought that verse was about evolution
 2. Paul was NOT effeminate nor feminine in anyway!
 - a. First, the Bible speaks to that: 1 COR. 6:9 – “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,”
 - b. Second, you can’t take the abuse Paul did and be a sissy
 - c. 2 COR. 11:24 – “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.” That’s 195 stripes with a whip, in case you’re wondering
 3. Paul was a MAN. It’s OKAY to be a MAN (it’s okay to be boy)
 - a. It appears to be the mission of pediatrics today to “calm” boys
 - b. A normal, active, MASCULINE boy can have trouble sitting still
 - c. YES, they are less attentive to school lessons than little girls
 - d. Quit trying to drug them into acting like zombies so they’ll act like little girls in classrooms. Quit cutting out recess! IT’S OBVIOUS!
 - e. REAL men look up to and admire another real man
- B. More importantly, Paul is a GENERAL in God’s Army
 1. God always seeks for a man to fill the gaps in the hedge
 - a. Indictment against Israel – EZEK. 13:5 – “Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD.”
 - b. EZEK. 22:30 – “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”
 - c. Ezekiel, Isaiah, Moses, Daniel, Peter, Paul – What about YOU?
 2. God is STILL seeking for men to stand up in today’s world!
 - a. In this ungodly atmosphere, wicked culture, antichrist age
 - b. It seems like the gaps in the hedge are growing
 - c. Do our bit and let God take care of the rest! Stand Strong!
 3. Who will help the Good Shepard? Who will protect the flock?
 4. Who will stand up and be Sheep Dogs to fight off the wolves?
- C. It takes a true Man of God! A true WOMAN of God to stand strong!

1. You don't think that ladies can take stands? You better believe it!
2. I don't know if you know this or not, but the morals of a nation rise and fall as much on womanhood as anything
 - a. Why do you think they attack womanhood?
 - b. Why do you think the feminists want to make sexual relations purely a transactional exchange?
3. Women are NOT equal to man
4. She is created to be protected and cherished! Her purpose not to fit pipe, dig ditches, and die on the battlefield

IV. GOSPEL SWORD

- A. Festus already declared that Paul was not worthy of Death (vs. 25)
 1. Agrippa will find the same thing in the next chapter
 2. But Festus is not willing to make a DECISION on Paul's Case
 3. And most importantly, not willing to decide about Paul's God!
- B. This is the same dilemma faced by Pilate 30 YEARS EARLIER before Jesus Christ
 1. Pilate wouldn't decide either. Instead, he "washed his hands"
 2. He said, "I find no fault in this man."
 3. Pilate is in Hell today, trying to wash his hands, crying "I found no fault!"
 4. Governor Felix is there too, he is still seeking a "more convenient season"
 5. Agrippa will say that Paul's testimony, "almost persuaded him"
- C. There's a reason for that! No other book divides the hearts of man like this one!
 1. HEB. 4:12 - "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 2. It divides! It discerns! It delivers!
 3. There is NO salvation in any other.
 - a. ACTS 4:12 - "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - b. 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. There is NO OTHER WAY

V. GRACIOUS SAVIOR

- A. What about you? Will you listen to the testimony of the Gracious Savior?
 1. Will you look at the facts of the Word of God and see the evidence?
 2. HEB. 11:1 - "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
- B. All have sinned ... and the wages of sin is death! Someone has to pay the price
- C. It is the GIFT of God, the GRACE of God, that pays for sin (not our good works)