

ACTS 23:23 – 26:32

PAUL IS BROUGHT TO FELIX THE GOVERNOR

- Big time protection
 - o 200 soldiers
 - o Seventy horseman
 - o Two hundred spearmen
 - o Mounts for Paul to ride
- “Bring him safely to Felix the governor” (23:24)
- The letter
 - o Claudis Lysias
 - The tribune of the cohort of Jerusalem
 - Called “the tribune” 16 times in the book of acts
 - Was in charge of up to 1000 soldiers.
 - Purchased his citizenship (22:28)
 - o The Governor Felix
 - Former slave (possibly of the Emperor Claudius)
 - Freed and made governor of Judea in 52AD, possibly by the influence of this brother Pallas, the head of the imperial service.
 - Corrupt and barbaric in his ways
 - Dealt with rebellion very harshly
 - o Claudius Lys’ias to his Excellency the governor Felix, greeting. This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be killed by them, **when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman citizen.** And desiring to know the charge on which they accused him, I brought him down to their council. I found that he was accused about questions of their law, **but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment.** And when it was disclosed to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.”
 - Does the first underlined part sound accurate?
 - What does the second underlined part sound like?
- Antipatris
 - o 10 miles along the road from Jerusalem to Caesarea
 - o 35 miles to Caeserea
 - They made it through the danger zone and will now be faster without the foot soldiers.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX AT CAESAREA

- Ananias – The High Priest (Very corrupt, was eventually killed by his own people)

- Tertullus – A professional orator (most likely a latin speaking Gentile) hired to make a case before the Governor.
- Paul is accused of
 - o Being pestilent
 - o Being an agitator among all the Jews throughout the world
 - o Being a ringleader of the **Nazarenes**
 - There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. (Is. 11:1)
 - Naser is Hebrew for branch
 - o Trying to profane the Temple
- Paul's defense
 - o He did not dispute with anyone
 - o He acted peacefully
 - o He came to Jerusalem to bring alms and offerings
 - o He was found in ritual purity in the temple... no crowd, no tumult.
 - o BUT... He does admit to being a member of "the way" (24:14) and to believing in the resurrection of the dead (24:21)
- But Felix having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them off...
 - o What do you think the knowledge was?
 - o What about his knowledge of Ananias?
 - o He also had monetary considerations (24:26)
- Paul is held in custody for 2 years
 - o Friends could visit and take care of him (24:23)
 - o Felix would listen to him from time to time (24:26)
- Felix is replaced
 - o Because of his brutal and bloody suppression of uprisings.
 - o But still leaves Paul in prison.

CHAPTER 25 – PAUL APPEALS TO CAESAR

- Even after all this time the Jews still want to kill Paul (25:3)
- Festus agrees to take the case. (25:5)
- The Jews falsely accuse Paul (25:7)
- Festus tries to set him up as a favor to the Jews (25:9)
- Paul appeals to Caesar (25:11)
 - o Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (54 to 68 AD)
 - o All Romans had this right
 - o He knew that there would be no true trial in Jerusalem.
- Festus consults with Agrippa
 - o Seems to be frustrated... but is concerned with keeping the Jewish authorities happy.
 - "being at a loss how to investigate these questions"(25:20)
 - o Herod Agrippa II,

- the great grandson of Herod the Great
 - Was interested in Jesus just like Herod Antipas (Luke 23:8)
 - Last in the line of Herodian Kings
- Luke stresses that Paul is innocent in the eyes of the rulers
 - Just like Jesus was:
 - And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitudes, “I find no crime in this man.” (Luke 23:4)
 - and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him; neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Behold, nothing deserving death has been done by him; (Lk 23:14-15)
 - A third time he said to them, “Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death; I will therefore chastise him and release him.” (Lk 23:22)

CHAPTER 26 PAUL’S SPEECH BEFORE AGRIPPA

- His last speech in Acts
- It includes the 3rd time we hear the conversion story of Paul, the second time he tells it.
 - With some differences
 - It hurts you to kick against the goads...
 - A waste of time to fight against the Gospel
 - But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles—to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’
- and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.”(26:22-23)
- Festus gets angry...
 - YOU ARE MAD!!! (26:24)
 - Why at this point does he become involved and passionate?
- Paul then gets personal with Agrippa
 - How do you interpret his reaction?

I WOULD TO GOD THAT NOT ONLY YOU BUT ALSO ALL WHO HEAR ME THIS DAY MIGHT BECOME SUCH AS I AM (26:29)

Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or customs. They do not inhabit separate cities of their own, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Their teaching is not based upon reveries inspired by the curiosity of men. Unlike some other people, they champion no purely human doctrine. With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general, they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to be living in, whether it is Greek or foreign.

And yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their full role as citizens, but labor under all the disabilities of aliens. Any country can be their homeland, but for them their homeland, wherever it may be, is a foreign country. Like others, they marry and have children, but they do not expose them. They share their meals, but not their wives.

They live in the flesh, but they are not governed by the desires of the flesh. They pass their days upon earth, but they are citizens of heaven. Obedient to the laws, they yet live on a level that transcends the law. Christians love all men, but all men persecute them. Condemned because they are not understood, they are put to death, but raised to life again. They live in poverty, but enrich many; they are totally destitute, but possess an abundance of everything. They suffer dishonor, but that is their glory. They are defamed, but vindicated. A blessing is their answer to abuse, deference their response to insult. For the good they do they receive the punishment of malefactors, but even then they, rejoice, as though receiving the gift of life. They are attacked by the Jews as aliens, they are persecuted by the Greeks, yet no one can explain the reason for this hatred.

To speak in general terms, we may say that the Christian is to the world what the soul is to the body. As the soul is present in every part of the body, while remaining distinct from it, so Christians are found in all the cities of the world, but cannot be identified with the world. As the visible body contains the invisible soul, so Christians are seen living in the world, but their religious life remains unseen. The body hates the soul and wars against it, not because of any injury the soul has done it, but because of the restriction the soul places on its pleasures. Similarly, the world hates the Christians, not because they have done it any wrong, but because they are opposed to its enjoyments.

Christians love those who hate them just as the soul loves the body and all its members despite the body's hatred. It is by the soul, enclosed within the body, that the body is held together, and similarly, it is by the Christians, detained in the world as in a prison, that the world is held together. The soul, though immortal, has a mortal dwelling place; and Christians also live for a time amidst perishable things, while awaiting the freedom from change and decay that will be theirs in heaven. As the soul benefits from the deprivation of food and drink, so Christians flourish under persecution. Such is the Christian's lofty and divinely appointed function, from which he is not permitted to excuse himself. "

From a letter to Diognetus (Nn. 5-6; Funk, 397-401)