

ACTS- Church On Mission

Part 58 - Peace In The Face Of Injustice

Acts 23:12-24:27- "When it was day, the Jews made a plot & bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. They went to the chief priests & elders & said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul. Now therefore you, along w/ the council, give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him before he comes near." Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went & entered the barracks & told Paul. Paul called one of the centurions & said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him." So he took him & brought him to the tribune & said, "Paul the prisoner called me & asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you." The tribune took him by the hand, & going aside asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?" And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely about him. But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him, who have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready, waiting for your consent." So the tribune dismissed the young man, charging him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of these things." Then he called two of the centurions & said, "Get ready two hundred soldiers, w/ seventy horsemen & two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night. Also provide mounts for Paul to ride & bring him safely to Felix the governor." And he wrote a letter to this effect: "Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings. This man was seized by the Jews & was about to be killed by them when I came upon them w/ the soldiers & rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman citizen. And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged w/ 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." So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul & brought him by night to Antipatris. And on the next day

they returned to the barracks, letting the horsemen go on w/ him. When they had come to Caesarea & delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him. On reading the letter, he asked what province he was from. And when he learned that he was from Cilicia, he said, "I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive." And he commanded him to be guarded in Herod's praetorium. And after five days the high priest Ananias came down w/ some elders & a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul. And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying: "Since through you we enjoy much peace, & since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation, in every way & everywhere we accept this w/ all gratitude. But, to detain you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly. For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world & is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him. By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him." The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all these things were so. And when the governor had nodded to him to speak, Paul replied: "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense. You can verify that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem, & they did not find me disputing w/ anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or in the city. Neither can they prove to you what they now bring up against me. But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law & written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just & the unjust. So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God & man. Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation & to present offerings. While I was doing this, they found me purified in the temple, w/out any crowd or tumult. But some Jews from Asia-- they ought to be here before you & to make an accusation, should they have anything against me. Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council, other than this one thing that I cried out while standing among them: 'It is w/ respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.'" But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the tribune

comes down, I will decide your case." Then he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody but have some liberty, & that none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs. After some days Felix came w/ his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, & he sent for Paul & heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. And as he reasoned about righteousness & self-control & the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed & said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you." At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often & conversed w/ him. When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor,

1. Bible Says: Don't Worry About What People Call You:

- 2 Timothy 3:12- "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"

2. Bible Says: Do Worry About How People See The Gospel:

- Jude 1:3- "Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."

3. We Have Done The Exact Opposite:

- Galatians 1:10- "For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."

4. Result We Are Crushed By Criticism & Cower Under Controversy

5. Our Only Hope Is To Remember Jesus

- John 15:18- "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you"
- John 16:33- "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
- Matthew 5:11-12- "Blessed are you when others revile you & persecute you & utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice & be glad, for your reward is great in heaven..."
- 2 Corinthians 4:17- "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison"
- Romans 8:18- "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing w/ the glory that is to be revealed"
- 1 Peter 1:1-6- "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia,

Asia, & Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ & for sprinkling w/ his blood: May grace & peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, & unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,”

- Psalm 30:5b- “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes w/ the morning”
- 1 Corinthians 15:55-57- “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, & the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Response:

- **Some May Need To Be Terrified Like Drusilla & Felix**
- **Some May Need To Remember They Are Freed Slaves**
- **Some May Need To Remember Paul's Boldness & Courage**
- 2 Tim 2:3- “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus”
- 2 Corinthians 2:14- “But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, & through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.”