

Beulah Baptist Church
Rev. Jerry D. Black, Pastor

Sunday School Lesson
November 6, 2022

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Lesson—Paul Before King Agrippa

Text: Acts 26:19-32

I. Aim for Change/Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, we will...

1. KNOW why Paul stood up for what he believed;
2. FEEL confident in sharing our faith; and
3. DEFEND our faith, even in the face of rejection.

Key Verse— *“But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.” (Acts 26:25, KJV).*

Lesson Song of Praise and Worship: *“Stand” ...by John B. Kee*

II. People Places and Times

King Agrippa II. He was the son of King Agrippa I, the ruler who was responsible for beheading the apostle James and who had Peter arrested. He was the grandson of the ruler who'd had John the Baptist beheaded. He was also the great-grandson of Herod the Great, who, in his attempt to kill the baby Jesus, had killed all the male Jewish children two years old and younger in Bethlehem. Agrippa II's power was limited to authority over Jewish affairs, Scriptures, and conflicts. Rome appointed him as the curator of the Temple, meaning he had authority over the Temple treasury and to appoint high priests. Agrippa II did not have any children, and when he met the apostle Paul, he was living in an incestuous relationship with his younger sister Bernice.

Background

When Jesus called Saul (a.k.a. Paul) of Tarsus to be an apostle, he sent Ananias to Paul, to pray for him and to welcome him into the Christian family. The Lord prophesied, “[Saul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (from Acts 9:15). In Acts 24, an imprisoned Paul stands before the Jewish governor, Felix, facing false accusations that he incited Christians to riot against Jews, was the ringleader of a sect of zealots intent on overthrowing the Romans, and insulted the Temple, its priests and custodians. Unknown to the governor, they secretly planned to have Paul assassinated during the transport. This plan was thwarted, and under God's direction, Paul wisely appeals to Festus to be tried in Rome as a Roman citizen. Festus had no choice, and Paul was brought to Rome to appear before Caesar, thus fulfilling the Scripture.

III. The Lesson At-A-Glance...

1. Paul Declares His Apostleship (Acts 26:19-23)
2. Paul Declares the Truth (vv. 27-29)
3. Paul Declared Innocent (vv. 30-32)

IV. In Depth with More Light on the Text

1. Paul Declares His Apostleship (Acts 26:19–23)

Paul begins by stating his credentials as a faithful Jew, who before his conversion had lived as a Pharisee. In spite of the fact that Agrippa was living in an incestuous relationship—he is married to his full sister, Queen Bernice—Paul is aware that King Agrippa is Jewish and is considered an expert on Jewish laws and customs. Paul makes it clear that he, like all Jews, is aware that the Jews were a “special” population, and he asserts that he is living in full expectation of God’s promises to the Jewish people. Paul does not sugarcoat the truth. He tells the whole truth, including the fact that he had formerly hated and ardently persecuted Christians.

2. Paul Declares the Truth (vv. 27–29)

This declaration proves to be too much to the governor, Festus, who shouts that Paul’s Gospel will make people believe he is crazy. Our Gospel is characterized by truth and based on historical events: the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Paul tells Festus that the things he has preached were based on truths and were probably known to King Agrippa.

3. Paul Declared Innocent (vv. 30–32)

Paul has stated his case and now King Agrippa, his wife, and Festus go off to discuss what they have heard. It is obvious to all that Paul has done nothing wrong and is not guilty of any of the charges. As far as they are concerned, Paul is innocent. However, it appears that there is a legal problem with setting him free. Paul’s initial appeal, as a Roman citizen, was to have his case heard by the “Roman” emperor. Agrippa’s response seems to imply that once an appeal was made, it could not be retracted. Rather than read this as a mistake, Christians should recognize Paul’s continued imprisonment as a fulfillment of God’s plan.

Liberating Lesson—See Sunday School Book

Application for Activation— See Sunday School Book...

Discuss the Meaning

Food for Thought and Questions for Consideration (from the Application for Activation)?

What have we learned (😊 Charlie Brown)?

1. *Have you ever been falsely accused of something because of your faith?*
2. *How was it that you were exonerated?*

Vocabulary-New Words

A. Repent (Acts 26:20) metanoeo (Gk.)—To be sorry for sin and “turn to God.”

Daily Bible Readings For the Lesson of November 6th

MONDAY

Appeasing Those Zealous for the Law (Acts 21:17–26)

TUESDAY

A Stirred-Up Mob (Acts 21:27–36)

WEDNESDAY

Taken into Custody (Acts 22:17–24)

THURSDAY

You Must Bear Witness in Rome (Acts 22:30–23:11)

FRIDAY

Paul's Background as a Pharisee (Acts 26:1–8)

SATURDAY

Paul's Encounter with Christ (Acts 26:9–18)

SUNDAY

Paul's Testimony before Roman Authorities (Acts 26:19–32)