

**of them which  
are sanctified by  
faith that is  
in me**

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**Acts 26:1 – 28**

~ Just three more reports will complete the Book of Acts in our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. That's when we return to the first Book of Samuel in the Old Testament. In this report, we continue to see Paul's great declaration of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ to Agrippa and Festus. In our last report, we saw the prisoner Paul brought before quite an assembly of dignitaries. Well, Paul's message was only for King Agrippa. I think Paul's only concern was getting his message to just that one man. This chapter of Scripture contains one of the most marvelous passages in the entire Word of God as the words of Jesus are recited by Paul. It is a literary masterpiece of the ages beginning at verse fourteen.

Remember, we are at a sham trial with accusers who have no evidence against Paul. Paul's case stopped the Roman wheels of justice from turning and, as a result, the highest levels of authority wanted to know the story of "The Way." The Gospel was something new and they wanted to know about it and understand it. Well, I trust you'll read this chapter very carefully. Our safari will be comparatively brief today because this chapter speaks for itself. This is a profitable chapter of reading for virtually anyone – lost or saved. I'm sure this was a scintillating and shiny show party that Agrippa put on. This is where the glamour of earth came into direct contact with the glory of Heaven....

***1 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:***

***2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:***

**3 Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.**

**4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;**

**5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straightest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.**

**6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:**

**7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.**

**8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?**

**9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.**

**10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.**

**11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.**

**12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,**

**13 At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.**

**14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**

**15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.**

**16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;**

**17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,**

**18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.**

**19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:**

**20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.**

**21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.**

**22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:**

**23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.**

***24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.***

***25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.***

***26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.***

***27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.***

***28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.***

***29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.***

***30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:***

***31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.***

***32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.***

~ This chapter tells its own story; and it's really too wonderful to add any meaningful commentary. I could also write ten reports regarding it. The crux of the matter is the resurrection. If you take the resurrection out of Paul's Gospel message, it loses all meaning and all power; there would simply be no Gospel message at all. It is impossible to explain the apostle Paul apart from explaining the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is why the church stands powerless in front of a world with a great need today. The church is NOT declaring the Gospel with the resurrection included and properly, correctly and completely applied. Paul said, "this

one thing I do” – declare the Gospel. The church just cannot say that today. The church is trying to organize and do everything under the sun EXCEPT teach the Word of God; they need to learn and get back to declaring the Bible and God would bless them.

The cross of Christ without the resurrection focuses only on the death of the Lord Jesus; and that is a tragedy every time. I feel that those people want Christ to have died for their sins, but they aren’t interested in loving Him as our living Holy High Priest Who was raised for their justification. Most don’t even understand the concept. The goodness of God is removed if you omit the resurrection as the focal point of the Gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ was raised for our justification. Yes, He died for our sins, but He rose again according to the Scriptures. If Christ died on the cross, but rose not again, then we have no hope, friends. That’s why we DO have hope – because Christ is alive today.

The Lord Jesus never had an enemy as brutal and hateful as Saul of Tarsus. Saul was a Pharisee and a rich young ruler. Hitler, Stalin and Putin combined constitute good little Sunday school boys compared to the killing and imprisoning and crimes Saul of Tarsus committed towards Christians. Saul had an inveterate hatred of the Gospel and of Jesus. That was Paul’s background and experience. Paul knew what it meant to go against the will of God. Paul also knew what it meant for Christ to become the most wonderful thing in his life.

If you were in Paul’s shoes as a prisoner - what would you have done? Paul preached the Gospel of the Lord Jesus to the entire assembly. Paul never preached a sermon that didn’t focus on the resurrection. The death of Christ must never be preached without the resurrection. I emphasize that because Paul emphasized it. Whosoever will believe on Christ shall be saved and that’s what Paul is presenting to this crowd. Agrippa knew the facts of the Gospel, but they weren’t meaningful to him. Anyone can know the facts, but it is our relationship to those facts that is important. Agrippa said Paul almost persuaded him. Well, did you know that you can almost be a Christian? How tragic that is ~

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