

# **The Gospel on Trial**

**Acts 26:1-18**

**Paul's Defense Before Agrippa**



# **A Testimony Under Pressure**

**“History doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme.” Mark Twain**

**Paul’s Story Echoes Our Own**



# Paul Before Agrippa

- Roman governor Festus seeks counsel
- Agrippa II, expert in Jewish law, hears Paul
- Caesarea: Roman authority meets Jewish tradition

**Context Is Key**



# Four Movements

- 1. Paul's Background (vv.1-8)**
- 2. His Zeal Against Christ (vv.9-11)**
- 3. Christ's Confrontation (vv. 12-15)**
- 4. Commission from Christ (vv.16-18)**

**Gospel clarity through testimony**



# 1. Paul's Background

1 Now Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul extended his hand and proceeded to make his defense:

2 "Regarding all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate that I am about to make my defense before you today,

**Acts 26:1-8 (NASB)**



# 1. Paul's Background

3 especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among the Jews; therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

4 "So then, all Jews know my way of life since my youth, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and in Jerusalem,

Acts 26:1-8 (NASB)



# 1. Paul's Background

5 since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion. 6 And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers;

Acts 26:1-8 (NASB)



# 1. Paul's Background

7 the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. For this hope, O king, I am being accused by Jews. 8 Why is it considered incredible among you people if God raises the dead?

Acts 26:1-8 (NASB)



# **Resurrection Hope of Israel**

**-Pharisee: strict observance of the Law**

**-Resurrection: central to Jewish belief  
(Job 19:25; Daniel 12:2; Isaiah 26:19;  
Psalm 16:10-11; Hosea 6:1-2)**

**- Paul's trial centers on this hope**

**Why Resurrection Matters**



## 2. Zeal Against Christ

9 "So, I thought to myself that I had to act in strong opposition to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, after receiving authority from the chief priests, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being put to death.

**Acts 26:9-11 (NASB)**



## 2. Zeal Against Christ

**11 And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was extremely enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.**

**Acts 26:9-11 (NASB)**



# 3. Christ Confronts Saul/Paul

**12** “While so engaged, as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, **13** at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who were journeying with me.

**Acts 26:12-15 (NASB)**



### 3. Christ Confronts Saul/Paul

14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, **'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'** 15 And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, **'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.'**

Acts 26:12-15 (NASB)



## 4. Commission From Christ

**16 But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose, I have appeared to you, to appoint you as a servant and a witness not only to the things in which you have seen Me, but also to the things in which I will appear to you,**

**Acts 26:16-18 (NASB)**



# 4. Commission From Christ

**17 rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'**

**Acts 26:16-18 (NASB)**



# Anchored In Scripture

**15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect;**

**1 Peter 3:15 (NASB)**

**Our Mission Too!**



# Anchored In Scripture

**4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.**

**Romans 6:4 (NASB)**

**Our Mission Too!**



# **Anchored In Scripture**

**13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

**Colossians 1:13-14 (NASB)**



# Respond to the Gospel

- What “goad” are you resisting?
- Will you rise and witness by faith?
- Share your story this week

**Your Moment To Respond**



# Benediction

**20 Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, that is, Jesus our Lord, 21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**Hebrews 13:20-21**



