

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

#### Part VI: The Ministry Of The Universal Church In Its Spread To The Ends Of The Earth, Acts 8:26-28:31

##### E. Christ's Use Of The Apostle Paul To Spearhead Worldwide Outreach, Acts 14:4-28:31

##### 30. Christ's Gift Of Wisdom To Paul To Defend His Testimony Before False Accusers

(Acts 24:1-27)

###### I. Introduction

A. When the believer is called of God to serve Him, and opponents wrongly accuse him so as to counter his character and thus his testimony, God provides the believer the wisdom to diffuse the wrong accusations.

B. This was evident in the experience of Paul in Acts 24:1-27, and it acts to encourage and instruct us:

###### II. Christ's Gift Of Wisdom To Paul To Defend His Testimony Before False Accusers, Acts 24:1-27.

A. The Lord had promised that Paul would witness of Him in Rome as he had done in Jerusalem, Acts 23:11.

B. Thus, when the Jewish authorities arrived at Caesarea to accuse Paul before king Felix, the Lord gave Paul the wisdom to defend his case so he could be moved to Rome versus being wrongly punished in Caesarea! Acts 24:1-27 thus reveals how God granted Paul the wisdom he needed to counter his accusers in court:

1. Paul's opponents built a slanderous, formidable case against him in Acts 24:1-9:
  - a. Paul's foes had hired an orator, Tertullus, who flattered Festus (Acts 24:1-4), a man designed to sway his judgment in their favor versus Paul's *humanly* less-gifted speaking ability, 2 Cor. 10:10.
  - b. Then, Tertullus framed the charges against Paul in terms particularly heinous to a Roman ruler like Felix: (1) he claimed Paul had fueled riots among Jews all over the Roman world (Acts 24:5a), (2) that he was a leader of a sect, implying a religion illegal to Rome (Acts 24:5b) and that he had tried to profane the Jewish temple (Acts 24:6), Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 421. [Verses 6b-8a in the KJV are not in most manuscripts, so we omit them here, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978 ed., fn.]
  - c. All the Jews present gave their approval of Tertullus' charges against Paul, Acts 24:9.
2. Paul's defense, given in the wisdom of the Lord, effectively countered his foes' efforts, Acts 24:10-27:
  - a. First, Paul did not flatter Festus as had Tertullus, but replied by stating the simple **truth**, Acts 24:10.
  - b. Second, Paul **logically** countered the charge that he had stirred up riots, Acts 24:11-23: (1) he had been in Jerusalem about a week, not enough time to form an uprising, Acts 24:1, 11. (2) He had not stirred up anyone in the Jerusalem area (Acts 24:12), and (3) no one could prove he had, Acts 24:13.
  - c. Third, Paul addressed the charge that Christianity was an illegal sect, noting that with a clear conscience, he worshiped the God of His Hebrew fathers in accord with Old Testament **Scriptures** and the belief in the resurrection of the dead that was held by some of his accusers, Acts 24:14-16.
  - d. Fourth, Paul addressed the charge that he had profaned the temple: he said (1) he had entered the temple only to bring alms and offerings (Acts 24:17) upon which (2) certain Jews from Asia found him and were without cause upset at him, and (3) Paul urged that they were the ones who should **legally** have charged him if they had anything against him, not the current Sanhedrin delegation, Acts 24:18-19. (4) Paul added that the accusers present should **legally** bring charges against him from the meeting they had with him in the Sanhedrin, not hearsay charges from Jews from Asia, Acts 24:20. (5) Paul noted the only charge his current foes could make was that he claimed in their hearing to support belief in the resurrection [that many of his accusers held], Acts 24:21.
3. Felix realized Paul was innocent, seen in his decision to delay making a ruling lest he offend the Jewish authorities, and in holding Paul in loose arrest, Acts 24:22-23; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 422.
4. Felix even heard Paul share the Gospel later (Acts 24:24), but came under conviction when Paul dealt with righteousness, self-control and judgment, so he sent Paul back to his quarters, Acts 24:25.
5. Felix's sinfulness is noted in trying to get Paul to bribe him into releasing him (Acts 24:26), but Paul refused until Felix was replaced by Festus who in turn left Paul bound to please the Jews, Acts 24:27.

***Lesson:*** Christ equipped Paul to answer his accusers effectively by telling the **TRUTH, LOGIC, SCRIPTURE and LEGAL ORDER** to make his defense.

***Application:*** If unrighteously accused or misrepresented, may we respond effectively by relying on the Lord for the wisdom to speak the **TRUTH, using LOGIC, SCRIPTURE and LEGAL ORDER**.