

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson #25 -Paul's Defense

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:27-29

Introduction:

1. Brief review of Chapter 25.
2. The direction of Paul's life is further proof of the resurrection of Jesus.
3. Paul proves his point by discussing his life...

I. BEFORE HIS CONVERSION

A. THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

1. Paul was of the strictest sect of the religion; the Pharisees
2. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection -Ac 23:8
 - a. While Paul was a Pharisee, no one opposed him
 - b. Now he preaches that the hope they had been seeking is here; they want him dead
3. Why is it incredible that God raises the dead?
 - a. There were eyewitnesses to the account -1Co 15:5-8
 - b. The resurrection validates the divinity of Jesus -Ro 1:4

B. PAUL'S PREVIOUS PERSPECTIVE -26:9-11

1. Paul thought he must take action against the Christians
2. He was enraged against them
 - a. This illustrates Paul's great passion against Christianity
 - b. It also points out that something significant had changed his mind

II. HIS CONVERSION

A. THE CONFRONTATION -26:12-15

1. Paul was continuing to persecute Christians by going to Damascus
2. A bright light appeared and all fell to the ground
3. Jesus spoke to him
 - a. Paul thought he was pleasing God
 - b. Rather he was persecuting Jesus
 - c. He was kicking against the goads -a symbol of authority used to make oxen to obey

B. THE REDIRECTION -26:16-18

1. It was Jesus who made him a minister and a witness before the Jews and Gentiles
2. Paul's new direction was to turn souls from their sins unto Christ.

III. HIS TRANSFORMATION

A. PAUL NOW PREACHED JESUS

1. He began immediately after his conversion
2. The problem with Paul is revealed -26:20, 21
 - a. Paul preached that Gentiles should believe in Jesus and obey the gospel
 - b. The result: they could have the same spiritual blessings as the Jews apart from Mosaic Law.
3. Paul received help from the Lord (i.e. protection from the Jews)

B. ALMOST PERSUADED

1. Festus insults Paul by saying that he has gone mad from all his learning
2. Paul speaks the words of truth and reason
3. Paul addresses King Agrippa
 - a. The crucifixion of Jesus and all the prophets spoke of were not done in a corner
 - b. Agrippa believes the prophets, but is he willing to make the proper application?
4. Agrippa is almost persuaded to become a Christian
 - a. Paul's desire is for all to become Christians
 - b. Two men were bound
 - i. Paul was bound in chains
 - ii. King Agrippa was bound in sin and stubbornness

Conclusion:

1. Our faith is strengthened when we consider the transformation in Paul.
2. Our motivation is strengthened when we consider the zeal of Paul.
3. Let us keep the faith and fight the good fight!