

092 - "We Affirm Jesus to Be Alive" - Acts 25:1-27 - 2013-10-10

Call to Worship: Acts 17:3b

Scripture Reading: Psalm 16

Sermon: "We Affirm Jesus to Be Alive" Acts 25:1-27

Benediction: Colossians 1:17-18

I. See how the corrupt in religion continue trying to use the government to persecute God's church (2-3)

- A. they accuse us to the government (2)
- B. what they really want is not a fair trial and justice done, but murder done (3)
- C. they make serious accusations (7)
- D. they cannot prove that we are wrong-doers (7)
- E. we defend ourselves with protestations of our innocence (8)
 1. this is what the Lord Jesus Himself did
 2. this is what Paul did
 3. let us do the same

II. Corrupt officials think more of currying favor with special interest groups than with doing justice (9)

III. We proclaim our belief in the right use of government (10-11)

We are accused of being "anti-government"; even "anarchists"; which we are not; we believe in the right use of government, which God gave us

1. people accused should be judged by the government
2. if anyone has done anything deserving death, we do not oppose the death penalty
3. if we have not done anything wrong, we should not be delivered to our enemies
4. if we cannot get justice from lower levels of government, we appeal to higher levels

APPLICATION: Paul's doctrine of government survived and prevailed, because it is the truth from the Lord. Let us understand it and teach it. We cannot make people believe it or live by it, but we can do our part to teach it.

IV. Corrupt officials pretend their belief in the right use of government (16-21; 25-27)

See how Festus pretends himself to his fellow rulers

1. he cares so much about traditional practices that ensure justice (16)
2. he cares so much about granting a speedy trial
3. he lies to cover up his unjust practices
4. he pretends not to be responsible for Paul's appeal to higher authority (21, 25)
5. he states right legal principle while refusing to act on it (27)

- V. We strive to be known by one thing: We affirm that Jesus died and is now alive! (18-19)
- A. in one place, Corinth, Paul said of himself, "I determined to know nothing while I was with you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified."
 - B. in Athens, the people summarized what he was saying by noting that he kept talking about "Jesus and the resurrection"
 - C. when Paul summarized his gospel, he said,
 - 1Co 15:1-4 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, (2) by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. (3) For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (4) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,
 - D. in the previous chapters of Acts we see that Paul's main message, when he could get a word in before the Jews started rioting again, was that his hope is in the resurrection of the dead
 - E. Well, did Paul's efforts work? Did our message get through? Yes! Through all the rioting of the Jews, through all the rioting of the pagans, through all the angry shouts that we are not fit to live, what is the one thing the new governor knows about us?
 - 1. There is a man named Jesus, who died, whom they affirm to be alive!
 - 2. Hallelujah!
 - F. APPLICATION: Let our efforts be primarily at proclaiming the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - 1. there other things we need to do
 - 2. there are other aspects to our message
 - 3. let the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus be primary to us

Henry:

[God] can make even the carnal policies of great men to serve his gracious purposes.

(9) But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor

JRY: See how evil this is, for a ruler to do this! Having a stronger inclination to please men than to do justice sets in motion a long train of problems.

(10-11)

JRY: See to what a degree the Holy Spirit uses Paul to teach us about the right functioning of government!

(19)

JRY: See how the Jews' conflict with Paul is characterized

-Paul affirms Jesus, who had died, to be alive!

-And this really is it, isn't it!? We affirm Jesus to be alive!

-There are a number of implications, then---we must live as if He is alive.

(20)

JRY: Note how Festus ascribes to himself noble motives that are not the true reason for his actions.

(23)

Henry:

Note, Great pomp is but great fancy. It neither adds any real excellency, nor gains any real respect, but feeds a vain humour, which wise men would rather mortify than gratify. It is but a show, a dream, a fantastical thing (so the word signifies), superficial, and it passeth away. And the pomp of this appearance would put one for ever out of conceit with pomp, when the pomp which Agrippa and Bernice appeared in was, [1.] Stained by their lewd characters, and all the beauty of it sullied, and all virtuous people that knew them could not but contemn them in the midst of all this pomp as vile persons, Psa_15:4. [2.] Outshone by the real glory of the poor prisoner at the bar. What was the honour of their fine clothes, compared with that of his wisdom, and grace, and holiness, his courage and constancy in suffering for Christ! His bonds in so good a cause were more glorious than their chains of gold, and his guards than their equipage. Who would be fond of worldly pomp that here sees so bad a woman loaded with it and so good a man loaded with the reverse of it?

(24)

JRY: "the whole assemblage of the Jews"? really? It was actually the majority of the leading, powerful Jews