

065 - God's Minister Protects Paul - Acts 18:9-18a - 2013-04-14

Call to Worship: Psalm 148:11-13

Scripture Reading: Genesis 9:1-7

Sermon: "God's Minister Protects Paul" Acts 18:9-18a

Benediction: Psalm 18:3

- I. The Lord had promised Paul that he would not be attacked to be hurt in this city (9-10)
 - A. The Lord Jesus is working
 - B. He works to bring about the salvation of His people against all opposition
 - C. We have not been given this particular promise regarding our cities in these days; but still let us take heart that we cannot be attacked to be hurt unless the Lord Jesus allows it for His purposes

- II. Then the Jews brought charges against Paul before the governor (12-13)
 - A. The Romans had granted to the Jews freedom to worship God according to their law
 - B. Paul was teaching Jews and others to worship God in ways NOT according to their laws
 - C. Which they hoped the governor would see as a violation of Roman law
 - D. APPLICATION: The Lord Jesus has told us this would happen
 - Mark 13:9 "But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.
 - 1. so when this happens, let us not think it strange
 - 2. let us also pray for those who live where this is more common

- III. But God's minister protected Paul (14-17)
 - A. He rightly stated what his purview was as the civil magistrate (14)
 1. see the way he stated it
 - a. in matters of wrongdoing or wicked crimes
 - b. he would bear with those who bring accusation
 2. see the way Paul teaches it
 - a. government is established by God (Rom 13:1 based on Genesis 9:6)
 - b. the magistrate is God's minister for our good (Rom 13:4)
 - c. he does us this good by dealing with evil practices (Rom 13:4)
 - i. as an avenger to execute God's wrath on those who actually do evil
 - ii. to make those inclined to evil afraid of doing it

- B. He rightly stated that religious questions are outside his purview (15)
- C. He drove Paul's accusers away (16)
 - 1. making a criminal accusation is serious business
 - 2. in this case apparently the Jews acted as a mob against Paul
 - 3. when the judge learned that they did all of this just on a religious dispute, he drove them away
- D. He allowed the people to punish Paul's accusers (17)
 - 1. the people looking on caught Gallio's attitude toward these accusers
 - 2. and did to the synagogue ruler what he had wanted to do to Paul
 - 3. Gallio thought this right, and did not stop them
- E. APPLICATION: What did Paul, then, write the churches to do?
 - 1. submit to these governing authorities (Rom 13)
 - 2. pray for these governing authorities (1 Timothy 2:2)

IV. So Paul was able to remain at his work (18a)

- A. This is an example of things working just as they should
 - 1. Christians submit to the government
 - 2. Christians pray for the government
 - 3. Then the government protects us from evil-doers, but in religion leaves us alone
 - 4. We then live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and reverence
 - 5. And the preachers can preach of Jesus Christ openly and in safety
 - 6. And God's elect in every place hear the gospel and believe
- B. There are undoubtedly times when the government is so bad that Christians cannot lead quiet and peaceable lives
 - 1. we live in a state born when Santa Anna's government had overturned the Mexican constitution and was trying to reduce the Texians under tyranny; for a time, the residents of Texas, even the Christians, had to live lives that were not quiet and peaceable, but disturbed and violent
 - 2. our dear state is part of a Republic born of similar circumstances; King George and his ministers so interfered with trade that the city of Boston was in terrible economic trouble; when the people tried to resist these government measures, the King sent the Royal Navy to blockade the port of Boston; when the people established stores of ammunition and worked to get their militia trained and ready, the governor sent the Royal Marines to confiscate the people's ammunition; at this, the people of the American colonies, many of whom were devout Christians, had to live lives that were not quiet and peaceable, but turbulent and violent
- C. Yet this is not how things are supposed to be; therefore we must submit to the government, to whatever degree possible, and we must pray for those in authority
- D. To the end that the church may not spend its energies in turmoil and violence, but in quiet Christian living and the preaching of the gospel

JRY (as Poole):

The legal ground they were trying to claim was this:

1. the Romans had granted to the Jews freedom to worship God according to their law, but not to make proselytes (RWP)
2. Paul was teaching Jews and others to worship God in ways NOT according to their laws (a false charge), and making Roman proselytes (RWP)

Spurgeon:

It is no business of the civil magistrate to inquire into the religions of the people brought before him. It is out of his province. He was quite right when he said, "If it be a question of words, and names, and of your law, look ye to it. I will be no judge of such matters." If the kings and queens of this world had been half as sensible as Gallio, there had been no stakes in Smithfield; there had been no prisons to lock up the Puritans. Religion would be let alone, which is the one thing it wants — free church and free state. We want neither the governor's help, nor the governor's hindrance. If he will kindly let us alone, it is all we ask from him; and so far Gallio is to be commended.

"You came here," he said, "to accuse Paul, to get him beaten: now the mob is beating you, and serve you right. I shall not interfere."