

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

I. Another Corrupt Plot Against God's Servant (vv. 1-5)

- a. The enemy is never satisfied until all righteous works are compromised, disrupted, or defeated
- b. The Sanhedrin Council and the principal men of the Jews plotted another ambush (two years later)
- c. Festus replaced Felix, but nothing changed concerning Paul's imprisonment
- d. Both Proconsuls were not interested in justice, but only protecting their political power (24:27; 25:9)

II. A Fool's Dilemma (vv.6-12)

- a. Dilemma -a situation requiring a choice between equally undesirable alternatives
- b. *Festus* – If Festus released Paul, the Jews would cause trouble...not good for a newly appointed official
 - 1. Festus could not hold Paul, a Roman citizen, without definite official charges.
- c. Festus met with the Jewish leaders, but he is unaware of their past plot to kill Paul.
- d. The Jewish leaders and Festus travel to Caesarea to hear from Paul, however, no new accusations are presented to charge Paul of any crime (civil, criminal or religious).
- e. *Paul* – As in Acts 24:10-21, Paul presents a similar defense to Festus and the Jewish leaders
- f. Paul refuses to return to Jerusalem for trial and *appeals to Caesar* (v.11).
 - 1. By appealing to Caesar, Paul influenced the Romans to guard him and take him to Rome.
 - 2. Paul knew that he could not have a fair trial in Jerusalem.

III. Consulting with Corruption and Compromise (vv.13-27)

- a. In order to determine the legal charges against Paul, Festus consults with King Agrippa.
- b. *Festus was trying to discover the legal truth and the Jewish leaders were trying to kill the truth.
- c. Rome had given King Agrippa legal jurisdiction over the temple in Jerusalem.
- d. Festus consults with King Agrippa who was "supposed" to be an expert in Jewish matters.
 - 1. Herod Agrippa II was the great-grandson of Herod, who killed the Bethlehem male babies
 - 2. Herod II killed the Apostle James, the brother of John (Acts 12:1-3).
 - 3. Bernice was the sister of King Agrippa, they *lived* together (but not as brother and sister).
- e. Based on his corrupt heritage and lifestyle, what possible insight on justice could King Agrippa bring to the situation?

IV. Thoughts and Considerations for Action (Maintaining your Christian mind in the face of unfairness)

- a. Sin is the element that creates an unfair world...a self-centered world does not care about fairness.
- b. No Christian should suffer because of evildoing, and no Christian should be surprised if they suffer for well doing.
- c. Each of us will face injustice from other people. How will you respond?
- d. Should we pout, roll on the ground, kick and scream, curse, retaliate. Love is more important than fairness. (Rom 12:11-19) God is watching our response.
- e. Remember Jesus said we can expect unfair treatment from this world (John 15:18-19).
- f. Paul expected injustice and unfair treatment because of his Christian witness, but he expected God's care and provision.
- g. Paul remained obedient and on mission, he did what he could and then he left the rest up to God.

Dumbing Down Our Kids, by Charles Sykes (1995)

Charles Sykes created the following for high school and college graduates to make them aware that the real world is not a fair place.

Rule 1: Life is not fair; get used to it.

Rule 2: The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something before you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will not make 40 thousand dollars a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice president with a car phone until you "earn" both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss. He doesn't have tenure.

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger flipping; they called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you screw up, it's not your parents' fault so don't whine about your mistakes. Learn from them.

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way paying your bills, cleaning your room, and listening to you tell them how idealistic you are. So before you save the rain forest from blood-sucking parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers but life has not. In some schools they have abolished failing grades, they'll give you as many times as you want to get the right answer. This, of course, bears not the slightest resemblance to anything in real life.

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off, and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. Do that on your own time.

Rule 10: Television is not real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to work.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.