

Acts 22:1 “When they were all silent, he (Paul) said to them in Aramaic; ‘Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense;

Paul is giving sound reason for *faith in Christ*. He was *defending his faith* before a hostile audience; he demonstrated his life before and after Christ; he gave *evidence of God’s work in his life*; and he focused on **Christ**. He understood the language and the culture of the audience.

Acts 26:1-3 “ Then Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You have permission to speak for yourself.’ So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: **v2** King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you to make my defense against all the *accusations* of the *Jews*, **v3** and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.”

,Paul acknowledged King Agrippa’s expertise so that it was apparent to all that Paul was not guilty of *offending the Jewish nation by his words or actions*. Speaking only of his own heritage and reputation. He was a Jew, raised and trained as a defender and teacher of the law. He wanted King Agrippa to understand he was not a troublemaker but someone whose conversion was as surprising to himself as it was to his fellow Jews.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, **v17** so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

God’s Word is useful and *profitable for all things*—sharing God’s Word, *education*, *encouragement* and *helping people in righteous living*. His people need nothing else. However, *they must invest—studying and applying its wisdom—to receive any benefit*. As His Word **rebukes** and **corrects errors**, in Christian doctrine, conduct, and attitude are revealed. Never ignore divine warnings. Paying attention to instructions in the Word can prevent disaster in our lives.

Galatians 1:9 “James, Cephas (Peter) and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the *grace* given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.”

John 14:6 “Jesus answered, ‘**I am** the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the **Father** except through **me**.’”

Galatians 1:3 “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,”

The order is meaningful. Once **grace** is experienced, then **peace** follows.

Galatians 1:4 “who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the **present evil** will of our God and Father,” *This is the age the Galatians lived in, as do we, under Satan’s rule.*

Romans 1:28-32 Read Aloud.. These words reflect the description of the person’s character, conduct, conversation, concepts, and companionship. *Paul describes the shameful human behavior that causes God to give people over to their sinfulness.*

Galatians 1:1-2 "Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers and sisters with me,"

1) Saul was an ambitious young Pharisee. Often referred to as the "Hebrew of Hebrews". He persecuted and even killed people who believed a rabbi—Jesus (**Acts 22:1, 26:1-3**) His self-made religious world came crashing down when he met the true and living _____ changing his entire life and world.

We cannot earn God's favor by our own works, in our own power, according to our own rules.

2) Grace: God doing for us what we do not _____. His unmerited favor and divine _____. We are each born with a nature we can make our own way to _____. *Even after we are saved—saved by _____ there often remains an attitude that is performance based.*

WE THINK WE CAN EARN GOD'S FAVOR BY WHAT WE DO! Grace is at the _____ of our faith.

2 Timothy 3:16-17. If we lose the message of the life transforming gospel—we lose our _____ **1:9**

3) Gospel of grace: Christ's death was: voluntary—He laid down His life for us of His own free _____. **vicarious**—He went to the cross, paying the penalty for _____ sins in our place. **victorious**—He rescued us from this present _____ age.

Christ has done all this; we are arrogant when we try to add our work to what He has done!

4) Working in our own power has Jesus in the _____ plus what man can bring to the table. Today's false _____ is we are saved by grace, and live the Christian life in our own strength.

5) Working according to our own rules is adding rules beyond what God has already defined.

The New Testament is filled with commands from Christ for our eternal good. The standard for our _____ and walk with Christ. **"JESUS IS THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND LIFE!" John 14:6**

The false teachers were Jewish religious leaders adding additional teachings and principles to GOD'S TRUTH; telling the GENTLES (non-Jew) they must convert to Judaism, be circumcised and believe God's Word, if they wanted to become a Christian.

ANYTHING ADDED TO OR TAKEN AWAY FROM THE WORD OF GOD IS A FALSE TEACHING.

Galatians 1:3 The order of the greeting shows once _____ is experienced, peace _____.

1:4 The **present evil age** is Galatia and *our fallen world* under the rule of Satan. **Romans 1:28-32**

6) Working to earn God's favor is sometimes attempting to please others. The idea is by doing certain things one increases in _____ before God. His favor is not based on our performance; reading the _____, going to church, doing _____ things. Are we people-pleasers or God-pleasers? **THE BIBLE IS TRUTH. ABSOLUTELY APPLICABLE TO OUR LIVES AND FAITH TODAY!**

GOD'S FAVOR IS FREE. GOD'S SALVATION IS FREE. HIS LOVE, MERCY AND PROVISION IS FREE.

It is not based on your performance; rather, on His grace.

Galatians 1:15-16 "But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased **v16** to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being."

These verses focus on God's Work. Paul's conversion is so important that it is recorded five times in the New Testament. Paul received the message he preached to the Galatians from the Lord, not from any human being. His call to preach...among the Gentiles does not mean that his message was not also meant for the Jews. He viewed the two audiences as connected. He taught the Gentiles did not need to observe the law to be saved.

Ephesians 1:4-6 "For *he (God) chose us* in him before the creation of the world to be *holy and blameless* in his sight. In love **v5** he (God) *predestined us for adoption* to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with *his pleasure and will*—**v6** to the *praise of his glorious grace*, which *he has* freely given *us in the One he loves*".

V4 *God is love* and love requires a relationship. So God *chose for himself* a people to be his "special possession".

V5 **Predestined** means "to mark out the boundaries beforehand" meaning that *God the Father chose His people* for a purpose and His purpose would be *their adoption as sons and daughters*. ("DJB Chosen for Salvation p1636)

V6 The **One he loves** refers to **Christ**. The believer's relationship with the **sinless Christ** is what makes him or her **acceptable before God**.

Romans 6:15 "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace: **By no means!**"

In **Romans 6:1** a person says "Let us go on sinning so that grace may increase." Paul answers the same way. **By no means!** This means without question; absolutely, finally and forever **not!** **Grace does not free anyone to sin but frees believers from sin.**

Galatians 2:14 "When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas (Peter) in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

Paul rebukes the apostle Peter, proving his authority as an apostle documented in public.

Galatians 5:13 "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to *indulge the flesh*; rather *serve one another humbly in love*."

We should never use our freedom as a springboard to *indulge the flesh* and be *lured into sin*. Instead, our **Redeemer frees us to serve one another.** We are saved to serve!

Believers still experience fleshly desires, they will battle those desires rather than repeatedly indulge them. Over time the believer should increasingly bear the fruit of the Spirit and be more successful in their battle over sin.

God the Father has initiated our salvation.

Galatians 1:3 "Grace to you and peace from God the Father... Grace is from God. We only have His _____ when we have His grace. It is God's will that His people would know His _____. Paul speaks of how he came to faith in Christ **1:15-16**. God set him apart, God called him, and God saved him by revealing Christ to him. **It was ALL. BY. GOD'S. GRACE!**

7) Every follower of Christ has this same testimony. Ephesians 1:4-6 "For He chose in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to His favor and will, to the praise of His glorious grace".

8) The gospel is not invented by man. The gospel is revealed by God; there is nothing man-made about it. God became a man and lived a perfect _____ that He might die on the _____ for our sins and be raised from the dead in victory over _____ so that all who believed in Him would be saved, not based on anything they had done, but Christ has done.

9) God the Son has accomplished our salvation. V3 The Father and the Son are closely identified in the work of salvation. The Son "gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age" **V4** This is the core truth of the gospel. Jesus gave His life in place of _____ who deserve God's judgement.

It is not about what man can do but WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE!

10) False teachers malign the gospel when they add to grace. The false teachers weren't telling people they denied the _____. Instead, they were improving it, adding requirements. Anyone who misrepresents or adds anything to grace, you lose the whole gospel. Do not add _____ works to the work of Christ for salvation. We don't need Christ plus this or that! Do we do this?

11) We express God loves us, but secretly think His love depends on how we're doing in our Christian life. God _____ us based on the work of Christ for _____. This Christ now lives in _____, and even our good works are the result of His power and presence within _____. **The Holy Spirit. Misunderstanding the gospel cheapens grace.** Some people will abuse _____ and take it to mean that this free gift gives them license and freedom to live however they _____. **Romans 6:15** Free grace changes your _____. This abuse is "deviating from the truth of the gospel" by their hypocritical actions. **(2:14; 5:13)** How might free grace lead to carelessness about sin?

12) The Gospel is freeing. V4 "who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age". This refers to this world. We are saved from the _____ age we live in and all of its sinful attitudes, values, and actions. Christ empowers us by His Spirit, we are _____ to obey His Word.

BY HIS GRACE WE ARE FREE TO SHARE HIS WORD WITH THE WORLD!

PASS ALONG THE GOOD NEWS!

The Marks of a Transformed Heart

The following descriptions show the kind of heart that is possible when we open ourselves to God's transforming presence.

Description	Meaning
A believing heart <i>Mark 11:23</i>	To have a heart that relies on the power of God and that fights the temptation to doubt
A broken and contrite heart <i>Psalms 51:17</i>	To be spiritually and emotionally crushed by the realization that you have disobeyed a good, loving, and holy God
A changed heart <i>Romans 2:29 NLT</i>	To experience a shift in motivation, from external pressure to keep God's law to an internal desire to obey
A committed heart <i>2 Chronicles 34:31</i>	To be committed to do whatever God has said, regardless of feelings or circumstances or outcomes
A confident (steadfast) heart <i>Psalms 57:7</i>	To be stable and secure in the truth that God rules, reigns, and rescues
A delighted heart <i>Psalms 37:4</i>	To be satisfied in God at the core of your being
A desirous heart <i>Isaiah 28:6</i>	To long for the things that are near and dear to God's heart
A devoted heart <i>1 Kings 8:61</i>	To give your allegiance and affection fully to the one true God and not to false gods or substitute saviors
An enlightened heart <i>Ephesians 1:18</i>	To be granted the ability to see and grasp God's eternal truth
An examined heart <i>Psalms 17:3</i>	To invite God to search your heart for suspect motives, wrong thoughts, and improper attitudes
A fearless heart <i>Psalms 27:3, 14</i>	To have confidence that God is present, protective, and more powerful than anything that comes against you
A forgiving heart <i>Matthew 18:35</i>	To pardon—with God's help—the offenses of others from the depths of your being, not just in empty words
A generous heart <i>Exodus 35:5 NLT</i>	To be willing and eager to share your resources
A glad heart <i>Psalms 16:9</i>	To rejoice deeply in who God is and what he has done
A God-fearing heart <i>Deuteronomy 5:29</i>	To be filled with and controlled by a deep reverence for the Lord and a desire to honor him
A God-following heart <i>1 Kings 14:8</i>	To be relentless in knowing and doing the will of God
A God-influenced heart <i>Nehemiah 2:12</i>	To be wooed or nudged by God to respond to his call

Monitoring Your Heart

When you suspect something is wrong with your "ticker," you go see your doctor. But what about when there is something wrong with your *spiritual* heart? Acts 1:24 describes God as the *kardiognostes*—the "knower of hearts." He is able to see and search the hidden depths of our hearts (1 Samuel 16:7; Luke 16:15; Romans 8:27; 1 Thessalonians 2:4). Is it time for you to make an appointment with the divine cardiologist?

Condition	Question to Ask
A backsliding heart <i>Proverbs 14:14 NASB</i>	Am I turning my back on or moving away from biblical truths I once believed?
A bitter heart <i>Ephesians 4:31</i>	Am I harboring resentment or a grudge against anyone?
A crooked heart <i>Proverbs 17:20</i>	In my thinking, speaking, and choosing, am I deviating from the life to which God calls his people?
A cunning heart <i>Psalms 64:6</i>	Am I dreaming or scheming about actions that are dishonoring to God or hurtful to others?
A deceitful heart <i>Jeremiah 17:9</i>	Am I guilty of dishonesty or shading the truth in my interactions with God or others?
A divided heart <i>2 Kings 10:31</i>	Am I wholly devoted to the Lord or am I withholding certain areas of my life from him?
A foolish heart <i>Proverbs 22:15</i>	Am I living in a way that godly people would say is wise?
A grieving heart <i>Proverbs 15:13; Lamentations 2:11</i>	In grieving a loss or reeling from a devastating trial, am I turning to the one who heals the brokenhearted (Psalms 147:3)?
A hard heart <i>Ephesians 4:18</i>	Am I resistant to God's word or will?
A lustful heart <i>Matthew 5:28; Romans 1:24</i>	Am I giving in to the impure desires that ruled my life before I began following Christ?
A numb heart <i>Acts 2:37 NLT</i>	Do I feel conviction ("pierced to the heart") when I do something sinful, or is my heart numb?
A proud heart <i>Psalms 131:1; Proverbs 21:4</i>	Am I arrogant—thinking chiefly of <i>my</i> desires, pushing for <i>my</i> ideas, promoting <i>my</i> agenda?
A troubled heart <i>John 14:1; Job 30:27 NLT</i>	Am I so stirred up, agitated, and upset that I have a hard time sleeping or focusing?
A vacillating heart <i>1 Kings 18:21; James 1:8</i>	Am I wavering in my spiritual life—trying to ride the proverbial fence between spiritual and fleshly things?