



## ACTS 26:9–18

“I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord’s people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.

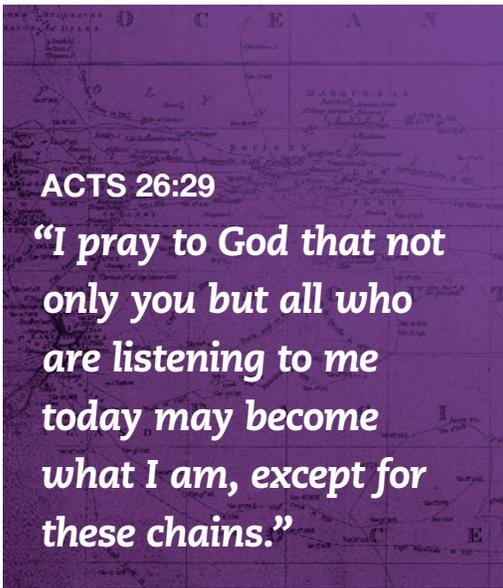
12 “On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. 13 About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. 14 We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic,[b] ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’

15 “Then I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

“ ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied. 16 ‘Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. 17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them 18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

## SERMON REFLECTIONS

- Paul never changed the message of the gospel, but he always contextualized the message of the gospel to address whatever person or culture he faced. What is the heart of the gospel message that never changes? Give examples of how you might present the unchanging gospel in the midst of ever-changing culture and circumstances.
- The Roman governor Felix was a man steeped in sin and selfishness. Pride, greed and lust were just a few of his sins. Read Acts 24, especially verses 10–26. What impresses you about Paul’s approach in presenting the gospel to Felix? What do you learn from this about the importance of helping people to be confronted with their sin problem without offense or accusation?
- Porcius Festus was clueless when it came to spiritual matters. He was ignorant of the scriptures, so Paul took a different approach. Based on Festus’ response in Acts 25:18–21, what do you think Paul preached to this unbeliever? How does this shape your thinking on what to include in your witness to unbelievers?
- Herod Agrippa was a religious man, secure in his religion and position to the point he saw no need to seriously consider the claims of Christ. In Acts 26, what approach did Paul take to confront Agrippa with his complacency and his need to take action on what he claimed to believe from the law and the prophets? How does Paul’s approach help you in thinking through how you may approach religious people who do not know the importance of a relationship with Christ?
- All of these encounters in Paul’s life helped equip and prepare him for the future witness he would be sent to proclaim in Rome. How has Paul’s example helped equip and prepare you to speak to the people whom God will send to you?



### ACTS 26:29

***“I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”***