

# Submitting to Due Process in Adversity

## *Paul's Trial in Caesarea*

Dr. Goodluck Ofoegbu

Prof. Oby Ofoegbu

Banking Blessings Ministry

San Antonio, Texas

USA

# What We Will Learn

- Submitting to due process
  - Commit to applicable rules and regulations
  - Competence with the rules and regulations
- Paul submitted to due process
- Relied on protection under due process
- To defend himself against persecution
- Acts 25:1–26 and related passages

# Paul Submits to Due Process

- Asserted citizenship right to avoid torture
- Directed conspiracy evidence to commander
- Submitted to trial before Gov. Felix
- Resisted bribery expectation by Gov. Felix
- Submitted to trial before Gov. Festus
- And before King Agrippa
- Appealed to Caesar

# Festus Explains Due Process

- Accused must be given opportunity to defend themselves against the accuser
- Timely and in accordance with the law
- Cannot be condemned or punished
- Before trial by competent authority
- Acts 25:13–21

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

13 A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus.

14 Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said: "There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

15 When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned.

16 “I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over anyone before they have faced their accusers and have had an opportunity to defend themselves against the charges.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

17 When they came here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in.

18 When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected.

19 Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

20 I was at a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges.

21 But when Paul made his appeal to be held over for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar.”

# Paul's Trial before Gov. Festus

- Jewish leaders requested Festus condemn Paul without trial
- He refused but convened court in Caesarea
- Paul represented himself
- Realized Festus was willing to hand him over to the Jews
- Appealed to Caesar
- Acts 25:1–12

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

1 Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,

2 where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.

3 They requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

4 Festus answered, “Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.

5 Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there.”

6 After spending eight or ten days with them, Festus went down to Caesarea. The next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

7 When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them.

8 Then Paul made his defense: “I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar.”

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

9 Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?”

10 Paul answered: “I am now standing before Caesar’s court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well.

## **Acts 25 (NIV)**

11 If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!”

12 After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: “You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!”

# Requirements for Due Process

- Professional competence
- Authority to apply professional competence
- Paul represented himself
  - Competent to represent himself
  - Authority to represent himself
- External professional representation may often be needed to follow due process

# Basis for Submitting to Due Process

- Rules and procedures for every person
- Submitting to due process
- Implies respect for authority
- 1 Peter 2:13–17

# 1 Peter 2 (NIV)

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.

# 1 Peter 2 (NIV)

16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves.

17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

# What We Learned

- Paul submitted to due process
- And relied on protection under due process
- To defend himself against persecution
- Had competence and authority to represent himself in the proceedings
- External professional representation often may be needed to follow due process in present-day society