

A QUESTION OF WORDS AND NAMES
Acts 18:12-18

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The Bible is an inspired book
 - 1) The Holy Spirit acted as Superintendent
 - 2) There are no errors in the Bible

- B. The writers of the New Testament were free to use their experiences.
 - 1) Paul was at Corinth when he wrote the Roman letter
 - 2) He described the Gentiles Rom. 1:
 - 3) He wrote of "good government" 13:1-7

- C. Paul may have had this incident in mind
 - 1) Paul was charged with being a law breaker
 - 2) Gallio, a judge, set him free

I. Paul was Brought to Judgment vs. 12

- A. "And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat."
 - 1) "deputy of Achaia" = proconsul, Governor
 - 2) "insurrection" = katephisistemi = "to rush upon"
 - 3) "judgment seat" = bema = "bench", "judges"

- B. "Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law"
 - 1) "persuadeth" = anapeitho = "persuade back again", "to persuade over, in a bad sense, to seduce"
 - 2) "contrary" = para = "beside" = "the idea of a comparison hence an implied superiority"

II. Gallio's Astute Perception vs. 14a

- A. He did not allow Paul to speak
 - 1) "And now when Paul was about to open his mouth"
 - 2) "Paul was about to begin his defense"

- B. Their charge was superfluous
 - 1) "wrong" = adikema = "the wrong done"
 - 2) "lewdness" = padiourgema = "what is done easily, light work, levity; recklessness"
 - 3) "reason" = kata = "according to", logon = "reason", "If indeed it were a matter of wrong or wicked villainy, I might reasonably bear with you."

- C. They were confusing religious laws with civil law - vs. 15
 - 1) "But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it"
 - 2) "question" = zetema = "topic of inquiry"

- 3) "words" = logos = "the subject matter of inquiry"
- 4) "names" = honoma = "that by which anything is called"
- 5) "but since it is a dispute about words and titles and your law, you can attend to that yourselves"
- 6) "for I will be no judge of such matters", "I refuse to be a judge of such matters"

D. "And he drave them from the judgment seat" vs. 16

- 1) "drave" = apelamno = "to drive away"
- 2) "and he had them ejected from the court"
- 3) Paul was remembering the Lord's promise to him - vs. 10

III. False Religion Must Punish Someone vs. 17

A. "Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the Chief Ruler of the Synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat."

- 1) Sosthenes became the Ruler of the Synagogue when Chrispus (vs. 8) was converted. Sosthenes is converted later. I Cor. 1:1 ".....and Sosthenes, our brother"
- 2) "beat" = tupto = "to strike", "smite with a stick"
- 3) "Then they all seized Sosthenes and kept beating him in full view of the bench"

B. "And God cared for none of those things

- 1) And Gallio cared for none of these things (kai ouden touton toi Gallioni eaelen). Literally, "no one of these things was a care to Gallio" The usually impersonal verb (aelei, eaelen, imperfect active) here has the nominative as in Luke 10:40. These words have been often misunderstood as a description of Gallio's lack of interest in Christianity, a religious indifferentist. But that is quite beside the mark. Gallio looked the other way with a blind eye while Sosthenes got the beating which he richly deserved. That was a small detail for the police court, not for the proconsul's concern. Gallio shows up well in Luke's narrative as a clear headed judge who would not be led astray by Jewish subterfuges and with the courage to dismiss a mob.
- 2) The best friend that Baptist's can have is a court that will not entangle itself in matters of religion.

IV. Paul Accepted His Circumstances With Quiet Joy vs. 18

A. "And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while"

- 1) "tarried" = prosmeno = "to remain at a place with a person", "continue there"
- 2) Under these favorable circumstances Paul did not immediately leave as had been his usual custom.

B. God's people should be grateful for the freedom and liberty granted them in our constitution.

