

November 22, 1928

Coming back to the lesson I read in your hearing this morning, I am reading this story of Paul because of its human element. I could read it and talk to you about the Christian element but if you go to Sunday School you have been getting that for some time. This book that we call the Bible is in my judgment the best book that has been written on human behavior. We get almost every phase of human behavior in this book. We have in this lesson this morning quite an interesting thing.

Paul had been taken away from these Jews by Lysias and he had a vision that night, I do not know how that vision came to Paul, it may have been a dream or some other way but he was convinced at least that he must be of good courage as all would be well with him. He had declared himself a Roman citizen but after that day I think Paul faced the day with new courage and as he was there in the castle his nephew came to see him and he told his uncle that there were over forty people that had bound themselves together with an oath that they would not eat until they got Paul. Paul called the centurion and told him to take this young man to Lysias and he told Lysias how these people had bound themselves under an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had Paul and that they were going to ask him to send Paul to the High Priest to try him under their laws but their plan was to kill him on the way. Lysias took this boy aside to get this information and told him that everything would be all right but not to tell anyone that he had told him. He did not tell anyone what he was going to do.

He called the centurion and told him to get ready to take Paul to Caesarea at the third watch of the night. In our courts today where we try people with juries our courts in order that the prisoner may be protected ask

each juror if he has reached a decision and if he is open minded. If they have an opinion, if they have decided in their minds as to whether this person is innocent or guilty they are not allowed to serve. If anyone comes around and talks to the jurors, that is sufficient reason to call it a mistrial. We have that sort of thing in America to keep from having just such a situation as this one we read.

Give people a chance and they will not give justice to a man. America is full of the same kind of folks today. Philadelphia and Chicago are famous cities in America for what is spoken of as the gang men. People who are like these forty men, who bind themselves together with an oath, taking the law in their hands and not giving a person a chance. Lysias had plenty of reasons for not letting Paul be tried any more in front of the Jewish council. That was sufficient reason why he should protect Paul who was free born. The human element runs thru it in a most interesting way.

---Robert H. Wright, President