

**Theme:** The people of God will experience persecution and opposition. We can stand with confidence if it is the “message” that is opposed. When challenged – will we defend ourselves, or the gospel??

**Background/Introduction:** Who confesses to a crime of which they have not been accused?

1. Festus needs help! - The Appeal – (Festus to Agrippa)
  - Help me figure out what to say Agrippa.
  - Not reasonable to send him without saying something about the nature of the “offense”.
2. Christianity isn’t religion of rebellion

### Paul’s Defense – Part 1

#### I. Establishing the Case

- A. Standing before Agrippa II
- B. The accusations against him?
  1. Charges of the Jews?
    - Nothing deserving death. (25:25)
    - Assertions about a dead man that Paul says is alive (25:19)
  2. From Paul - The charge is against his HOPE.
    - a. His *hope* is in the promises of God (vv.6,7)
    - b. His – and their – hope in the resurrection. (v.8)  
(Job 19:25; Ps. 19:6; P)s. 17: 15; Ps. 49:15; Is. 25:8;  
Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; Dan. 12:13; Hos. 13:14)  
Zechariah had given voice to that hope – Luke 1:68ff
    - c. His *hope* is in the resurrection of particular individual. (V.9)

## II. Answering the Charges

### A. Jews?

- He is a Pharisee.

- He is no traitor!

### B. From Paul

#### a. Paul makes the case against himself. (26:9-11)

- Not being tried for what he did,

- But for what he stopped doing!

#### b. He was/is one of them.

- like them, he didn't believe

- like them, persecuted those of "The Way"

## III. Making his Defense

A. Not defending himself – but the gospel!

B. He is on the offense

1. On trial for the hope of the resurrection.

2. *Why won't you believe?*

## IV. Our Only Defense - Application

1. What hope do we have of defending ourselves before the throne of God?  
None! apart from Him who died and rose again.

2. Our defense is not *just* about avoiding punishment or death. It is about upholding the glory and honor of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. At the heart to the gospel we preach is the resurrection of Jesus – the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of those who have fallen asleep.