



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

April 18, 2024



Photo: Our Daily Bread

GOD'S AGENTS OF PEACE

The Lord stood near Paul and said, "Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome."

Acts 23:11

READ Acts 21:27-22:2

Nora went to the peaceful protest because she felt strongly about the issue of justice. As planned, the demonstration was silent. The protestors walked in powerful quietness through the downtown area.

Then two buses pulled up. Agitators had arrived from out of town. A riot soon broke out. Heartbroken, Nora left. It seemed their good intentions were fruitless.

When the apostle Paul visited the temple at Jerusalem, people who opposed Paul saw him there. They were "from the province of Asia" (Acts 21:27) and viewed Jesus as a threat to their way of life. Shouting lies and rumors about Paul, they quickly stirred up trouble (vv. 28-29). A mob dragged Paul from the temple and beat him. Soldiers came running.

As he was being arrested, Paul asked the Roman commander if he could address the crowd (vv. 37-38). When permission was granted, he spoke to the crowd in their own language, surprising them and seizing their attention (v. 40). And just like that, Paul had turned a riot into an opportunity to share his story of rescue from dead religion (22:2-21).

Some people love violence and division. Don't lose heart. They will not win. God is looking for courageous believers to share His light and peace with our desperate world. What seems like a crisis might be your opportunity to show someone God's love.

By Tim Gustafson

PRAY & REFLECT

Father, my heart aches for our broken world. Help me realize Your Spirit's presence is far more powerful than any attack the world can throw at me. Amen

When have you been in a crisis that you couldn't make sense of? How do you think the Holy Spirit might help you find the wisdom for what to do in that moment?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

When he had the opportunity, the apostle Paul told how he'd met Christ on the Damascus Road (see Acts 9). In today's passage, he'd been wrongfully arrested and charged with crimes he didn't commit. As a result, he tells his story yet again (22:3-21)-this time to a hostile crowd (v. 22). He'd repeat his story again in chapter 26 when standing before King Agrippa. – By **Bill Crowder**

Used with permission