

CGH June 27

Act 18:12-17 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal, (13) saying, "This man is persuading people to worship God contrary to the law." (14) But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or vicious crime, O Jews, I would have reason to accept your complaint. (15) But since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of these things." (16) And he drove them from the tribunal. (17) And they all seized Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of this.

As we get deeper into this missionary journey we encounter the Roman system at work, which is evident in this passage.

In Roman law at the time, religious tolerance was the norm. this meant that all religions were felt to be equal and none was superior to any other. From Henry's commentary we learn that Paul is accused by the Jews before the Roman governor. The governor was Gallio, deputy of Achaia, that is, proconsul; for Achaia was a consular province of the empire.



This Gallio was elder brother to the famous philosopher Seneca; in his youth he was called Novatus, but took the name of Gallio upon his being adopted into the family of Julius Gallio; he is described by Seneca, his brother, to be a man of great ingenuous and great probity, and a man of wonderful good temper; he was called Dulcis Gallio - Sweet Gallio, for his sweet disposition; and is said to have been universally beloved.

Questions:

Who apprehended Paul?

Why was Paul arrested?

How was this contrary to the law if all religions were "tolerated"?

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Mat 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them

The claim was that Paul was persuading the people to worship contrary to the law, which was claiming exclusivity.

Do we struggle with this today?

Is our society accepting of the primacy of Christ?

In our background on Gallio, we see that rather than take on the situation and involve himself in it he chooses to leave it to the religious authorities.

Was this an appropriate response?

Would we do the same thing today?

What was the response of the Jewish Leaders?

Sosthenes: It seems most probable that Sosthenes was a Christian, and Paul's particular friend, that appeared for him on this occasion, and probably had taken care of his safety, and conveyed him away, when Gallio dismissed the cause; so that, when they could not light on Paul, they fell foul on him who protected him.

1Co 1:1 Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes,

So we see that so many times it's the OPPOSITION to the Gospel, not the Gospel itself, that causes the disruptions and intervention of the secular authorities. Opposition comes in many forms and from many places, often from the so called religious leaders themselves.