

# **“Accused of Being a Sect”**

## **Acts 28:16-22**

### Introduction

- I. When Paul arrived in Rome, he was ready to defend Christianity.
- II. The church had been growing, and some had an unfavorable view of such.
- III. The church of Christ was accused of being a “sect”, which we will examine in this sermon.

### Discussion

- I. What is a “sect”, and why should we care if the church is called one?
  - A. In the Greek, the word from which we get “sect” is *haireseis*.
    1. In the King James Version of the New Testament, the word appears nine times.
    2. Four times it is translated “heresy”.
    3. Five times it is translated “sect”.
  - B. “Heresies” are listed as works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
    1. Many modern versions translate this as “factions”.
    2. Peter mentioned this as well (2 Pet. 2:1).
  - C. A deeper word study indicates that a “sect” chooses certain beliefs and ideas while rejecting others, from whence we get the word “section”.
  - D. Inspired writers did not idea the church as a “sect”, but rather something that deviated from the church of Christ.
    1. “Sectarianism” or “denominationalism” is to be rejected.
    2. The church of Christ is to be whole and united (1 Cor. 1:10).
- II. Jewish leaders accused the church as being a “sect” that was spoken against everywhere.
  - A. Apparently, the thought was that Christianity was simply a branch of Judaism that was heretical.
  - B. Jews already had different groups such as the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Herodians, and the Zealots.
    1. Each group seemingly had a problem with the church.
    2. While divided doctrinally, they were united against Christianity.
  - C. This was not the only accusation railed at the church (Acts 16:20-21; 17:5-6; 18:12-13; 24:5, 14).
  - D. Being accused does not make you guilty of the accusation.
- III. The church of Christ is not a “sect”, and we need to make sure that we are a part of it.
  - A. Avoid false teachers and false doctrines (Rom. 16:16-17; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).
  - B. Stay true to what Jesus said and built (John 17:20-21; Matt. 16:18-19).

### Conclusion

- I. Regardless of accusations, the church of Christ still stands unique and singular.
- II. Christians should do their parts in making sure that we never become a “sect”.