

# Where's Your Chair?

Acts 25 1-12



The proud have derided me cruelly, but I have not turned aside from your law.  
Psalm 119:51

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## **Praising:**

Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
cumbered with a load of care?  
Jesus is our only refuge: take it to  
the Lord in prayer.

Do your friends despise, forsake  
you? Take it to the Lord in  
prayer:

in his arms he'll take and shield  
you, you will find a solace  
there.

## **Reading:**

Acts 26:1-11

Paul tells of his former hatred for  
Jesus' followers

Much as Paul's appearance  
before Agrippa suited Festus, it  
also suited Paul himself. He is  
quick to acknowledge Agrippa's  
familiarity both with the ancient  
traditions of Judaism and its  
modern internal politics. As he

has done several times before,  
Paul begins by outlining his own  
impressive Jewish credentials.  
However what he now goes into a  
little more deeply, is the personal  
animosity and vitriol he first felt  
towards Christians. At one level,  
Paul had a principled spiritual  
objection to all that the Jesus  
movement stood for as a direct  
challenge to Judaism from within.  
But at a baser human level, this  
spiritual objection manifested  
itself as raw, sometimes violent  
hatred. Not that it was a lone,  
personal campaign of  
suppression for Paul. Again, he  
makes the point that he enjoyed  
the approval and encouragement  
of his Jewish elders.

## **Listening:**

## **Praying:**

We pray Lord for those  
harbouring hatred for followers of  
Jesus

- that Christ himself would melt  
the hearts of those who are so  
cold to his disciples
- that we may see through  
insults we receive to the real  
reason for some people's  
anger
- that if some have had a bad  
experience of Christians, we  
may offer them a good one

Father: recognising the antipathy  
some Christians have aroused in  
me from time to time, I ask for  
patience and grace to love those  
who seem to hate me because of  
Jesus. Amen

## **Doing:**

Monday, 11 July 2016