

Defense

Acts 25:10-12 and 26:19-32

I. Intro

- A. Defense: What is the first word that comes to your mind?
 - 1. Football? Legal matters?
 - 2. Locks on the door, home and personal defense measures?
- B. Defense is something that needs a plan, and defending that which is sacred has a plan.
- C. Paul defends the gospel and his position in different ways, based upon the context of the day.
 - 1. Here, we have the appointed leaders of Israel
 - 2. Some are Roman, Some are Hebrew...all are flawed, selfish men.

II. Text

- A. Characters:
 - 1. Felix:
 - a) Governor, Roman overseer
 - b) Same role as Pilate in the trial of Jesus
 - 2. Festus:
 - a) Governor after Felix
 - b) He is cleaning up open court cases
 - 3. Agrippa:
 - a) King Herod Agrippa 2
 - b) The last of the Herods
 - 4. Bernice: Sister to Agrippa 2, in scandalous relationship with Agrippa 2
- B. Paul is still in Caesarea
 - 1. He was held there from 58-60 ad
 - 2. Then moved to Rome for 60-62 ad
- C. Acts 25:10-12:
 - 1. Paul is willing to die if necessary
 - 2. Paul is also determined to go to Rome as God has already proclaimed
- D. Acts 26: 19-32
 - 1. Verse 23: after telling his story again, he goes quickly to the resurrection.
 - 2. Verse 24: Festus interjects himself, thinking Paul to be out his mind.
 - 3. Verse 25, Paul defends himself, but diverts the attention from Festus back towards King Agrippa.
 - 4. Verse 26: Paul says..."The King knows of these things"
 - a) Agrippa was supposed to be Jewish, so Paul was being generous
 - b) He would also be stating, politely, that Festus has no understanding of these spiritual matters.
 - 5. 28-32: the invitation and judgment, Paul was being sent to Rome, so this is the will of God, not a mistake on the part of Paul.

III. Point

- A. Tell Your Story
 - 1. How did you come to Christ? This story has a real impact.
 - 2. Let the evidence of your life make an impact.
 - 3. Paul told his conversion story again, and used the story as his gospel proclamation, and his defense.
 - 4. Your story of coming to faith is a:
 - a) Fulfillment of a promise
 - b) A supernatural event in history
 - c) A personal experience
 - d) One that details spiritual truth as you and others have experienced
 - 5. How do you tell your story:
 - a) Pre-conversion experience (short)

- (1) I was hopeless and caught up in sin
 - (2) I was broken and unable to save myself
 - b) Conversion experience
 - (1) I was introduced to the truth of Christ through my parents, church, friend...
 - (2) I learned that Jesus died for me and was resurrected
 - (3) I trust in His sacrifice and resurrection for my salvation.
 - c) Post-conversion experience
 - (1) Tell of all the ways God is currently at work in your life.
 - (2) Don't allow all of your God stories to be old stories!
- B. Tell His Story
1. Your story needs to become HIS story very quickly.
 2. The purpose of a testimony is to tell the story of Jesus' work in your life.
 3. In a testimony, don't spend too much time on the time in your life before you met Jesus.
 4. Getting to the heart of the matter will get you to the story of God at work in your salvation, and your sanctification.
 5. His story:
 - a) There is a rescue, for His purposes.
 - b) There is an empowerment, for His purposes.
 - c) There is a step of faith, for His glory.
 6. Paul tells the story of his conversion, but tells the story of Christ's resurrection.
 7. Make much of Jesus as you tell the story, because it is about HIM!
 8. Every time Paul tells the story, he tells of the power and grace of Christ!
 9. When you get this wrong:
 - a) You major on the benefits of faith
 - b) You put yourself at the center of the story
 - c) You fall into a trap that looks like true religious conversation, but is really not.
 10. We see this when:
 - a) Someone tries to compel others to faith so they can be blessed
 - b) When we focus on the fruit rather than the source of the fruit
- C. Invite Others to start their story
1. Agrippa was on the verge of decision, or was mocking Paul's attempt to persuade him.
 2. Acts 26:28: this is the second time "Christian" is used in the Bible
 - a) The first is in Antioch, Acts 11:26,
 - b) Only other time is 1 Peter 4:16
 - c) Christianos, follower of Christ
 - d) Identified with Christ.
 3. So, Agrippa, being brought (Confronted with) the truth according to the prophecies in which he claimed to believe, now rejects the truth.
 4. The invitation was made, the decision was also made:
 - a) Agrippa rejected the truth
 - b) The decision was normal, and even natural, but not the right decision.
 5. Wrong decisions are still decisions.
 - a) Many times in our study, Paul says he has done his job in the matter:
 - b) Acts 20:27: Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.
 6. Decisions have consequences or blessings, and the decision to follow Christ is clearly a blessing.
 - a) Throughout our study, the challenge has been placed before men.
 - b) Some believed
 - c) Many did not
 - d) ALL made decisions.

IV. Close