



Sunday, June 3, 2012

Paul before Felix

Speaker: Joe Boot

Scripture: Acts 24

Sermon Notes:

1. The gospel ministry is the most exciting adventure you could devote your life to.
2. Paul engages in evangelism and defense of the gospel.
3. His activity is deemed such a great threat that he is arrested. He faces an assassination plot, and he faces political and religious charges.
4. As Paul brought his defense before Jew and Gentile, it was his judges who were being judged by the gospel.
5. The charges of being a ring-leader of a Jewish Messianic sect was a serious charge; it was an unapproved movement in non-compliance with Roman law.
6. If the Jews could separate Paul from the Jewish faith, they could label him as a rebel against Roman law.
7. Paul was respectful, but he was not flattering of Felix.
8. In refuting the charges that he was a sect leader, Paul asserts that he worships the God of Abraham, he believes the law and prophets, he believes in the resurrection, and he has lived with a clear conscience before God.
9. Paul affirms that he is in fact the consistent Jew.
10. Paul did not violate the temple; in all his ministry he took care to avoid unnecessary offense over customs.
11. Felix wanted to court favour with the Jews; so he came up with an excuse to hold Paul for 2 years.
12. Paul then has the opportunity to proclaim the whole gospel of faith in Jesus Christ to Felix and Druscilla.
13. Felix was alarmed by the ethical implications of the gospel, as Paul reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment.
14. Like Paul, we can expect to be accused of political crimes for our allegiance to Christ and His Law-Word.
15. In Western society, secularism increasingly sees Christianity as a plague and a threat to the social order.
16. But, in fact, with the widespread abandonment of the Christian faith, we are facing collapse of social order.
17. Western governments first became democratic, then paternalistic, and finally totalitarian.
18. What is good or evil is to be determined by parliamentary vote, or worse, by well placed bureaucrats.
19. Our faith is on trial because we have a different law and a different Lord, who is above the pagan state and its laws.
20. As always, they question the authority of the Bible.
21. Despite our fear of giving offense, we must speak to the conscience in an unrighteous age. The righteousness and justice of God is a necessary component of the Gospel.
22. If you're not confronted with God's holiness, you'll never grasp the meaning of the gospel (cf. Isaiah 6).
23. Don't be deterred by false witnesses, high paid lawyers, evil and immorality. Evil cannot prevail against Christ.

Application Questions:

1. How does Paul refute the charge that he is a religious innovator?
2. What is it about the gospel that its message puts kings and judges on trial?
3. Can we, like Paul, defend the faith in conversation?
4. Do we affirm by our witness the full authority of Scripture?
5. What's the appropriate response to evil according to Psalm 36:4 and Psalm 37:1-5?
6. How can we work to see the church again take its place as the moral compass and conscience of the nation?