

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of November 9, 2014

This Week's Focus: Paul takes the opportunity as King Agrippa II examines him to declare the gospel.

This Week's Text: Acts 25-26

"If there was only an empty tomb and there had been no sightings people would have believed the body was stolen. If there had only been eyewitness claiming to have seen Him but the tomb still had the body in it then everybody would have believed they were hallucinating. But only if all these were true, the empty tomb, the sightings and the permanently changed lives of the witnesses only if all these were true could Christianity have ever even begun." N. T Wright

*For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **1 Corinthians 15:16-20***

Related Texts: Acts 17:2-3; Galatians 1:14-16; 1 Corinthians 15:3-9; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Isaiah 49:6, 53; Psalm 22; Colossians 1:13-14

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- What in the text/sermon was most illuminating or helpful? Why?
- Read and discuss each stage of Paul's defense. Reference Acts 26, verses 2-3, 4-8, 9-11, 12-16, 17-21, and 22-23.
- What is the significance of Paul's comment in Acts 26:3 that Agrippa was well acquainted with Jewish controversies as well as the customs?
- How important is having hope in something? What was Paul's hope? How does the resurrection of Jesus prove hope? Reference 1 Corinthians 15:20-21, Acts 2:24, 3:14, 4:10, 13:32, and 17:2-3.

- How is this account of Paul's conversion different from the others? Reference Acts 9:1-19 and 22:5-16. How do these differences show Paul adapting his presentation to his audience?
- Many of us do not have testimonies as dramatic as Paul's. However, there are things we can learn from Paul to help us in sharing our own experiences. What are they? What are some things that all testimonies have in common?
- Discuss Paul's description of the commission he received from God in Acts 26:18?
- What does Paul mean when he says we have a place with God?
- What is true biblical repentance? Describe what the fruit of repentance might look like.
- What did Paul mean when he said that he has said nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen? What did the prophets and Moses say would happen?
- In Acts 26:24-29, Paul's life passion is exposed: declaring Christ. Festus thinks Paul is out of his mind, but how does Paul challenge King Agrippa? What does he mean when he says, "*For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner.*"
- What is the significance of Paul's question to Agrippa in Acts 26:27?
 - What was Agrippa's response?
 - Why was Paul trying to get Agrippa to become a Christian?
 - Discuss ways we can build bridges to share our faith with others.
- Paul's answer to Agrippa was, "*Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.*" What implications does this answer hold for us?
- If someone asked you what it meant to be a Christian, how comfortable would you be making the statement Paul made: to be a Christian is to be what I am?
- List several principles we can learn and apply from this narrative about living on mission. (Demonstrating and declaring the Gospel). Think about contending and contextualizing. Reference 1 Corinthians 9: 19-23 and Jude 1:3.

Gospel Celebration:

- Jesus's perfect life, atoning death, and resurrection from the dead secure our pardon.
- The gospel is the opening of the door of being home with God where you are eternally loved and wonderfully accepted and forever welcomed and delightfully God's Child!

Next Week's Text: Acts 27