

Words of Life

(December 20, 2006)

So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in.

Acts 25:23

By the time the apostle Paul appeared before King Agrippa, he had been in custody for over two years after having been falsely accused and arrested. During his custody he was brought before many prominent people, then finally, King Agrippa shows up and Paul testifies before the King.

There are two reasons this verse captures my attention. The first is that it is the fulfillment of a prophecy given concerning Paul's ministry twenty five years earlier. Shortly after his conversion, the Lord revealed that Paul would testify before kings. And now, twenty five years later, the prophecy is fulfilled. The second reason is the manner in which Paul gained access to the king. Being falsely accused, arrested and severely beaten was probably not Paul's idea of a great plan. This kind of plan would cause most of us to have some deep questions about God's methods.

Contained in this verse (and its context) are two lessons I believe the Lord will build into each of our lives as we follow Him. Patience and flexibility. Paul waited twenty five years for this prophecy to be fulfilled in his life. He also was led down a path that demanded flexibility when none of it made sense or was particularly enjoyable. The key for us is to not become discouraged when things are taking longer than we would like or when the path takes unexpected turns.

I have found the best protection against discouragement, which many times comes from our impatience and inflexibility, is to live for the day (Matthew 6:34). As we busy ourselves with the daily opportunities God sets before us to serve others, He will accomplish great things through us. Not because we have focused on the great things, but because we have been patient and flexible in His hands and have faithfully done the daily things.

I trust you will find great joy as you are faithful to the opportunities God has given you to serve Him this day! *Pastor Ted.*

The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

John 6:63