

Recap of 8/21/22 message by Chris Sommerfield – Acts 25:12-27

God works seemingly ironic circumstances to bring about His will and we do not have to be intimidated by vain and vaunting pomp.

1. *The irony of civil justice is on full display in this passage, seen primarily through 3 things:*
 1. *Festus recognizes Paul's innocence, yet he does not release Paul due to his indecision and Paul's appeal to Caesar.*
 2. *The pagan state's (Rome) procedure is protecting Paul from the murderous plots coming from God's nation and those who claim to uphold the law of God.*
 3. *The show trial of Agrippa over Paul. Agrippa and his sister Bernice were rumored to have been in an incestuous relationship. This rumor was widely known. They entered with pomp in front of all the "important people" of Caesarea, yet it is Paul who is God's chosen messenger with something important to say. They sit over Paul in judgement, yet find he has done nothing wrong, and while Paul wears the physical chains as a prisoner, he is free in Christ, and it is the judges who think so highly of themselves that are wrapped in the chains of their sin.*
2. *Paul is not intimidated by this show of power as these rulers enter with great pomp. His defense before them in the next passage is one of the best recorded examples of the gospel being proclaimed in the whole bible. We see from Paul's writings in the New Testament that he has clarity on his identity in Christ and God's purpose for his life, he has confidence in the power of the gospel and in God's faithfulness, and he is committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This clarity, confidence, and commitment is present here before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice as well.*
3. *We must seek to be people that are characterized by this clarity, confidence, and commitment so we are prepared to handle the show trials of the world that we will face. Clarity in our identity in Christ and His purpose for our life, confidence in God's faithfulness, and commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ will help us as we face intimidating moments in our lives.*