

LIFE LINKS

Growing Together



(Remember the point is not to get through all the questions, but to facilitate connection between each other and God's word.)

:Life:

What have you given up for lent? How is the discipline going?

:Bible:

Felix is out and Festus is in as governor of Judea. Paul has been sitting in jail for a couple of years with little hope of justice in his case. Now that Festus is in charge the Jewish leaders seek to use this to their advantage. They ask for Paul to be brought to Jerusalem, hoping to kill him enroute. Festus denies the request but invites them to have another "trial."

Through this farcical trial Paul realizes that Festus is not interested in the truth but rather in performing the political circus. Festus is more moderate than his predecessors. Just like Felix he is more interested in doing political favors instead of the truth. When Festus floats the idea of Paul going back to Jerusalem that's the last draw. Paul appeals to Caesar.

As a Roman citizen Paul had the unique right to have Caesar hear his case. Festus in disarray confers with his council and agrees to Paul's request. Now Paul will face the justice of Rome and hope for a better outcome. The words to Paul from Jesus about testifying in Rome are closer to being fulfilled.

Does the request from Paul seem strange? Why would he trust his case to go further into the Roman system?

Two years later and the Sanhedrin is still trying to kill Paul. It is a shame when faith turns to killing to solve perceived threat. Do we see this today? Do we have a responsibility to respond?

How would you respond to being falsely accused?

Read Scripture:

Ephesians 2:4-7

[4] But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, [5] even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—[6] and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

We can have confidence in our hope at the same time recognizing our responsibility to others. Do you share the message of the hope in Jesus to those who are struggling today?

Right now is a particularly volatile time. What is the responsibility of the church?

:Application:

Lets position ourselves for ministry. This week find someone that you disagree with and have a conversation.

:Prayer Requests:

