

“True and Rational Words” (Part 1)

Introduction

The Text

A. We’re going to read the entirety of [Acts 26](#) this morning. Paul is standing on trial before both the Roman governor Festus and the Jewish petty king Herod Agrippa II. And here’s how it begins . . .

¹ So Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense:

² “I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am going to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews,³ especially because you are familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

⁴ “My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews.⁵ They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest party of our religion I have lived as a Pharisee.⁶ And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers,⁷ to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king!⁸ Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

⁹ “I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth.¹⁰ And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them.¹¹ And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

¹² “In this connection I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.¹³ At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me.¹⁴ And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’¹⁵ And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.’¹⁶ But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you,¹⁷ delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you¹⁸ to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

¹⁹ “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.²¹ For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.²² To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass:²³ that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

²⁴ And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind.”²⁵ But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words.²⁶ 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.²⁷ King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.”²⁸ And Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?”²⁹ And Paul said, “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.”

³⁰ Then the king rose, and the governor and Bernice and those who were sitting with them.³¹ And when they had withdrawn, they said to one another, “This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment.”³² And Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.” (Acts 26:1-32)

Ambassadors for Christ

- A. One of the things I love so much about the book of Acts is it teaches us what it looks like to be a missionary for Jesus—an ambassador for him.
 - 1. That’s the word Paul uses to describe Christians in [2 Cor. 5](#): “[W]e are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God” (v. 20).
 - a. We are ambassadors—representatives of our heavenly homeland here on the earth.
- B. As we saw a little last week, we’ve been put in this place on purpose, with a purpose. Well, what is that purpose?
 - 1. A big part of it is this: to bring the good news of Jesus to others.
 - 2. To reach them for him—with his word, with his truth, with his love, with his grace.
- C. But how do you do it? Where do you start? What does it look like?
 - 1. Again, that’s why I love the book of Acts. We learn a lot about this watching these early Christians, especially Paul.
 - a. And he’s at it again here in [Acts 26](#) . . .

“True and Rational Words”

- A. It seems to me, as silly as it may sound, one of the things that can really stop us from sharing Jesus with others is we get worried they’re going to think we’re stupid.
 - 1. We’re going to sound crazy—talking about Jesus rising from the dead and heaven and hell and all this. It sounds a bit out there.
 - 2. I don’t want my friends, my family, my coworkers, my neighbors, whoever—to think I’m crazy.
- B. But, I wonder if you noticed, that’s precisely what Festus says to Paul at the end there, right? Look at [v. 24](#): “And as [Paul] was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, ‘Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind.’”

1. The Greek word used there is **mania** (where we derive our English word “maniac”)—denoting madness, insanity, delirium. “You are not in your right mind. You’re crazy.”
2. But then how does Paul respond? I love it.
 - a. He’s not taken aback by this. He’s not offended. He’s not scrambling for a rebuttal. He doesn’t resort to name-calling as well: “I’m not stupid. You’re stupid.”
 - b. He just confidently and calmly—and even respectfully—pushes back, **v. 25**: “But Paul said, ‘I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words.’”
 - i. You can call me crazy. But I know I am speaking “**true and rational words**.”
- C. And I just thought, there’s my title for this sermon (or really for the next three sermons—as we’ll look at this chapter over the next three weeks): “**True and Rational Words**.”
 1. I want us to have that kind of confidence when we’re sharing with others. Regardless of how they respond, we know these are “**true and rational words**.”
 2. But, for us to get there, we’ve got to consider more carefully these words from Paul.
 - a. What exactly does he say? How does he say it?
 - b. What are the various layers to his presentation, his defense, his apologetic here?
- D. I want to bring out four layers I see in his discussion here that together help him form a very true and rational argument for the validity of Jesus and the gospel.
 1. There’s something personal here, something biblical, logical, and historical.
 - a. Lord willing, we’ll take the first two of these layers this week.
 - b. Then we’ll look at the last two of these layers next week.
 - c. And, finally, we’ll come out in Part 3 and consider the one ultimate aim he has in all of this—looking, in particular, at those stunning words in **v. 18**.
- E. So . . . “**true and rational words**”: four layers that compose them, and one ultimate aim that guides them. That’s the plan for the next few weeks!

Preliminary Observations

- A. Having said that, before we look at the two layers I’ve got for us today, I did want to make a couple quick preliminary observations . . .

Observation #1: Paul Begs the King for Patience

- A. Did you see that there just as he’s about to start his whole discussion? What does he say to Agrippa in particular? Look at the end of **v. 3**: “**I beg you to listen to me patiently**.”

1. That's pretty bold to start off that way when you're the one in the dock. "Give me time. Don't just rush past what I'm going to say. Let it sink in. Ruminates on it a bit."
- B. But I saw that and I thought: what a word for today! "[L]isten to me patiently." We live in a day where folks can barely focus for a few seconds before flitting off to something else.
1. Some of you may have noticed, we've started clipping from our sermons and posting "shorts" on YouTube and Instagram and Facebook. And it's crazy when you look at what they recommend for these sorts of things.
 - a. You should probably make it sixty seconds or less because people can't hang on longer than that.
 - b. You've got capture their attention in the first three seconds or they'll just swipe away.
 - c. You should edit out any silence in your discourse longer than a second or two or they might get bored.
 2. This is our culture. And we're posting shorts not merely to accommodate or capitulate to this, but to reach people where they're at and hopefully hook them enough that we can get them to think more about Jesus—to get them to a place where they're willing to listen patiently to what he's said and done and why it matters for them.
 - a. I see it as just trying to lay out bread crumbs that might lead them back to the feast.
 3. But this is a problem in our culture, right?
- C. And Paul's just saying: "Listen, if you're not a Christian in this place, take your time as you contemplate the claims of Christianity, the message of the gospel, the validity of it. It's worth serious consideration."
1. And he can say this because he knows the Christian faith will stand up to scrutiny.
 2. He's not trying to pressure people into quick decisions before they really know what's happening—like the guy at the door trying to sell you a piece-of-junk vacuum cleaner. That guy wants you to buy it quick and then he's out and down the street before you actually try it and realize the thing's a joke.
 - a. This is not a sales pitch or a magic trick or some con.
 - b. He's fully confident that if you give it time, if you listen patiently, you'll see: these are "true and rational words."
- D. For those of us who are already Christians, I suppose there's a lesson in this for us too.
1. This reminds us, if you're going out to share your faith with others, don't look for the slam-dunk, silver-bullet presentation that will quickly get your hearer to repent and believe, or something.
 2. Let it linger. Take your time with people. Encourage them to listen well, to ask questions, to search it out for themselves.

- E. You remember, at one point Jesus has a guy saying to him: “I will follow you wherever you go” (Luke 9:57).
 - 1. And Jesus actually doesn’t say: “Great, this is awesome!”
 - 2. Instead, he says, in essence: “Wait, hold up a minute. Have you really thought this through?” He encourages him to “count the cost” (Luke 14:28) before he comes. He slows him down. “Let’s make sure you realize what you’re getting into.”
 - a. He doesn’t push for the quick decision before there’s been real reflection.

Observation #2: Paul Tailors His Message for Relevance

- A. What I mean here is: Paul doesn’t say everything that could be said in his little speech to these guys. He brings out and emphasizes those things that are particularly relevant for the people he’s trying to reach.
- B. So, for example, with Festus and Agrippa, what is the big issue that these guys are trying to figure out with this trial and things, do you remember? Well, they want to know: Paul, why are the Jews so mad at you? They’re claiming you’re against them at every point. Are you or are you not?
 - 1. This concern of theirs is going to influence the way he shapes his message. Did you notice?
 - a. He tells his own story, he brings in Scripture, he does all these things, in an effort to say: “Listen, I’m not opposed to Judaism. I’m just following the trajectory that Judaism and the OT put me on! I didn’t see it at first. Now I do. Jesus is not against these guys. He’s the arrival of everything they’ve been hoping for.”
 - i. Paul’s answering questions they’re really asking. So it all seems especially relevant to them.
 - 2. But, and here’s the critical point, he’s not just making a defense for himself, is he? No. All along the way, if you look carefully, he’s actually making a defense, an apologetic (vv. 1, 2, 24) for Jesus and the gospel itself.
 - a. That’s why at the end, if you caught it, Agrippa says: “Wait a minute Paul, are you trying to make me a Christian? “[W]ould you persuade me to be a Christian?” (v. 28). I thought we were just hearing your defense. Now I realize you’re preaching the gospel and trying to convert us!”
- C. But I think there’s a principle here that’s important for us to remember in our evangelism.
 - 1. So often we’re trying to answer questions the people in front of us aren’t really asking.
 - 2. A lot of times we have our canned gospel presentation and we’re just going to cram it down your throat no matter what—even if it doesn’t seem relevant to you or to what’s going on.
- D. That’s not how Paul does it. And that’s not how Jesus does it either, if you remember. He’s always tailoring his message so it’s relevant to the people he’s caring for.

1. So, on the one hand, he doesn't come to the woman at the well in [John 4](#) and say: "Not to fear! I'm the light of the world." She doesn't care about light right now—she wants water.
 - a. So instead he says: "I know you're thirsty. I am the source of 'living water' (v. 10)." That's relevant to her. That's a connection she cares about in the moment.
 2. But then, on the other hand, he doesn't come to the man born blind in [John 9](#) and say: "Don't worry brother, I'm the fountain of living water." This guy doesn't care about water right now. He's lived his whole life in darkness. He wants to see.
 - a. So instead Jesus says: "I am the light of the world" (v. 5). That's a way of getting at this that he'll perk up to, lean in towards.
 3. Both things are true of Jesus. But this one seems relevant to this person and that one seems relevant to that person. He meets people where they are and walks with them towards the gospel from there.
- E. That's what Jesus does. That's what Paul does. We ought to do the same.
1. All roads lead to the gospel if you know where to look.
 - a. So instead of forcing people to get on your road and walk with you, get on their road and walk with them.
 - b. Everyone's looking for Jesus whether they realize it or not. Your job and joy is to help them see it, to see him!
- F. Okay, now, with these preliminary observations out of the way, we are ready to consider two of the layers in Paul's presentation here that I think are very important and help him make a case for Jesus that's both "[true and rational](#)".

Layer #1: Personal

Jesus' Story in the Context of My Story

- A. What Paul shares here is deeply personal. Obviously, you caught that. He's telling his own story of conversion, transformation, how Jesus confronted him on that road to Damascus and changed him forever.
 1. He's sharing the gospel, that's for sure.
 2. But he tells Jesus' Story, you could say, in the context of his of his own story.
- B. Now, this is the third time in the book of Acts we've seen Paul sharing his testimony.
 1. So we're not going to deal all that much with the details here. (You can go back to some of the sermons in Acts 9 and Acts 22 if you're wanting more of that.)
 2. For today I just simply want you to see that he's sharing the gospel in a deeply personal way.

- a. Jesus isn't merely some idea to Paul. He not just providing some rational set of proofs here, though, as we'll see, he does do some of that.
 - b. But he does that in the context of talking about how Jesus has met him, how Jesus has saved him.
 - i. Our faith is not just intellectual, historical, factual, logical . . . it's deeply personal.
- C. And I think this is something today that's really important, maybe more important than ever.
 - 1. People don't just want to hear the truth from you, they want to see the truth at work in you.
 - 2. Part of what makes something seem true and rational to folks in our culture is its personal—you see it at work in a person. And you're left thinking: "Okay, something really happened there. Jesus really changed him."
- D. So Paul says:
 - 1. "Listen, you can ask these Jewish opponents of mine, you can ask my accusers—I was just as against Jesus and these Christians as they are.
 - 2. But then he met me there on that Damascus road, and he got ahold of my heart, and I've never been the same."

Evangelizing Yourself

- A. In light of this, I suppose we could say, then, that effective evangelism actually begins with evangelizing yourself—making sure your own soul is in touch with the gospel.
 - 1. You have to be reached by Jesus, before you can reach others for Jesus.
 - a. You've got to be genuine. You've got to be the real thing. It's got to be personal for you.
 - b. Anything else isn't going to come off as true and rational, but as hypocrisy. People aren't going to be inclined to believe your words. They're going to be suspicious of them.
- B. You know, my kids have back to school nights and we get to go meet their teachers and hear about their classes and things. And one of my kids is taking a health class.
 - 1. And as we're sitting in there listening to this guy talk about what they'll be doing for the year, it just occurred to me: he seems in decent enough shape, healthy enough . . . but what if he didn't?
 - a. What if your health teacher is visibly unhealthy? He turns to the side and he's got this big old gut hanging out. And he's talking to you about eating right and exercise and all this.
 - i. He may have the facts right. He may be teaching you right out of the book.

- ii. But because his life hasn't been changed by this, you're not all that likely to listen to him. It seems a little suspicious, a little questionable.
- 3. Certainly, if you flip it around, the opposite is true.
 - a. If the guy is just ripped, shredded, in incredible shape, you can see the outline of his six pack through his shirt, and he's teaching you about things . . . you're like: "Okay, I've got to do this. If it worked for him like that, maybe it can work for me." The whole thing is much more compelling.
- C. Let me ask you: When you go to share your faith with others, which guy are you?
 - 1. Too often, I fear we're like the first guy.
 - a. We may have our facts right, but have we been touched by the facts, changed by the facts?
 - b. We turn to the side and people see our spiritual gut hanging out.
 - c. We talk about Jesus but we're acting like jerks, we're arrogant, we're self-righteous.
 - d. And they're thinking: "Maybe you should be taking the medicine you're trying to jam down my throat. You're talking about the love of God in a most unloving way. I don't want any part of this."
 - 2. If people are going to see the gospel as true and rational (as it really is) it has to be personal for you. It has to have changed you. Or they're just going to disregard it.
- D. Anyone could see Paul had been changed.
 - 1. He's literally sharing the gospel with Herod and Festus here in chains—willing to suffer for the sake of his faith. As Jesus suffered in love for us, he's suffering in love for them.
 - a. That's how much it's gotten into him. And there's something powerful about that.
 - i. Even if you want to argue about the facts.
 - ii. You can't deny that he seems to have been transformed by this.
 - (1) It's personal for him.
 - (2) And that makes it more compelling for others.
- E. So, if I were to sum up what we've seen thus far . . .
 - 1. First, make sure the gospel has really gotten in you.
 - 2. And then, second, don't hesitate to talk about that with others.
 - a. Share Jesus' story in the context of your own story.
- F. But there's another layer to Paul's "true and rational words" here . . .

Layer #2: Biblical

True for You (personal) and True for All (biblical)

- A. If his presentation were only personal, then someone might respond: “Okay Paul, that’s great, that’s true for you . . . but it’s not true for me.”
 - 1. That’s why he tries to show them what he’s experienced with Jesus is not just personal.
 - 2. It’s also biblical. It’s part of God’s truth—not just for him, but for all.

Using the Bible to Prove the Bible?

- A. Now, in the context here, he’s talking especially to Herod who seems to have had a soft place in his heart for the Jewish faith and OT Scriptures.
 - 1. So, in trying to reach him, Paul could really leverage the Bible in trying to prove the validity of Jesus and the gospel.
 - 2. What about for us—when we’re talking to people who, from the gate, already think the Bible is just a joke? Can we, in essence, use the Bible to prove the validity of the Bible?
 - a. Well, in one sense, yes, I actually think you can . . .
- B. For this, we have to remember the Bible is not like other books. It’s more of a book of books. It’s a library in your hand.
 - 1. I think it’s easy to forget that and, with it, to forget just how the Bible originated.
 - a. For other books on your shelf, usually it’s just one author wrote something up, saves it, hits print, and there it is.
 - b. But that’s not how the Bible has come to us. It’s come to us from many authors, writing in many places, through the course of many centuries.
 - i. And yet still it’s ultimately telling just one story—with Jesus at the center of it.
- C. To get more specific on this:
 - 1. The Bible is composed of 66 books
 - 2. of various genres,
 - 3. written over a 1500 year span,
 - 4. in 3 different languages,
 - 5. on 3 continents,
 - 6. by more than 40 different authors,
 - 7. coming from various walks of life,
 - 8. with different backgrounds, different skillsets, different personality types . . .

- a. . . . and yet, again, they're all ultimately telling one story: and it's a story that culminates and climaxes in the person and work of Jesus Christ!
- D. I've shared this with you before, but this has been one of the most personally compelling and encouraging truths for my own faith. There is no book like this book.
 - 1. As I see it, the fact that all these authors are ultimately telling one story is evidence to the fact that there really is ultimately one Author over them all and in them all: namely, God.
 - a. In other words, the Bible's unity is evidence of its divinity!

Three (Two) Instances

- A. And Paul's trying to get that across here—that the gospel is not his idea, it's God's idea, and it's been his idea all along.
 - 1. He brings it up in three separate instances throughout his little speech. For the sake of time, I'll take you to just the second and third instance.

Instance #2: Verses 22-23

- A. The second instance comes to us in [vv. 22b-23](#) and here's where Paul gets the most explicit about this: “²² I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: ²³ that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”
 - 1. In other words, again: “My message isn't novel, it's as old as the Old Testament. This is the essence of Israel's 'hope' (cf. [vv. 6-7](#)). Moses and the prophets have been talking about this from the very beginning.”
 - a. Talking about what? The Christ.
 - b. What about him? Three things in particular: (1) that he would suffer and die; (2) that he would rise again; and (3) that he would bring salvation to all people—Jew and Gentile alike!
- B. It seems clear to me (and many commentators before me) that Paul likely has especially in mind here those prophecies from Isaiah concerning the Suffering Servant. For these same three things are spoken of regarding this coming figure in particular.
 - 1. That he would suffer and die . . .
 - a. We could turn to [Isa. 53:3-6](#): “³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All

we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

2. That he would rise from the dead . . .

- a. We could turn to *Isa. 52:13* where God says: “Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.”
- b. But in *Isa. 53:10-12*, he gets even more specific. After the description his suffering and death for our iniquity, Isaiah says this: “¹⁰ [W]hen his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.”
 - i. The clear implication here is that he’s suffered and died, yes, but he’s now alive!
 - ii. He worked a great redemption for his people. And then he distributes the spoil of his triumph to his people.

3. That is why, in the third place, it is said that he would bring light and salvation to all!

- a. So in *Isa. 42:6-7*, God says of this servant: “⁶ I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, ⁷ to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”
- b. Or later in *Isa. 49:6*, God says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”
 - i. “I’m going after more than just Jews here. That would be far too small.
 - ii. No. This salvation is from the Servant for the world!”

C. And let me just remind you, Isaiah was a prophet active in Israel some 700 years before Jesus ever even shows up on the scene! It’s amazing.

- 1. And in case you’re tempted to assume that Christians must have doctored the evidence, tampered with Isaiah’s writings, somehow after Jesus had already come and gone,
- 2. let me remind you: with the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery, we actually have nearly the full scroll of Isaiah dated back to at least 100 B.C.
 - a. And, wouldn’t you know it, all these prophecies about the Suffering Servant are there!

- D. All we've had time to do is look at a few prophecies in Isaiah. Truly the entire OT is preparing us for and pointing us to Jesus—his suffering and death, his resurrection glory, and the salvation he'd make available to all!
- E. So Paul is saying that, while this is personal for him, it's not just personal.
 - 1. It's also biblical.
 - 2. And, because it's biblical, it's something God is trying to communicate to the world. You need Jesus. You need the gospel!

Instance #3: Verse 27

- A. And that's why the conversation goes where it does in the third instance of this down in [v. 27](#).
 - 1. With this, we are brought back to that more pointed moment we already referred to between Paul and Agrippa where Agrippa can tell Paul's trying to convert him.
 - 2. But how can he tell? What did Paul say to him that made him think such a thing?
 - a. Well, look at [v. 27](#): "[King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.](#)"
 - b. It's after that, that Agrippa says: "[\[W\]ould you persuade me to be a Christian?](#)"
 - i. Because he gets what Paul is saying here: If you believe the prophets, you would believe in Jesus, because all the prophets spoke of him.
- B. It's the very same move Jesus made with the Jews many years before. Do you remember? "[39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. . . . 46 \[I\]f you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me](#)" (John 5:39-40, 46).
- C. So Paul's argument for Jesus is true and rational because it is both personal and biblical (and, as we'll see next time, it's also logical and historical).
 - 1. And we should incorporate such things in our own evangelistic efforts.
- D. But for now I just want to address those who may still be skeptical of Christ, returning really to where we began.
 - 1. I'd encourage you to take the time to really search this out?
 - a. There are so many people in this room whose lives have been transformed by the love and grace of Jesus. It's deeply personal for a lot of us. And that should give you reason to pause. "If I don't believe in Jesus, what accounts for all of this?"
 - b. But, furthermore, give yourself to a careful reading of the Bible. Look into these things I'm sharing with you. There truly is no other book like it.

- i. It's unity is evidence of its divinity.
- ii. And, at the heart of it all, God is trying to get across just what Paul is going after with Herod here. You need Jesus.

(1) Jesus lived the life we should have lived, and died the death we should have died, so that when he rose from the dead he could throw open the way back to God—the way back to life and joy and peace and hope!

2. “[W]ould you persuade me to be a Christian?”

- a. Yes, that was Paul's prayer for Herod.
- b. And it's my prayer you!