

August 1

Scriptures: Read Acts 24 & 25

Key Verse: “Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.” (Acts 24:26)

Overview

She was just a nice little old lady. She came to our door in Jerusalem, out of breath, and clutching a large notebook and a beat-up tape recorder. She said she wanted to talk to me about Jesus, and “would you mind if I tape our conversation? I’d like to write an article for a Canadians magazine.”

“No problem”, I said, and I even let her use my tape-recorder when hers malfunctioned. We talked about the Lord for two hours.

Month later, a large article appeared in Israel’s leading women’s magazine—alerting Israel to a dangerous new missionary, Jin Cantelon. It was a direct transcript, with a few strategically placed editorial comments included in quotations to make it appear they, too, were my words. The little old lady was in the employ of a large international anti-Christian organization dedicated to getting Christian preachers out of Israel. This was to be the first of several occasions throughout the ensuing years when I would face eager seekers-after-the-Gospel with mixed motives.

In chapter 24 and 25, we see Paul presenting his message to three high-ranking Romans: the governor Felix, his successor Porcius Festus, and King Agrippa. These conversations took place, not over the course of a few hours, but two years.

It was Felix who spent the most time talking with Paul. He showed such interest that Paul may have assumed there was a genuine motive behind his questions. But there wasn’t. Luke tells us that his interest was money; Felix hoped to receive a bribe.

There’s a simple lesson here. We shouldn’t be overly impressed with a person’s eagerness to hear the Gospel. We need to be discerning, lest we “cast our pearls before swine”. That quote, by the way, comes from Jesus Himself (Matt.7:6).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You said, “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses to Me.” Fill us today and every day with Your Spirit so our witness for You will be powerful. Amen.