

SCCC – IDENTIFYING TRUE CHRISTIANITY

S - Scriptures

“First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.” Acts 26: 20

C – Consideration

Paul once again is presenting his case to political leaders, at this time to Agrippa. He had already used his privilege as Roman citizen to have his case judged by the Emperor in Rome; however, the Lord gave him an opportunity to share his testimony with this group of aristocrats before heading to the capital of the empire. He summarized his discourse with these words: “I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles.” As he finished his defense, he asked, and at the same time answered a question to the King “do you believe the prophets? I know you do.” Understanding Paul’s challenging statement, “Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”

C – Commitment

The text is very explicit and there is no proof that Agrippa, even though believing in the writings of the prophets became a Christian. John, the Baptist, preached short sermons and hundreds became believers. In the last century, thousands who had attended Billy Graham’s crusades became Christians after hearing very short sermons. It seems to me that the King’s problem was not the length of Paul’s sermon, but the cost to follow Christ. The first step is repentance. To become a Christian it is not lifting up a hand in an altar call or repeating a prayer after a preacher, but must be proved by fruit. Paul said, “Demonstrate repentance by their deeds.” Jesus had said, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ In conclusion, to be a Christian is to become a new creation. It is to be like Jesus, to obey Jesus’ commands, to deny the ego, pick up our cross and follow Him. It is to live in the hope that He could come any time to take His people home.

C – Call

My God, thank You for Jesus, who came to earth to save us from our sins. Thank You to the messengers who are proclaiming the gospel to the nations. I pray that I will be a faithful preacher of Your word and not try to make converts, but as Jesus had commanded: Go and

make disciples. I also pray that people might see Christ in me, not just for what I preach but for what I do. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.