

"The Road to Rome"

Part 5

Acts 22-28

Introduction: Two weeks ago, we followed Paul with his escort of 470 soldiers to the city of Caesarea. Paul was taken to Caesarea to stand on trial before Felix. The Jews who wanted to see Paul put to death brought with them a hired attorney by the name of Tertullus. The last time we divided this chapter into three parts.

- 1. The Jewish charges against Paul. Acts 24:1-9**
- 2. Paul's reply to the charges. Acts 24:10-21**
- 3. Felix's response. Acts 24:22-27**

➤ **The Jewish charges against Paul.**

Tertullus did his best to make it appear as though Paul was living in lawlessness.

Notice Acts 24:1-9

Tertullus had brought three accusations against Paul and each one had governmental overtones.

➤ **Paul was a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world,**

Tertullus referred to Paul as a troublemaker who stirred up riots wherever he went. This accusation was meant to bring the Roman government against him. The Romans desired to maintain order throughout the entire Roman Empire. To accuse him of stirring up riots was an attempt to paint him as a lawless man with no concern for Roman law.

➤ **Paul was a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.**

This was another attempt to bring the Roman government against Paul. The Romans only permitted Judaism as a legal religion. The way Tertullus worded the accusation he made it appear that Christianity was a sect that was divorced from the Jewish religion. He tried to make Paul look like the leader of a cult. This was to again make Paul look like a lawless man who was against the Roman law.

➤ **Paul had desecrated the temple.**

This was an attempt to get permission to execute Paul. The Romans had given the Jews permission to execute any Gentiles who went beyond the Gentile courtyard in the temple. Paul was not a Gentile but he had been accused of bringing a Gentile into the forbidden area. These were the accusations that were brought against Paul. This now brings us to the next point.

➤ **Paul's reply to the charges. Acts 24:10-21**

Notice Acts 24:10-11

Paul tells Felix that it was just 12 days ago that he had arrived at Jerusalem to worship. This is an interesting statement because 5 of those 12 days were spent in holding at Caesarea.

Notice Acts 24:1

Keep in mind that one of the charges against him was that he had stirred up a riot. That would mean that he only had 5 days to gather people to stir up the riot, which was not enough time. This then countered the claim made by the Jews.

Notice Acts 24:12-13

Paul was not stirring up a riot.

Notice Acts 24:14

Here in this verse is Paul's confession. He was a follower of THE WAY which the Jews referred to as heresy. But it was through THE WAY that he worshipped the God of his fathers. He also made it clear that he was not against the Law or the prophets. His beliefs did not contradict anything written in the Old Testament. Paul believed ALL the things written in the Old Testament. This is such an important statement because he was turning the tables on his accusers. Paul was saying that they were the heretics because they did not believe the Old Testament. The Old Testament focused upon Jesus Christ and when He came, they rejected Him. They thought they worshipped the Father but they did not because Jesus was the only WAY to the Father and they had rejected Him. It is important

to pay attention to how Paul refers to THE WAY. He does not say it is A WAY but instead Jesus Christ is called THE WAY. Jesus, as we know is the only way to the Father.

John 14:6

⁶ *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

In Proverbs we read of the belief of many in the world today.

Proverbs 14:12

¹² *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

The fact that there is but ONE WAY for salvation is pictured in several places in the Bible.

Genesis 6:14-16

¹⁴ *Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.*

¹⁵ *And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*

¹⁶ *A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.*

John 10:7-9

⁷ *Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.*

⁸ *All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

⁹ **I am the door**: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ Enter ye in at **the strait gate**: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

¹⁴ Because strait is **the gate**, and narrow is **the way**, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Notice Acts 24:15

Paul now speaks of his hope and his hope was in the resurrection. He states here that he believed there will be a resurrection of the just and the unjust.

Application:

I want to raise a question here. Why is the resurrection so important for the believer's salvation?

1. We are justified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 4:23-25

²³ Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

²⁴ But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

²⁵ Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

1 Corinthians 15:17

¹⁷ And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

It was the resurrection that proved God the Father accepted the blood sacrifice of His Son as the payment for our sin.

2. It is the resurrection that gives us the hope of seeing our loved ones who died in Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:17-19

¹⁷ *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*

¹⁸ *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*

¹⁹ *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

If there is no resurrection then there is no salvation and that would mean all of our loved ones perished and we would never see them again.

3. It is the resurrection that gives us the assurance of new glorified bodies one day.

1 Corinthians 15:23,51-54

²³ *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.*

⁵¹ *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

⁵² *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

⁵³ *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

⁵⁴ *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*

4. It is the resurrection that ensures that the wicked will receive their due reward.

Revelation 20:11-15

¹¹ And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

¹⁴ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Notice Acts 24:16

Paul's life was lived in the hope of the resurrection and here he tells Felix that it was the resurrection that motivated him to live a blameless life. Why? Because he knew that there was coming a day when he would stand before the Lord and be held accountable for how he lived his life as a believer.

Conclusion:

We too will stand before the Lord and be held accountable.

2 Corinthians 5:9-11

⁹ Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

¹¹ Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

The idea of terror in this passage is a deep respect and reverential sense of the coming day of accountability before the Lord Jesus Christ at His Judgment of believers. Believers are not to be terrified at the thought of standing before Christ. On the other hand, unbelievers should feel a terror of having to stand before Him at the Great White Throne to be sentenced to eternal separation from His presence.