

"The Road to Rome"

Part 6

Acts 22-28

Introduction: Last week in our study we stopped as Paul was right in the middle of his trial before Felix. The Sanhedrin had come to Caesarea and they brought an attorney by the name of Tertullus. He attempted to make Paul look like a lawless Roman citizen but his attempt failed. When Paul was given permission to speak he explained what had happened and he stated that they had no evidence against him. He told Felix that he was a man with a clear conscience.

Notice Acts 24:13-16

In this statement he also spoke of his hope that rested in the resurrection. This then brings us to where we are tonight.

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

➤ **Part 2**

Notice Acts 24:17-21

Paul explained that he was called in before Felix because of his stance on the resurrection. That is what stirred up the Jews. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection but the Sadducees did not.

Notice Acts 23:6-10

This was Paul only "crime" that he mentioned the great doctrine of the resurrection.

➤ **Felix's response. Acts 24:22-27**

Notice Acts 24:22

This is a very interesting verse. We are told that Felix had a more perfect knowledge of the way. The way here refers to Christianity. But the question is, "He had a more perfect knowledge than who?" It seems that he had a more perfect knowledge than the Sanhedrin and their attorney, Tertullus. How did he get this more perfect knowledge? Luke does not tell us but there is something to consider.

Acts 21:8

⁸ *And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.*

Here we see that Philip the evangelist lived in Caesarea so possibly Felix had contact with Philip but we cannot be sure. Getting back to the verse, it is shocking that Felix had a more perfect knowledge than the religious leaders. They should have known the Truth concerning Jesus Christ for they were supposed to be Old Testament scholars.

Application:

The Sanhedrin are much like the Syrians in 1 Kings 20 who were guilty of following the wrong theology. I look at the Sanhedrin here in Acts 24 and realize that they had the greatest apostle that ever lived in their presence and he has attempted to tell them the Truth concerning the Word of God and they refuse to listen. What a tragedy!! We who live in the US are truly blest with the freedoms that we have. We can worship with no fear of persecution. We have Bibles in all of our homes and we have churches to attend. But one of the saddest things about the church today is that many are Biblically illiterate. We have the Holy Spirit who desires to teach us living within us. But there are so many distractions around us and many believers get caught up in the distractions and they have very little time to search the Word of God to learn Truth that matters. What I often see in the lives of people is that they live for the world and the stuff in it until some unexpected news comes and then they turn to the Bible. This is tragic! We need the Bible in our lives every single day not just when unexpected news comes. I am sure there was a day when the religious leaders looked back and desired to have this very opportunity to do over again. But it was too late.

Notice Acts 24:22 again.

Let us not miss the providence of God in this verse. The hearing is delayed and the delay is from the Lord. There was no evidence against Paul but if Felix released him the Jews would have been able to capture Paul and kill him. Therefore, the delay was for Paul's protection and let us keep in mind that the delay would last two years.

Application:

This should make us thankful for the delays in our lives especially when we understand that God is control of the events that unfold in our lives. How many times have we been met with a delay that seemed to be very inconvenient? Possibly the delay was for our

protection or it was to put us in contact with someone that needed to be ministered to in some way.

Psalm 31:13-15

¹³ *For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life.*

¹⁴ *But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God.*

¹⁵ **My times are in thy hand:** *deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.*

There are times when God changes our plans and delays what we desire to see right now. We must learn to wait on Him for He knows our lives from the cradle to the grave.

Lamentations 3:25-26

²⁵ *The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.*

²⁶ *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.*

Isaiah 40:28-31

²⁸ *Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.*

²⁹ *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.*

³⁰ *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:*

³¹ *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

Notice Acts 24:23

Here again is the hand of God. Paul friends were free to visit and bring whatever he needed. Paul was chained to a guard but he had liberty in certain areas of the palace.

Notice Acts 24:24

Here we are introduced to Felix's wife, Drucilla. Felix and Drusilla sent for Paul because they desired to hear more of his message. She was from the family of the Herods. Notice the words of Robertson on Drusilla.

"Felix had induced her to leave her former husband Aziz, King of Emesa. She was one of three daughters of Herod Agrippa I (Drusilla, Mariamne, Bernice). Her father murdered James, her great-uncle Herod Antipas slew John the Baptist, her great-grandfather (Herod the Great) killed the babes of Bethlehem. Perhaps the mention of Drusilla as "his own wife" is to show that it was not a formal trial on this occasion. Page thinks that she was responsible for the interview because of her curiosity to hear Paul."

Notice the words from an unnamed writer.

"The lesson for all of us here is clear - God's delays may lead to human disappointments, but remember that His delays may also lead to divine appointments, for His delays always have a higher purpose for our good and His glory. We need to learn to be patient. In this case His delay resulted in an appointment to proclaim the Gospel to Felix and Drusilla."

Notice Acts 24:25

Paul preached on three subjects.

1. Righteousness

I am sure that Paul explained that God required perfect righteousness in order for a man or woman to go to heaven. He would have made it clear that there are no people that are righteous and left to ourselves we would be damned to hell. He would have explained that the righteousness that God required could only be found in Jesus Christ. Felix would now know that he was guilty of sin and that he fell far short of God's glory.

2. Temperance

This was self-control. This topic certainly would have brought great conviction to Felix and Drusilla because it was the lack of self-control that brought these two together.

3. Judgment to come.

Paul did not hesitate to proclaim the Truth of the Scriptures that speak of the day of judgment that will come upon all the ungodly. Paul was very direct and to the point. He was not preaching to win the favor of Felix and Drusilla. They needed the Truth and that is exactly what he delivered. Notice the words of Phillips.

"What were a few fleeting years of sin and self-indulgence compared with the eternity of woe that awaited the unrepentant? The great white throne lay ahead. There was no escape, except by way of Calvary. They might be able to flout and manipulate, scorn or evade the judgment of men, but there awaited them the judgment of God. There remained the Supreme Court of the universe and Jesus, Who must be faced—if not as Savior, then certainly as Judge."

Notice Acts 24:25 again.

Felix trembled as the Truth was presented to him. But he made the choice to take his chances and wait for a more convenient season. How sad this is. He was under the conviction of the Spirit and he pushed Jesus Christ away. He was so close but yet so far. I am sure if Felix never got saved that this would be a day that would haunt him for the rest of eternity. Notice the words of an unnamed writer.

"Paul always preached for a decision, and under the conviction of the Holy Spirit Felix knows this message is for him. It fills him with fear. He is startled, terrified, at the prospect of the last day (Lk 24:5, 37; Acts 10:4). But this does not lead to humble faith. Felix uses procrastination to stay in control of his own destiny. He will determine when and to what extent these matters are considered in the future. How often does fear hide behind a busy schedule? How many have fooled themselves into thinking that by not deciding they have truly "kept all the options open" and at a convenient time in the future they will give the claims of Christ the serious attention they deserve? Actually, indecision is a decision, a choice to remain where we are, outside God's saving grace, with the condemnation of the judgment to come our only prospect."

Application:

Let us learn for Paul that when the opportunity comes to share the Gospel the person we are speaking with **MUST** know why they need Saviour before they can rest their faith in the Saviour. People must understand that they are sinners and that sin must be paid for. They must know that God is righteous and that all sin will be judged and if they die in their sin they will go straight to hell. This message cannot be softened! Some preachers are very careful so as to not offend their listeners but I say what good is it if the people "Feel good" but die and go to hell. The Gospel is offensive and it will make people uncomfortable but it is the Gospel that is the power of God.

Romans 1:15-16

¹⁵ *So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

¹⁶ *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

We live in a day when sin is viewed as an alternative lifestyle and we are told to accept it. I say that we will never accept it and we shall never be afraid to declare that it is sin and will one day be judged.

Notice Acts 24:26-27

Here in verse 26, we see that Felix's procrastination was fueled by greed. He desired money more than he desired forgiveness and peace.

Conclusion:

How many souls are in hell because people traded eternal life for the wealth of this world?

1 Timothy 6:8-10

⁸ *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

⁹ *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

¹⁰ *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*