

"The Road to Rome"

Part 9

Acts 22-28

Introduction: Last week in our study of Acts we watched as Paul was brought before king Agrippa and Festus. Festus was preparing to send Paul to Caesar, and he wanted to write a letter describing his crimes and he could find none. He therefore wanted Agrippa to listen to Paul so he might be able to find something of which he was guilty. This evening, we are going to step right back into Paul's testimony. Let us keep in mind as we considered last week that this trial was a great opportunity for Paul to testify of Jesus Christ. In our lives our trials are many times designed for us to testify of our Lord Jesus Christ. The problem is that we have come to believe that as believers we should not suffer. We will suffer and we will be tried. It is for us to trust God in whatever the situation is.

1 Peter 5:6-7

⁶ *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:*

⁷ *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

As we listen to Paul this evening we are entering into his testimony as he explains to Agrippa his meeting with Jesus on the road to Damascus.

➤ **Paul before Festus and Agrippa**

➤ **Part 3**

Notice Acts 26:13-18

I want to take out time this evening and focus upon verse 18. In this verse we can see the power of the Gospel.

Romans 1:16

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.*

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

I share with you these verses because I do not believe we fully understand the power of the Word of God and especially the power of the Gospel. In Acts 18 we can see the Power of the Gospel in the Words of the Apostle.

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

1. The Gospel opens the sinner's eyes.

When the Gospel is preached and the Spirit of the Lord is working in a person's life it is by the power of God through the Gospel that the eyes of the blinded sinner are opened.

Luke 4:17-18

¹⁷ *And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,*

¹⁸ *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,*

John 1:4-5

⁴ *In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

⁵ *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

1 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴ *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

From these verses we can see that the unsaved sinner is blind to Spiritual Truth. Only the Lord can open their eyes, and it will only happen as the Gospel is preached/shared with the lost. Their eyes are not opened as we talk about the weather. They are not opened as we talk about politics. It is the Gospel that has the power to open the eyes of the lost.

2. The Gospel rescues the sinner from spiritual darkness.

The Gospel has the power to remove a sinner from spiritual darkness and bring them into the glorious light of God. Every unsaved person today is walking in spiritual darkness.

John 3:19-20

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

²⁰ For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Proverbs 4:18-19

¹⁸ But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

¹⁹ The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

These two points paint a very sad picture of the unsaved. They are blind and they are in darkness. They have no idea that they are on a path leading them directly into eternal damnation. They just do not understand their spiritual condition.

Proverbs 14:12

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

Matthew 7:13

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:

The lost are blind people walking in spiritual darkness. It is only the Lord who can bring them out of the darkness and into the Light and this can only happen as they hear the Gospel.

3. The Gospel rescues the unsaved from the power of Satan.

In Ephesians Paul reminded his readers of what controlled them before salvation.

Ephesians 2:2

² *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

1 John 5:19

¹⁹ *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*

This verse means that the entire unsaved world is under the power of Satan. Let us understand that it is the Gospel that has the power to set them free. Let us notice what Paul wrote to the Colossians.

Colossians 1:12-13

¹² *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

¹³ *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

This deliverance happened because they heard the Gospel.

4. The Gospel frees people from their sin debt.

Every unsaved person is walking through this world with a growing sin debt. By that I mean that each and every sin that they have committed and will commit **MUST** be paid for.

Romans 6:23

²³ *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The word **WAGES** here means "payment" and the Truth is that each sin **MUST** be paid for before we die otherwise, we will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire separated from God forever. In the Lake of Fire, the sinner will be tormented with a degree of punishment given to him or her at the Great White Throne Judgment.

The only escape from this horrific judgment is to come to Jesus and rest your faith in Him as your Substitute, believing that He died to pay your sin debt and that He was buried and rose again the third day.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

This forgiveness of sin comes only when a person hears the Gospel and repents and believes. Apart from the Gospel there is no way for anyone to be saved.

Romans 1:16

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.

There is a beautiful picture of this found in the Old Testament. It was the year of Jubile. What was the year of Jubile?

Leviticus 25:10-13

¹⁰ And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

¹¹ A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

¹² For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

¹³ In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.

The word "jubile"—literally means, "the blast of a horn" in Hebrew—it is defined in Leviticus 25:9 as the sabbatical year after seven cycles of seven years (49 years). The fiftieth year was to be a time of celebration and rejoicing for the Israelites. The ram's horn was blown on the tenth day of the seventh month to start the fiftieth year of universal redemption.

The Year of the Jubilee involved a year of release from indebtedness (Leviticus 25:23-38)

and all types of bondage (vv. 39-55). All prisoners and captives were set free, all slaves were released, all debts were forgiven, and all property was returned to its original owners. In addition, all labor was to cease for one year, and those bound by labor contracts were released from them. One of the benefits of the Jubilee was that both the land and the people were able to rest.

This was all a picture of salvation that is found in Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:13-15

¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

5. The Gospel gives to each believer an inheritance.

The things of this world will all pass away but that which God promises will never pass away.

1 Peter 1:3-4

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Conclusion: Can you see how important the Gospel is? This is why we NEED proclaim it and why we MUST protect it.