

"The Road to Rome"**Part 10****Acts 22-28**

Introduction: The last time we were together we were listening as Paul stood before King Agrippa and Festus. Paul had appealed to Caesar and Festus desired to have a crime to attach to Paul as he would send him to Rome. He could find no crime and he therefore set up a trial in which Paul would give his testimony to King Agrippa. Possibly Agrippa could find something that Paul had done to bring against him. When we were in our study weeks ago, we looked at one verse which Paul spoke as he testified.

Notice Acts 26:18

This was the verse we looked at and, in this verse, we were able to see the power of the Gospel and what it does in a person's life if they are willing to accept it. Notice the words of **Warren Wiersbe**.

"The lost sinner is like a blind prisoner in a dark dungeon, and only Christ can open his eyes and give him light and freedom (2 Cor. 4:3-6). But even after he is set free, what about his court record and his guilt? The Lord forgives his sins and wipes the record clean! He then takes him into His own family as His own child and shares His inheritance with him! What must the sinner do? He must trust Jesus Christ. Paul had to lose his religion to gain salvation! He discovered in a moment of time that all of his righteousnesses were but filthy rags in God's sight, and that he needed the righteousness of Christ."

➤ **Paul before Festus and Agrippa**

➤ **Part 4**

Notice Acts 26:19

Paul tells Agrippa that he was immediately obedient to the Lord. Obedience is produced by True salvation.

1 John 2:3-4

³ *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

⁴ He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

To profess to know the Lord and live in disobedience and show no sign of desiring to be obedient to God is evidence that a person is deceived and is not a true believer.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity

Notice Acts 26:20

Here we see the message that Paul preached, and he says something here that needs to be seen. He called on those whom he preached to repent and to live in a way that proved their repentance was real.

Application:

This tells us that when a person is truly saved not only will they desire to walk in obedience, but they will also live in a way that others will know that their lives have been changed. Too many people see salvation as a "fire insurance" but that is not what salvation is. Sure, when we are saved, we can be sure that we will not experience the fires of hell. But salvation is so much more.

John 17:3

³ And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Here in this verse Jesus defines eternal life for us. It is a relationship with God the Father and His Son. It is not a "fire insurance" so that we can go out and live to satisfy the flesh. A relationship is getting to know a person. It is spending time with them. It is having communication with them, and it is listening to what they have to say. Eternal life is walking with the Lord and knowing He is there with you as you go through life. Can you

imagine a marriage where there was no communication, where there was no time spent together, where there are no meals enjoyed together and where each person just did their own thing even if the other person did not agree? There are marriages like that, but they are not healthy. In these marriages there is pain and loneliness. This is the way some people view eternal life. They see Jesus as someone who saved them from the fires of hell and someone that they can call on when they are in a bind. But they do not see Him as a personal Savior to walk and talk with every day. They do not see Him as someone who is by their side and longs for fellowship with them. Eternal life is a relationship which is not just insurance to keep them out of hell.

Notice Acts 26:20-23

Paul explains to his audience that he stood before them on that day because of God's help to bring him through the trials that he had faced. Now he was before royalty to share the Truth of the Gospel. This was God's plan all along.

Acts 9:15-16

¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

¹⁶ For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Notice the quote by an unknown writer.

"We all do well to remember that the same God Who repeatedly intervened to protect Paul, also is there to protect us, many times using providential circumstances and people that we will probably not know about until we get to glory!"

Notice Acts 26:22 again.

I want to notice the Words, "I continue unto this day." Paul started with a vision that God had given him and even in the face of the trials and the pain he never quit.

Application:

Many believers start out serving the Lord with great zeal but along the way they encounter trials and hardships, and this is not what they expected so they give up and quit. Let us understand that as we step out for the Lord there are going to be hardships and trials that come. Satan is going to do all he can to get you to sit back down and do nothing

because when that happens you are of no threat to him. It should be expected that as we serve the Lord we will be attacked. Let that be an encouragement to us because that means we are a threat to Satan and his plans. All through the Old Testament Satan did all he could to discourage those whom God was using. It is no different today.

Notice Acts 26:24-25

Festus could not grasp spiritual Truth and this was his response. Possibly he was under conviction as he listened to Paul. It is interesting that Festus did not think that Paul was mad when he was persecuting the church. But now that he believed in the resurrection and was committed to serving Jesus Christ, Festus believed him to be mad.

Application:

Festus represents millions of people in our world. They view Christians who are committed to Jesus Christ and are willing to die for what they believe as being mad or crazy. There is a verse that helps us to understand why this is.

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.

Festus defines this verse with his response to Paul's testimony. Notice the words of Longnecker.

"No sensible Roman could believe in the resurrection of a man from the dead—and even if he did privately accept such a strange view, he would not allow it to interfere with his practical living or bring him into danger of death. Paul, Festus concluded, was so learned in his Jewish traditions that he had become utterly impractical. Such talk was the height of insanity. Down through the ages Festus's response has been echoed by men and women too trapped by the natural to be open to the supernatural, too confined by the "practical" to care about life everlasting."

Notice Acts 26:26

Now Paul turns to Agrippa and reminds him that none of what Paul spoke of was hidden from Agrippa. He had heard about the resurrection, and he had heard about Jesus and His death and resurrection. Now he had been confronted by Paul face to face. The level of accountability for Agrippa was now at a higher level. Agrippa was now responsible for the

Truth that had been presented to him. If he continued to reject Jesus his day of judgment would be very severe.

Luke 12:46-48

⁴⁶ The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

⁴⁷ And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

⁴⁸ But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

Matthew 11:20-22

²⁰ Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

²¹ Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

²² But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

Notice Acts 26:27

This verse looks back to what Paul just said in verse 22. Agrippa was a Jew, and he knew the Words of the prophets which spoke of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

Daniel 12:2

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

This verse speaks of two resurrections 1000 years apart. Those resurrected to eternal life will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation to enter the Kingdom. Those resurrected to everlasting contempt will be resurrected 1000 years later at the Great White throne Judgment. Agrippa knew of the prophecy of the resurrection as well as the

prophecies of the Redeemer. Jesus fulfilled many of those prophecies and Agrippa should have been able to see that. But he would suppress the Truth.

Notice Acts 26:28

Some believe that Agrippa was embarrassed and wanted to keep his reputation before Festus. Whatever it was, Agrippa allowed the most important moment in his life to get away.

Notice Acts 26:29

Paul desired that all who heard him would be saved as he was but not in chains as he was. It is important to note that while Paul was in chains he was the only one in the room who was free. All others were slaves to their sin and were on a path straight to eternal **damnation**.

Notice Acts 26:30-32

Why couldn't they just declare Paul innocent and set him free? Notice the words of A. N. Sherwin-White.

"When Agrippa remarked: 'this man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar,' this does not mean that in strict law the governor could not pronounce an acquittal after the act of appeal. It is not a question of law, but of the relations between the emperor and his subordinates, and of that element of non-constitutional power which the Romans called 'prestige,' on which the supremacy of the Princeps so largely depended. No sensible man with hopes of promotion would dream of short-circuiting the appeal to Caesar unless he had specific authority to do so."

Conclusion:

As we end this chapter let us keep in mind that Paul's trial was an opportunity to share his testimony. This is often the purpose of our trials also. We go through trials to manifest Jesus to those around us.