

Paul Before Governor Felix

Acts 24:25

Acts 24:25 - But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."

Introduction:

- A. In the 24th chapter of Acts, we find Paul has been arrested in Jerusalem and then moved to Caesarea. There he appears before the Roman governor named Marcus Antonius Felix. Felix dismissed this first session promising a decision when the Roman commander from Jerusalem comes to Caesarea.
- B. While waiting for the commander's arrival, Felix, evidently under the pretext of wanting to learn more about the Christian religion, sends for Paul to come a second time and talk with him and his wife Drusilla. Although the details of Paul's sermon aren't given by Luke, the general theme and the main points are supplied.
- C. Paul's general topic is "the faith in Christ" (v. 24), so we know what he says is connected to the system of faith revealed through Jesus Christ.
- D. Let's see what we can learn from what we know about this scene.

I. He Preached On Righteousness

- A. God's plan to make man righteous is revealed in the gospel - Rom. 1:16-17

Romans 1:16-17 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

- B. This plan is based upon the death of Christ as our propitiation - Rom. 3:23-26

Romans 3:23-26 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- C. It requires strong, obedient faith to obtain this righteousness - Rom. 4:18-25

Romans 4:18-25 - In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE." Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore, IT WAS also CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

- D. Maintaining this righteousness depends on our submitting to God - Rom. 10:1-4

Romans 10:1-4 - Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

II. *He Preached On Self-Control*

A. All who wish to please God and win the prize must have self-control - 1 Cor. 9:24-27

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 - Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the game's exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

B. Self-control is the result of the influence of the Spirit in our lives - Gal. 5:22-23

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

C. It involves putting off the old man and putting on the new man - Col. 3:5-10

Colossians 3:5-10 - Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him--

D. Thus, we must be careful not to be entangled with things of this life - 2 Tim. 2:3-4

2 Timothy 2:3-4 - Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

III. *He Preached On Judgment*

A. Jesus told us about judgment to come - Matt. 25:31-34, 41, 46

Matthew 25:31-34 - "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Matthew 25:41 - "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

Matthew 25:46 - "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

B. Paul taught others that judgment will come - Acts 17:30-31

Acts 17:30-31 - "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

C. The standard by which we shall be judged will be the gospel - Rom. 2:5-11, 16

Romans 2:5-11 - But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to

those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

Romans 2:16 - on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

D. And the basis upon which we shall be judged will be our deeds - 2 Cor. 5:10

2 Corinthians 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Conclusion:

A The record of Felix's life in secular history is one of greed, lust, and wickedness. In fact, he was living in adultery since he had taken Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, away from her first husband.

B. Therefore, Felix was made afraid by Paul's preaching, as well he should have been in his undone condition (Heb. 10:31).

Hebrews 10:31 - It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

C. Felix could have reacted by believing in Christ, repenting of his sins, confessing his faith in Christ, and being baptized for the remission of his sins. But he chose not to do so at that time. What about you?