

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral

Lesson 46 “Paul Presents the Gospel to Felix”

I. We have been studying through *Acts* and how the gospel went viral through various revivals in the first century. This is what caused the gospel to spread so rapidly in the first century.

A. Most recently currently studying Paul’s ministry in Jerusalem. As we’ve studied, Paul was in Jerusalem because of his disobedience to the call of God on his life to go to the Gentiles. He also ignored 2 prophetic words that told him if he went to Jerusalem, he would suffer.

1. After meeting with James when he came to Jerusalem, he was arrested and beaten in the temple before he was given the chance to minister.
2. Roman soldiers rescued and attempted to bring Paul to safety, however, Paul asked for the opportunity to speak and he then addressed the Jewish mob and shared his testimony. His testimony was powerful, but not well received so the commander declared he should be examined under scourging.
3. Last week we saw God’s deliverance as Jesus appeared to Paul and told him that he had preached in Jerusalem would preach in Rome also. This word Paul received while he was in jail was the key to his deliverance.
4. Over 40 Jews were plotting to kill Paul, but God moved and the Roman commander sent Paul with a 470 person entourage to Caesarea to appear before the Roman governor Felix. Paul escaped!

B. Today we are going to look at Paul’s Presentation of the Gospel to Felix

II. Paul Presents the Gospel to Felix

A. It’s important to understand who Felix was. Felix began life as a slave. His brother Pallas was a friend of the emperor Claudius and through that relationship, Felix gained his legal freedom. The connection with Claudius led to Felix gaining political influence and he eventually became the first slave to become a governor of a Roman province.

1. While he was legally free, Felix retained a slave mindset. What do I mean by that? People who have a slave mindset are motivated by fear. They live from a position of inferiority, lack, assuming the worst, and often self protect and can be very cruel. Sons don’t do that because they know the kingdom is there’s and they are happy to give to others since they know they’ll never go without.
2. Tacitus, the Roman historian, described Felix as “a master of cruelty and lust who exercised the powers of a king with the spirit of a slave.”
3. He ordered a massacre of thousands of Jews in Caesarea, with many more Jewish homes looted by the Roman soldiers. He was brutal

4. He also indulged in sin and excess. He married his second wife Drusilla by breaking up her marriage with the King of Emesa by hiring a fake magician to help seduce her and get her to fall in love with him.

B. What I want you to think about is do you have areas in your life where you don't live in spiritual freedom? You may be legally free, but do you live like a slave and self promote, manipulate, and try to control instead of living like a Son who is heir of all.

C. Acts 24:1-9 Paul Accused of Sediton

1. *Verse 1* Ananias really hated Paul. He was 80 years and made an 80 mile journey to Caesarea to make sure Paul was convicted. Legalism hates grace.
2. *Verses 2-5* Tertullus was a Roman lawyer that presented the case. He called no witnesses and did not give any corroborating evidence to the accusations he made. He did a terrible job. Ex:
3. *Verse 6* The Jews accused Paul of profaning the temple by bringing Trophimus the gentile in. Not true. The fact they wanted to put Paul to death for this reveals the nature of the legalistic mindset.
4. *Verses 7-9* Tertullus grossly misrepresented the account of how Lysias the commander rescued Paul and sent him to Felix.

D. Acts 24:10-27 Paul's Presentation of the Gospel

1. *Verse 11* The fact that Paul entered Jerusalem only 12 days previous is an important point. He hadn't had a lot of time to stir up a mob or sedition.
2. *Verse 12-13* Paul makes a great point. Tertullus made allegations but brought no witnesses or evidence. Paul could have finished his defense there, but he wanted to present the gospel.
3. *Verse 14* - Paul was saying Jesus came to fulfill the law and prophets - **Matthew 24:17** He fulfilled the righteous requirement of the law.
 - a. The law came to show our lack - **Romans 3:19-20**
 - b. Christ is the end of the law to those who believe - **Romans 10:4.**
 - c. All of this has to do with the motive of our heart with how we relate to God. A Christian who approaches God from lack (as a sinner, incomplete, impoverished, etc.) has wrong identity problem. They are a slave.
4. *Verse 15-21* Paul begins to talk about the resurrection of the dead meaning there more than just the natural world is a life after this one. Paul says this statement about the resurrection of the dead is a matter of Jewish law and why he is here before Felix. He hadn't committed any crimes against Rome.
5. *Verse 22* Felix's more accurate knowledge of the Way came from his wife Drusilla who was a Jew. He heard about the Jewish Christian debate from her.
6. *Verse 26-27* Interestingly instead of releasing Paul, he keeps him in prison for 2 years as a favor to the Jews, unless of course he can get paid off by Paul. Both

actions illustrate a slave mindset. A person who sees themselves as a son and king doesn't need to do these types of things.

7. **Verses 24-25** We aren't told what, but apparently something in Paul's initial presentation intrigued Felix and caused him to want to hear more.

a. What was drawing Felix? The Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 12** *no one can declare Christ Jesus the Lord unless the Holy Spirit draws Him*. God was dealing with heart.

b. What is the gospel? It is the almost too good to be true news our salvation spirit, soul, and body (being made whole - no longer a slave). It pertains to our spirit, but also to our health, emotions, and finances.

c. Unfortunately, when he heard the gospel, he didn't come into a salvation experience, but rather said he would call again for Paul at more convenient time.

d. This is a mistake many people make and this often keeps them from coming to faith. As far as we know, Felix never did. **2 Corinthians 6:2** *Now, is the time of salvation*. When you hear the truth and God is dealing with you, obey immediately because a more convenient time probably won't come.

III. Conclusion - The power of the gospel is its ability to make us whole in every area of our lives. It sounds almost too good to be true, but that is what the word gospel means. What I want to encourage each of you to do is to not put off to a more convenient time the aspect of the gospel you need to be whole whether salvation, healing, prosperity, mental peace or something else. **Don't live like a slave when you are called to be an heir that inherits all things.**

A. Call Up Prayer Team

B. Pray Closing Prayer