

The Acts of the Apostles

Chapters 24

Savouring Every Moment

Memory Verse: 1 Timothy 6:17

“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy”

I. Introduction

To the world, and even to most Christians, "Christianity" is something only to be endured. Yet to Bible-believers, living the Christian life yields the only true source of pleasure and happiness since their sights have been set on eternal things, and not on the things of this world.

II. Background

At this point in Acts, Paul is in chains (in which he will remain in for the rest of his life), and is about to begin a trek toward Rome that leads him to witness to Governors, Procurators, Kings, and then ultimately, the Emperor Caesar Augustus!

III. Lesson - "Savoring Every Moment"

A. Felix The Governor Hears Paul (24:1-27)

1. Meet The Great _____ - Tertullus
 - a. Tries to convince based upon SOUNDING better
 - 1) This is the aim of today's 24 hour-a-day advertising.
 - 2) 95% of all Christians have abandoned the truth of God and gone after "up-to-date" rubbish that SOUNDS BETTER!
 - a) New "bibles" - Good News, The Living Bible, 150 "NEW" translations since 1611!
 - b) New churches, fellowships - sound so much better
 - c) New lifestyles - that don't offend anyone!
 - b. Starts by buttering-up Felix - "*You are the greatest...*"
 - 1) We enjoy great quietness because of you...
 - 2) Very worthy deeds are done unto us by thy providence...
 - 3) We are so thankful for your very existence!
Where is God in all this?!
 - c. Lists the 4 charges against Paul that make him worthy of death:
 - 1) A Pestilent fellow (a pest)
 - 2) A mover of sedition - revolt, rebellion against authority
 - 3) A ringleader of the sect (cult) of the Nazarenes
 - 4) A profaner of the temple - somebody who seeks to ruin it
2. Meet The Great _____ - Paul (24:10-21; 1 Cor 2:1-5)
 - a. He has one goal in mind - tell them about Jesus
 - b. He first refutes the charges
 - 1) Not a mover of sedition - I disputed no man in the Temple
 - 2) Not part of a sect - I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation - he truly loved his people, and would not ruin them
 - 3) They cannot prove that I profaned the Temple
 - 4) My "heresy" is simply believing in the resurrection

NOTE: A real heretic has to use coercion, litigation, slander, political power, force, violence, or persecution to obtain his objectives. A Bible believer just prays and preaches!

EXAMPLE: The Moslem "faith". It used force to bring in new converts for a thousand years - as did the Catholic "faith".

- c. Paul states his position (24:14-21) - Confesses his guilt:
 - 1) I AM a heretic (if that is what you want to call me). I simply believe ALL the things written in the law and prophets (24:14), not pick and choose (2 Tim 2:15)!
 - a) The first 12 chapters of Genesis are NOT a "myth"
 - b) The crossing of the Red Sea, not Sea of Reeds (Ex 14:21)

- c) That the walls of Jericho fell flat with only a shout! (Josh 6:20)
 - d) That the sun stood still for 12 extra hours for Joshua (Josh 10:12,13)
 - e) That Jonah REALLY was swallowed by a whale (Matt 12:40)
 - f) That the Messiah would come (Dan 9), and die (Isa 53) and then rise again (Psalms)!
- 2) I have a great hope (confidence) toward God concerning the resurrection of dead (24:15-21)
- a) There are TWO resurrections (Dan 12:3)
 - i) Rev 20:5
 - ii) Rev 20:11-15
 - b) There are TWO births (Jn 3:3-7)
 - c) There are TWO deaths - both very REAL
 - i) Physical (Heb 9:27)
 - ii) Spiritual (Rev 20:6,14)

PRINCIPLE: He who is born once, dies twice He who is born twice, dies once.

- 3) I live what I believe (24:16) with my conscience CLEAR toward both God and man! No guilt, or regrets!
- d. Paul calls for "witnesses" which were not there (24:18-20)
 - e. Paul refers everyone back to the issue of FAITH - which should never be debated in a court AT ALL!
3. Felix *defers* his decision (24:22-27) - can't handle TRUTH (just as Pilate couldn't - John 18:38)
- a. Knows that these Jews don't have a leg to stand on (knows Christianity has something to it all other religions don't - proof).
 - b. Waited TWO years! Remember Joseph experienced the same thing in prison (Gen 40:13-41:1). But Paul kept giving the Gospel to him (reasoned). The "faith" in Christ includes declaring:
 - 1) Righteousness - God's standard - Ex 20; Jesus (Rom 2:10)
 - 2) Temperance - Our *inability* to be perfect and under control
 - 3) Judgement to come - Pay day's a'coming (Act 17:31; Rom 2:16; Eccl 12:14; Rom 6:23)
 - c. Felix TREMBLED (24:25)!!!

PRINCIPLE: We should never give up on people! God's timing is almost always different than ours! Remember that God is "longsuffering."
PRINCIPLE: Be bold in your witnessing. Don't just talk about the "love of God."

- d. Felix Communed, passed the time - no longer interested (24:26)
- e. Felix really just wanted three things:
 - 1) To keep his Jewish wife happy (24:24)
 - 2) To see if any money would come out of the situation!
 - 3) To have a "convenient" religion for himself
 - a) chose comfort for a cross
 - b) chose convenience for consecration
 - 4) To keep the Jews happy (24:27) just wanted peace and quiet