

Acts 24

Paul arrived in Jerusalem, met with the elders there, and joined 4 men as they completed their Nazarite vow.

1. At the conclusion of the 7 days necessary for the completion of the Nazarite vow, Paul is falsely accused of bringing a Gentile into the temple...and everything erupts!
2. He is arrested by the Tribune, in order to save his life and stop the ruckus.
3. He hushes the crowd and shares his testimony with them...until he mentioned the unmentionable word: Gentiles.
4. The riot begins again and Paul is brought into the barracks where he avoids a flogging when it is learned that he is a Roman citizen.

He was brought before the high priest where he stirs up yet another controversy and motivates some 40 men to make a vow that they would neither eat nor drink until he is dead.

1. Word of this assassination plot leaks out and an army is assigned to relocate Paul
 - a. 200 soldiers, 75 horsemen, and 200 spearmen
 - b. An army for 1 little missionary!
2. Paul arrives safely in Caesarea and that is where we left him last time.

This morning we pick up in chapter 24. We will walk through the text until our time runs out.

I. The Accusations v1-9

1. Paul is a plague
2. He is a trouble maker
3. He is a ringleader

Jeremiah 38:1-6

Acts 17:6 *When they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have upset the world have come here also"*

Acts 16:20 *and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion"*

And here we are with more money, more material resources, more avenues, more mobility, more opportunity...and yet, possibly some of the most impotent Christians in history.

II. The Defense v10-21

1. **According to the "Way," I worship God**
 - a. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life
 - b. You can try to worship God in your way, this way, that way, or according to "the way"
2. **I believe everything laid down by the Law and Prophets**
 - a. Isaiah 8:20
 - b. Luke 16:29-31
 - c. Ephesians 2:20
 - d. 2 Timothy 3:15-17

3. I have hope in God for the life to come

a. Where is our hope...really?

b. 1 Corinthians 15:19 *If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.*

4. I strive for a clear conscious towards God and Man

III. The Offense v22-27

1. Righteousness

Leviticus 19:2

Leviticus 20:7

Deuteronomy 18:13

2 Corinthians 7:1

Matthew 5:48

1 Peter 1:15-16

2. Self Control

1 Corinthians 9:25 *Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.*

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.*

We live in a society that lacks self control if ever there has been one!

3. Coming Judgment

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.*

Hebrews 9:27 *And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,*

Revelation 20:11-15 *11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

4. Fear

1. Felix did not have to hold on to such fear.

2. 1 John 4:18 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.*

3. Unfortunately, he bought one of the lies of Satan

a. Jesus isn't worth giving up that pet sin for

b. Jesus isn't gracious enough to forgive and accept me

4. 2 Corinthians 6:2 *for He says, "AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU, AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU." Behold, now is "THE ACCEPTABLE TIME," behold, now is "THE DAY OF SALVATION"--*

Conclusion:

Felix leaves Paul sitting in prison, hoping for kickbacks from the Jews, for at least 2 years!

1. Can you imagine?
2. Now he is succeeded by Festus who repeats the whole scenario again: he re-examines Paul in 25:1-12
3. A climactic moment occurs when Paul appealed to Caesar...but this leaves Festus in a predicament.
4. He doesn't really know what to tell Caesar about this man.
 - a. He knew what Felix passed along to him
 - b. He knew what he heard from Paul
 - c. But he didn't really have anything clear to communicate about why Paul is coming to appeal his case before him.
5. So, he capitalizes on a visit by King Agrippa in verses 13-27 to have Paul appear one more time in hopes of getting some counsel on what to tell Caesar.