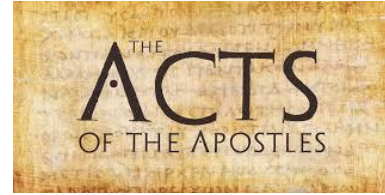


It's a curious thing that there are people who actually fear the message of Jesus Christ and the good news of the Gospel.

I wonder what causes that reaction.

People usually fear what they don't understand but it's another thing to not want to understand.

That's what we will soon see.



We left off last time with The Apostle Paul being rescued by the Roman soldiers from the violent religious Jews who accused him of leading people away from the Law.

We noted that religion can spur violence and ended with these points:

1. When people put their religion before Jesus Christ, they close their mind to what God want to show them.
2. That religion actually becomes their god.
3. Their belief is so strong, that they become violent to those who differ. To me. this gives evidence that their belief system is wrong.
4. Like Paul, stand firm and do not be swayed by the crowd, which is really a mob.
5. We have to live for Christ, but that could also include dying for Christ, as we will see.

Paul is now brought before the governor, Felix and a hearing is being held to ascertain what to do with him.

Ananias, the high priest came with his accusations, of which you already heard.

v.5 *For we have found this man a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*

v.6 *And he even tried to desecrate the temple; and then we arrested him. [We wanted to judge him according to our own Law.*

Remember,

They had assumed he brought a Gentile into the Temple because Paul was seen with him.

Paul was given an opportunity to speak and he said that all the time

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he was in Jerusalem, he did nothing wrong and no charges were ever brought against Him.

He believed in the Law and the writings of the Prophets, but he was also a follower of Jesus Christ.

He also believes in the resurrection of the dead, of which the religious sect, the Sadducees did not.

These were accusing him of heresy.

v.22 *But Felix, having a more exact knowledge about the Way, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case."*

Lysias was in Jerusalem and he would have more knowledge about any disturbance Paul may or may not have caused.

v.23 Paul is under house arrest

Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.

Now;

Here is where we find people who fear the Gospel.

v.24 *But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus.*

Being married to a Jewish woman, his wife may have been curious as to what Paul had to say.

Perhaps she would explain more completely to her husband, Felix this belief in the One, True God.

v.21 May have been a source of interest to him.

For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today.

But Paul didn't go there.

v.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."*

Paul went to Felix's lifestyle instead.

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He mentioned 3 things, 3 things people don't want to hear:
"righteousness" character expressed between a man and God, and a man and his fellow man.

Felix did not have the noblest character.

"self-control" self-government, a man's control over his own passions

His wife was married to another man and Felix went after her and allured her away from her husband to marry him.

Note;

Uncontrolled passions always lead one to a bad place.

That's why "self-control" is part of the fruit of the Spirit.

Self-control is a sign the Holy Spirit is working in you and developing this Godly quality.

So Paul is preaching to them about:

"righteousness"

"self-control"

Thirdly;

"the judgment to come" the day of reckoning with God

These are realities that people treat as something unrealistic.

Ie.

Nothing to be concerned about.

Or, in the case of Felix, a reality that scared him.

v.25 *Felix became frightened*

"became frightened" *emphobos ginomai* – to become terrified

"phobos" frightened, terrified

"ginomai" to become something you were not before

Ie.

He was fine before Paul gave him the Word of God which pointed out the error of his ways.

Oh,

The big governor, all proud and powerful.

Now,

He is running scared.

He said; **v.25**

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Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."

One man said; (John Gill)

"This was only an excuse to get rid of him now, and lull his conscience asleep, and make it quiet and easy;"

Ie.

Guilty people quit church too.

v.26 His unrighteous character

At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and converse with him.

In Felix, I see an example of people without Christ, who are always seeking to get over on someone.

Here, it's the taking of a bribe.

v.27 *But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned.*

So Paul spends 2 more years under house arrest.

Soon,

He will give his testimony again to, this time, king Agrippa, a Jewish king.

NEXT TIME

"Almost Saved"