

2010ACTS#24CHAPTER24 STAND, SIGN, SERVE VETERANS DAY

Acts 24:22-27

I trust you noticed our field of honor flags this week.
 Today we celebrate veterans Sunday.
 It's a day we remember and honor those who sacrifice for our freedom.
 As I think about those young men and women called up to serve.
 And those who are even now serving our country.
 I couldn't help but think about how it changes lives.
 For so many of these young people it was a defining time in their lives.
 They grew up quickly,
 They matured and found themselves.
 They became men, and women.

What is sad today is that we have so many young people in our streets and schools,
 who haven't found themselves.
 They don't know what they want to do with their lives.

Three boys were standing on a street corner discussing life and what they would like to be. One boy said: 'I want to be a fireman when I grow up.' A Second boy said: "I want to be a policeman when I grow up." The third said: "I want to be a vitamin when I grow up." The other two looked at him and said: "You can't be a vitamin when you grow up, what do you mean by that?" The boy answered, "Sure I can. That sign on the front of the drugstore says: Vitamin B-1".

Halloween costumes in a weird sort of way
 Give kids an opportunity to dress up and be somebody.
 Don't children dream about what they want to be when they grow up.
 Sometimes we do that in later life.
 I talked with a person who was in their 7th year in college,
 Had three different majors.
 Still deciding what they want to be when they grow up.
 A perpetual students.

What is more sad is for someone 45-50 years of age
 Who never got to be what they wanted to be.

In our Scripture today we find a man who was
 still looking for what he wanted to be when he grew up.
 Felix and his brother (Pallas) had been slaves of
 Agrippina, Claudius Caesar's mother.
 When they were Freed
 They were appointed Judean governors by Claudius.
 Tacitus writes about Felix and his newly appointed kingdom.
 "With every kind of cruelty & lust, he exercised the authority of a king with the temper of a slave." (Tacitus)

What's so sad today is that
 people who don't know what they want to be,
 Will try all kinds of solutions.
 And improper lifestyles,

Felix had a deep emptiness inside,
 He covered it up by living in an adulterous relationships with a 20 year old.
 Drusilla was the wife of Azizus (King of Emesa)
 the daughter of Herod Agrippa.
 Felix in his sexual perversity,
 persuaded her to leave her husband and live with him.
Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, XX:7

Sounds like modern day politics doesn't it?
 Where someone who can't find themselves,
 goes off out into the world.

What is so sad is that Felix's name means happy, fortunate;
 Felix was fortunate.
 He was given a second chance.
 From a slave to a king
 But he wasn't free.
 He was still a slave to sin.

And when the Apostle Paul was brought to him,
 A flick of light flashed in the darkened closet of Felix heart.
 Here was an opportunity to maybe get it right.

**²²Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the Way, adjourned the proceedings.
 "When Lysias the commander comes," he said, "I will decide your case." Acts 24:22**

He stalled Paul's trial.
 put it off.
adjourned the proceedings & delayed a judgment
 because it was politically & personally expedient for him to do so.

He could have set Paul free, but instead
**²³He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom
 and permit his friends to take care of his needs. Acts 24:23**

He was not afraid that Paul would escape,
 Because Felix knew about Christians.
 And their choice to live right.
 He knew a Christian would not
 not lie, cheat, or steal from you,
 He won't defraud you, or seduce your wife.
 Or at least that is what it ought to be.
 We want those kind of Christian's for friends, and employees,
 And politicians.
 A Christian Politician should not be an oxymoron

Confused and empty, Felix and Drusilla
 thwart justice to find personal answers.

I. A UNIVERSAL NEED

²⁴Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. Acts 24:24

Everyone needs to hear the Gospel,

Jesus believed this in Mark 16:15 when he sent out the 11 disciples.

Thats right 11 disciples,

Because this is the newly resurrected Jesus

and Judas had already hung himself. He said to them:

15 "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16:15-16

Jesus was showing us that the Gospel is what

Helps people with their sin.

"God puts people right though their faith in Jesus Christ. God does this to all who believe in Christ, because there is no difference at all: everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. Romans 3:22-23TEV

God has placed in us all a universal need for the gospel

And God has placed in the Gospel a universal cure to put us right. Vs. 24

But by the free gift of God's grace all are put right with him through Christ Jesus who sets them free. Romans 3:24

Universal need

Universal fix in Christ Jesus

Too often we judge people out in the world.

But Paul didn't judge Felix,

Or charge him with evil motives.

He accepted him where he was.

Just like Jesus did with Matthew the Tax collector.

Who even went to his house for meal and said:

People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. Matthew 9:12

Friends as Christians, we must be loving, but honest

And speak the gospel without reservation, fear or favor.

We must talk about sin and separation from God

Because most people already know where they are standing.

We must help them know

That they can come to God

And Give God their worst so he can give them His best.

A Pastor preached this at his church

Give God your worst so he can give you His best.

and a man took him at face value.

They discovered in the offering plate a bag of Marijuana.

with a note that simply said: "No More".

Isn't that what the gospel is all about.

Not getting the preacher high,

But helping people get high on Jesus.

Isn't that what the church is all about?

The need for Christ is universal

And the UNIVERSAL FIX IS JESUS.

II. A FAITH FIX

25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. Acts 24:25:

Why was Paul so effective with Felix and Drusilla?

Because he reasoned from the truth.

Gods' truth is absolute and sure, it is reasonable.

It is also fixed and constant.

Francis Schaeffer called it the "true truth"= the unchanged and unchanging expression of who God is: and what we are.

We live in a world that laughs at absolute truth.

So we must be careful not to give our own personal or arbitrary interpretation of the bible or reality.

Think about it this way:

Truth is never determined by looking at God's Word and asking:

"What does this mean to me?"

Whenever I hear someone talk like that, I'm inclined to ask,

"What did the Bible mean before you existed?"

We should ask: **What does God mean by what he said?**

Gods gave us a mind to use.

A seven-year-old daughter was thrilled when her parents took her to Disney World for the first time, and she headed straight for Space Mountain.

They worried that the roller coaster would be too scary for her, but she insisted. To her delight, they rode it twice.

The next year they returned to the Magic Kingdom, and the daughter, now eight, again dragged them to Space Mountain. As they stood in line, they could see her soberly studying the signs that warn about the ride's speed.

"Dad," she said, "I don't think I want to go."

He asked her why she was nervous this time when she enjoyed it so last time.

She replied, "This year I can read."

The scripture says: Come, let us reason together, says the Lord.

Turn to the Lord and pray to him now that he is near. Let the wicked leave their way of life and change their way of thinking. Isaiah 55:8-9

Isaiah says God will help the sinner change his way of thinking.

Paul goes on to says:

We know what it means to fear the Lord, and so we try to persuade (or reason with) others. II Corinthians 5:11

To Persuade in this verse means to converse, argue, discuss, and dispute.

Were not going to reason everyone into heaven

Felix and Druscilla heard Paul preach.

It was so compelling a message that Felix trembled.

Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. Acts 24:25:

Just like the Philippian Jailer he trembled.

The Jailer ask: "What must I do to be saved."

Felix trembled and said leave now for a better time.

How many people are in hell because they sought a more convenient time to be saved.

Sin will cause a man to tremble.
 It will cause his bones to break.
 Because we are not two separate entities, spiritual and physical.
 We are entwined and what affects one affects the other.

**We can't continue in an affair or an illicit lifestyle physically, and
 Still be in harmony with God spiritually.**

**When I confessed not my sin and I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my
 groaning all day long. Psalm 32:2-3**

That is why Felix got the shakes,
 He was evil,
 And if you can reason that something is a necessary evil,
 soon you will see it as more necessary and less as evil.
 Paul reasoned from righteousness, temperance and judgment to come.

III. A PERSONAL RESPONSE

**²⁵As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix
 was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it
 convenient, I will send for you." ²⁶At the same time he was hoping that Paul would
 offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him. Acts 24:25-26**

Good gracious was Felix only in this for the money?
 He wanted a bribe from Paul.
 He was living in open adultery with Drusilla,
 Now he adds to it greed, cruelty, and deception.
 Paul put his life on hold to help Felix get a hold.
 You and I must be honest with the world.
 Souls are at stake

Remember somebody put their life on the line for you. Paul says:

**You know that I did not hold back anything that would be of help to you as I
 preached and taught in public and in your homes. ...I gave solemn warning that
 they should turn from their sin to God and believe in our Lord Jesus. Acts 20:20-
 21TEV**

Felix's reaction was fear and trembling.
 I believe that the world is afraid of the Christian.
 Because he is afraid of the truth.
 It exposes what we really are.
 So instead of judging the case and releasing Paul.
 He is kept prisoner for two years.

**And after two years had passed, Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor. Felix
 wanted to gain favor with the Jews so he left Paul in Prison. Acts 24:27**

But Festus wanting to gain favor with the Jews
 Sends Paul to Rome and his ultimate death.

**Then Festus, after conferring with his advisers, answered, "You have appealed to
 the Emperor, so to the Emperor you will go. Acts 25:12**

Did Paul fail in his attempt to reach Felix, Festus, Agrippa?
 Perhaps, but when they stand

Before the justice of God.
They will have no excuse.
Because they heard the Gospel,
And they chose to live outside the Kingdom of God.
And they faced a judgment to come.
It matters how we treat our bodies,
It matters how we treat others
It matters how we treat God's world.
Because someday,

As surely as I am the living God says the Lord, everyone will kneel before me, and everyone will confess that I am God. Every one of us, then, will have to give an account of himself to God. Romans 14:11-12

Friends God cared about sinners like Felix and Drusilla,
And God cares about you.
Friends Come to Him,
Find His grace is sufficient,
His forgiveness is complete,
His love is forever.

Every Veteran here today knows that in their life
There came that time when they had to stand up,
Sign on the line, and serve.
That meant giving themselves
Body soul and mind to the Service.

That is what Jesus did for you.
He stood up,
He signed up with his blood,
And he served up his life for you.

Today, it's time for us to make a decision.
Will you stand up
Sign on the line
And Serve Christ with your life?