

PAUL BEFORE FELIX

Acts 24:25

INTRODUCTION:

1. Give historical setting.
2. Our aim is to analyze what Paul preached.

I. The gospel before his own personal rights.

- A. Paul preached to the man instead of defending self. Ax 24:25 and also in chapter 26.
- B. Let us put the gospel and the church before personal defenses, desires, and gain (or loss).

II. Righteousness:

- A. The Lord loves righteousness: Psalm 11:7 "For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness..."
 1. World needs to be made conscious of this fact.
 2. Such would be greatest incentive for good.
- B. God's commandments are righteousness. Ps. 119:172 "...For all Your commandments are righteousness."
 1. All are righteousness.
 2. Anything more is not righteousness.
- C. Those blessed who hunger for righteousness. Mt. 5:6
 1. To hunger for righteousness is to desire knowledge of God's word.
 2. The one who seeks to know the truth can learn it.
- D. Must work righteousness to be accepted. Acts 10:35 "...whoever fears Him and works righteousness..."
 1. To work righteousness is to obey God's word.
 2. Since God's commandments are righteousness, to do a thing he has not commanded is not.

Illustration: "Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest." - Mark Twain

III. Temperance.

- A. Temperance is self control; abstinence from all forms of that which is evil and moderation in that which is good.
- B. Temperance is part of the work of the Spirit. Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet.1:6
- C. Christians can't indulge the passions; drunkards, fornicators, adulterers, etc. cannot enter heaven.
Must control body. 1 Cor. 9:27
- D. World must recognize God's code of morality, or society will revert to barbarism.

Illustration: Lyndon Johnson's weight problem

IV. Judgment to come.

- A. When one loses sight of God's standard of righteousness and temperance, one naturally denies the judgment. Cf. Modernism.
- B. Fact of judgment. Heb. 9:27
- C. Scope of judgment — Everyone will give an answer for himself. Rom. 2:5,6
- D. Word of God will be standard of judgment — John 12:48.
- E. Righteous rewarded; wicked condemned. Matthew 25
- F. Must obey gospel preached by Paul. 2 Thess. 1:7, 8

Illustration: Fire on the prairie

CONCLUSION:

Some still insist on putting it off as Felix; as far as we know, Felix died in his sins!

During his term as President of the U.S., Lyndon Johnson was somewhat overweight. One day his wife challenged him with this blunt assertion: "You can't run the country if you can't run yourself." Respecting Mrs. Johnson's wise observation, the President lost 23 pounds.

One of the first gospel illustrations that ever made a real impression upon my young heart was a simple story which I heard a preacher tell when I was less than nine years old.

It was of pioneers who were making their way across one of the central states to a distant place that had been opened up for homesteading. They traveled in covered wagons drawn by oxen, and progress was necessarily slow. One day they were horrified to note a long line of smoke in the west, stretching for miles across the prairie, and soon it was evident that the dried grass was burning fiercely and coming toward them rapidly. They had crossed a river the day before but it would be impossible to go back to that before the flames would be upon them. One man only seemed to have understanding as to what could be done. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then when a space was burned over, the whole company moved back upon it.

As the flames roared on toward them from the west, a little girl cried out in terror, "Are you sure we shall not all be burned up?" The leader replied, "My child, the flames cannot reach us here, for we are standing where the fire has been!"

What a picture of the believer, who is safe in Christ!

"On Him Almighty vengeance fell,
Which would have sunk a world to hell.
He bore it for a chosen race,
And thus becomes our Hiding Place."

The fires of God's judgment burned themselves out on Him, and all who are in Christ are safe forever, for they are now standing where the fire has been.

[H.A. Ironside, Illustrations of Bible Truth, Moody Press, 1945, pp. 34-35.](#)