

A Case of Non-Conversion

After being falsely accused and arrested in Jerusalem, the Apostle Paul is transferred by the Romans to Caesarea. The reason for this move is given in Acts 23:12-35. Once arriving in a new and safer location, Paul has an opportunity to make a case for his innocence before the Roman governor Felix (Acts 24:1-21).

Their initial meeting makes Felix more curious about Paul and the message he preached. He decides to meet with Paul again (this time in private), and Paul seizes the opportunity to preach to him the gospel (Acts 24:22-27). Unfortunately, unlike the many other stories in Acts, this one does not end with a conversion.

Paul's Message (Acts 24:25a)

- Paul preached about righteousness. Paul told Felix that he must have faith in Christ if he wanted to be righteous before God (Romans 1:16-17).
- Paul preached about self-control. Righteousness includes living a disciplined life (Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:5-6). We can't live however we want and expect to please God!
- Paul preached about the Judgment Day. There is coming a day in which every person will give an account of himself to God (Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10). The resurrection of Jesus guarantees this day (Acts 17:30-31).

Felix's response (Acts 24:25a)

- Felix was frightened. The message penetrated his heart. The 3,000 on Pentecost responded similarly after hearing the preaching of Peter (Acts 2:37).
- Felix procrastinated. He put off committing himself to Christ. James warns us about this in James 4:13-17.
- Felix left unchanged. He kept Paul in prison because he was hoping to bribe him (Acts 24:26). Hearing the word of God doesn't do us any good if we are not converted and transformed by it (Romans 12:1-2; James 1:22-25).

Conclusion:

Felix's story ended in non-conversion. How will yours end?

Shawn Jeffries