

The Effective Evangelist

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John 18:37, 38; Acts 24:22-27

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Jesus said John 18:37 – [37] *You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.*

John 18:38 – [38] *Pilate said to him, “What is truth?”*

This EXAMPLE of JESUS before PONTIUS PILATE made a massive and indelible impression upon the APOSTLE PAUL.

- 1 Timothy 6:13, 14 – [13] *I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, [14] to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*
 - JESUS is the MODEL EVANGELIST.
 - By the EXAMPLE of the MODEL EVANGELIST, TIMOTHY, you are to keep the COMMANDMENT unstained.

Turn to Acts 24:22.

The CONNECTIONS between JESUS and PAUL are STARTLING:

- Both intentionally march to Jerusalem, knowing that trials and suffering awaits them.
- Both are Unfairly arrested.
- Both are ordered to be flogged... Paul is NOT because he is a Roman citizen.
- Both appear before the Sanhedrin.
- Then Both appear before two secular rulers at which false accusations are made.

BACKGROUND:

- Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem when Jews from Asia had seen him in the Temple. They see Greeks with him in Jerusalem and they accuse him of bringing them into the TEMPLE. (Acts 21).
- Paul addresses the CROWD... they listen intently. However the crowd goes berserk, when he says he saw the LORD in a vision in the TEMPLE and the LORD told him to go to the GENTILES (Acts 22).
- A Roman tribune by the name of Claudius Lysias, had been the arresting officer. Brings him in the Roman Barracks.
- Paul goes before the Sanhedrin and Paul confounds them by dropping the BOMB of the RESURRECTION (Acts 23).
- There is a PLOT to kill PAUL (Jews bound themselves by oath never to eat or drink until PAUL is killed). The Tribune is warned by Paul's nephew, and he is brought by NIGHT to Caesarea (Acts 23).
- Caesarea was the HQ of the Roman Governor.
- In Acts 24, the high priest sits on a trial with Ananias and a lawyer Tertullus.

- 1) 24:5 – [5] *For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world*
- 2) 24:5 – [5b] *and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*
- 3) 24: 6 – [6] *He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him.*
- To these Paul makes his defense. There is no grounds to anything they say.
 - The WAY, he says... is a group that is a continuation of Judaism.

Acts 24:22 – [22] *But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case.” [23] Then he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that none of his friends should be prevented from attending his needs.*

- Felix... had been the Roman governor since A. D. 52... served for about 6 to 7 years... until A. D. 58.
 - He had seduced the 16 year-old Drusilla (the Jewish daughter of Herod Agrippa... who was already married to Gaius Azizus, King of Emesa by promising her wealth and luxury.
 - It was probably because of his relationship with Drusilla that He knew so much about Christianity.
 - Or it could have been through Cornelius... a centurion... who was converted in Acts 10...
- He delayed giving the Jews an answer...

Convicted by the Truth

This is perhaps the great secret to an effective ministry. There is a DIFFERENCE between beliefs and convictions.

- Intellectual knowledge is one thing.
- Firm CONVICTION is quite ANOTHER.
- CONVICTION is a TRUTH that BECOMES part of your SOUL.
- What JAMES is talking about is mere intellectual belief.
 - James 2:17 – [17] *So also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. [18] But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. [19] You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!*
 - Abraham acts in FAITH. Abraham acted... by putting Isaac up on the altar.

The TRUTHS of CHRISTIANITY had become a CONVICTION to PAUL.

- See. Acts 21:13 – [13] *Then Paul answered, “What are you doing, weeping and braking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” [14] And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, “Let the will of the Lord be done.”*
- Luke and the rest of the disciples could not move PAUL from his convictions.
- The TRUTH held fast in his soul.
 - After he got to ROME and was imprisoned there
 - Philippians 1:21 – [21] *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*
 - Philippians 3:7 – [7] *But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. [8] Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth*

of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

- The POINT, the TRUTH for PAUL was not theoretical. Nor merely intellectual.
- It was REAL. It was embodied in a person.

Centered in the Truth

Acts 24:24 – [24] *After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus.*

- So Paul has been sitting in a jail cell.
- Drusilla... a young lady... according to the Western textual variant, it was DRUSILLA who pressed FELIX to listen to PAUL.
- So PAUL is sent for... and he comes for a conversation.

And LUKE tells us what the thrust of PAUL'S MESSAGE was. "Faith in Christ Jesus."

- That was His General Theme.
- Remember Paul told the Corinthians 1 Corinthians 2:2 – [2] *For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*
- To the JEW, Paul would begin with the OT prophesies. And show how Jesus Christ was a fulfillment of them.
- To the GENTILE, Paul explained the reality of INCARNATION.
 - Philippians 2:5 – [25] *have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, [6] who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, becoming born in the likeness of men. [8] and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

Conversant in the Truth

24:25 – [25] *And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you."*

Reasoned (dia-lego-mai)

- Thessalonica. Acts 17:2 – [2] *And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, [3] explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead*
- Corinth. Acts 18:4 – [4] *And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.*
- Acts 18:19 – [19] *And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.*
- Acts 19:8 – [8] *And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.*

Some commentators believe... he essentially prosecutes... Felix's lack of righteousness. Drusilla and Felix's lack of self-control. And then their judgment.

What I think he's doing – Walking them through the BROAD SCOPE of the GOSPEL.

Righteousness. Justification

- God is righteous. Romans 1:17 – [17] *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed...*
- Romans 3:10 – [10] *None is righteous, no, not one.*
- Romans 5:18 – [18] *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.*
- Romans 3:22 – [22] *the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: [23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24] and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, [25] whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.*

Self-Control.

- Galatians 5:23 – [23] self-control
- Before the person is in the flesh. They are a slave to the flesh.
- But the new man in Christ, has the capacity to not to sin.
- Romans 6:22 – [22] *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.*

Coming Judgment.

- 1 Corinthians 15:22 – [22] *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. [23] But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. [24] Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. [25] For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.*

Felix becomes ALARMED... “Go Away.” He doesn’t want to hear. It frightens him.

[26] *At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him.*

- He wanted a BRIBE to support Himself.
- So he calls Paul in quite often and they converse together.

[27] *When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix let Paul in prison.*