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Have You Found Time For God?

Acts 24:24-27

Introduction

1. Can you ever imagine saying to God, "I don't have time for you right now?"
2. This is basically what Felix did when he said to Paul, "**Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you**" (Acts 24:25).
3. Luke tells us that these words were spoken following an audience which Felix and his wife Drusilla had with Paul who was at that time a prisoner, for the cause of Jesus Christ, in Caesarea Philippi.
4. A few days earlier, Paul had been brought to Caesarea under heavy Roman guard because of a plot against his life by a number of Jews while imprisoned in Jerusalem.
5. At the invitation of Felix, the high priest, Ananias, a lawyer named Tertullus, and some of the elders among the Jews came to Caesarea to present their case against Paul.
6. After hearing both sides, Felix decided to hold Paul until the Roman commander Lysias, who had sent Paul to Caesarea, could come down and give his report.
7. Our text picks up a few days after these events when Felix and Drusilla had Paul brought to them so that he might speak to them about faith in Christ Jesus.
8. When Paul began to speak about "righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come" he hit too close to home and Felix became afraid and sent Paul away.
9. Luke indicates that Felix had Paul brought before him on other occasions over a period of two years:
 - a. Never again do we read of Felix trembling.
 - b. His later meetings with Paul were always with the thought that Paul would offer him a bribe for his release.

10. There is no indication that either Felix or Drusilla ever obeyed the gospel or put on Christ in baptism.
11. This morning, I would like for us to look more closely at Felix and Drusilla and ask why people, even today, have no time for God.

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I. Felix and Drusilla

A. FELIX

1. Originally, he was a slave in the household of Antonia, the daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia, and the mother of the Roman emperor Claudius.
2. He and his brother, Pallas, were given their freedom and rose to positions of great influence during Claudius' reign.
3. Pallas became the chief accountant to the public treasury and amassed great wealth.
4. He used his influence to get his brother, Felix, appointed as governor of Judea (ca. AD 52-59).
5. Felix became known for his cruelty and oppression, his greed and his immorality — Drusilla was his third wife.
 - a. According to the Roman historian, Tacitus, the rule of Felix was known for its savagery and lust.
 - b. He showed no mercy in crushing the opposition.

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B. DRUSILLA

1. The daughter of Herod Agrippa I, who had executed James and planned to do the same with Peter (**Acts 12**).
2. Her father died (*Acts 12:23*) when she was only six years old, leaving her to be raised by her seventeen year old brother, Agrippa II, alongside her ten year old sister, Bernice.
3. When she was a young teenager, she was given in marriage, by her brother, to the king of Syria.
4. Not long after this, Felix saw her and convinced her to leave her husband for him, promising to make her a happy woman — she was 16.

5. When Paul was brought before her and Felix, she was only 18 or 19 years of age.

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II. How Do We Make Time For God?

A. WE ADDRESS OUR SIN

1. The first topic which Paul discussed with Felix and his wife, Druscilla, was “righteousness.”
 - a. This means that we live in a manner which is right in God’s sight.
 - b. However, sin is a universal problem.
 - c. as Paul would later point out to the Christians in Rome, “There is none righteous, not even one” (Romans 3:10).
 - d. When he penned these words, Paul was quoting something which David had written over 1,000 years earlier, in the Psalms, twice! (Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3)

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“The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.”

They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds;

There is no one who does good.

The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men

To see if there are any who understand,

Who seek after God.

They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt;

There is no one who does good, not even one.”

(Psalm 14:1–3, NASB95)

- e. And 300 years after David, the prophet Isaiah had written, “all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment” (Isaiah 64:6).
- f. Paul may have added “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Romans 3:23, NASB95)

- g. No doubt, he also informed Felix and his wife that the wages of that sin is death (Romans 6:23).

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- 2. The second topic which Paul addressed as he spoke to the two was that of *self-control*.
 - a. In Paul's second letter to a younger evangelist named Timothy, he wrote of how difficult times would come in what he called "the last days" (2 Timothy 3:1).
 - b. One of the things which would identify that time was a lack of "self-control" (2 Timothy 3:3).
 - c. This no doubt caught the attention of Felix because he had enticed Druscilla away from her husband to marry him and because he was one known for taking bribes.
 - d. On one occasion when Jesus was teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem, he said, "everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin" (John 8:34).
 - e. Peter remembered this, because in his second letter he wrote, "for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved" (2 Peter 2:19).
 - f. How often do we know the right thing to do but find ourselves doing the exact opposite?
 - g. Is it possible that we have become enslaved to sin?

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- 3. The last topic of discussion which Paul addressed was perhaps the most difficult one of all for the couple — that of *judgment to come*.
 - a. Several years earlier, in Athens, Paul had a discussion with the Greek philosophers of that city.
 - b. On that occasion, his message focused on the nature of the one true God.
 - c. As he concluded his message, Paul spoke these words:

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness

through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”” (Acts 17:30–31, NASB95)

- d. As we have seen recently in Paul’s second letter to the saints in Corinth, none of us will be exempt from that judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10, NASB95)

- e. Also, in his letter to the Christians in Rome, Paul wrote, “each one of us will given an account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12).
4. If you are here this morning and are not a Christian, addressing your sin begins with recognizing your need to have your sin forgiven.
- a. Before Paul became the apostle that we read of here, he was a Pharisee named Saul.
 - b. He was also a persecutor of the church — putting Christians to death if need be to stop the spread of the faith.
 - c. It was only when our Lord confronted him on his way to Damascus to search for more Christians that Saul realized what he had been doing.
 - d. Three days later, in the city of Damascus, as a blind man who had been praying and fasting, a man named Ananias was sent to him by the Lord to tell him what he should do.

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- e. He told him to “Get up and be baptized, and was away your sins, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16).
- f. This is the same thing that each of us who are Christians here today have done in order to have our sins removed and to become followers of Jesus Christ.

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5. If you are a Christian and find yourself struggling again with sin in your life, you need to ask God’s forgiveness for that sin.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins

and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, NASB95)

- ❑ An important question which each of us must ask ourselves this morning is, “Am I ready to stand before God and give an account for the way I have lived?”

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B. WE INVEST OUR LIVES IN HIS KINGDOM

1. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told His listeners to “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33).
2. In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul wrote of the one thing he was doing as a Christian — “forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13b-14).

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3. In his letter to the Galatian Christians, Paul wrote, “So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:9).
4. We make it our goal to . . .
 - a. Live our lives in a manner worthy of the Lord (Colossians 1:10; Ephesians 4:1).
 - b. Seek to please Him in everything we do — this was Paul’s ambition in life (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:9).
 - c. Do our best to bear fruit (good works, souls won).
 - d. Grow in our knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10)

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Conclusion

1. There is no convenient time for God, but there is an urgent time — now!
 “for He [God] says, “At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day

of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is “the acceptable time,” behold, now is “the day of salvation”—” (2 Corinthians 6:2, NASB95)

“Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near.”
(Isaiah 55:6, NASB95)

2. How many people over the years have sat in a pew just like the one you are sitting in today?
3. How many of them, like Felix, have trembled at the messages which they heard?
4. How many walked out without obeying the gospel?
5. How many will stand before our Lord in judgment and wish they had made time for Him?
6. If we do not find time now for God, we may never have another opportunity.

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7. Please, do not neglect God’s great salvation (cf. Hebrews 2:1-3).

“ . . . how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.” (Hebrews 2:3a)