



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Paul Reasoned with Them

In Acts chapter 24 we have some insight into how the Apostle Paul witnessed to the unbeliever. It is quite different than the appeals to trust Christ that we hear today. To give you some background of this encounter, Paul was waiting to stand trial for his Christian faith and Felix the governor of Judea, along with his Jewish wife Drusilla, were interested in receiving the information about Christ.

In today's modern church it would have been something like this: Paul says to Felix and Drusilla, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death, but God's gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. If you want this gift repeat this prayer after me. 'I Felix ask Jesus to come into my heart and be my Savior, Amen.' Now you are saved and never doubt it."

Can anyone show me this in the Bible?! I was talking to some ladies in a park. I asked them, "What church do you attend?" They told me, it was a large mega church I was familiar with, known for good Bible teaching. I said to them, "According to your church, how do we receive salvation?" One said, "You know, ask Jesus into your heart, ask Him into your life, or ask Him to be your Saviour." I said, "Can you show me in the Bible where it states that?" One of the women got very angry. She said, "You can go now!"

Let's take a close look and see how the Apostle Paul reasoned with Felix and Drusilla.

*"And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ."
(Acts 24:24)*

Notice, Felix sent for Paul to hear what he would say concerning the Christian faith, faith in Christ, or a life of believing in Jesus Christ.

*"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)*

1) "He reasoned of righteousness."

The first thing that he reasoned or discussed with them was their need to turn from unrighteousness to righteousness (2 Peter 2:21). To turn from the wrong way and turn to the right way, turning to righteousness. In the Scripture this is called repentance. It's a turning away from something to something else. From sin to righteousness, from darkness to light, from Satan to God (Acts 26:18-20; Luke 24:47; Luke 13:1-5;

Luke 16:30-31; Acts 17:30). Without it, Jesus said we will perish (Luke 13:3). The New Century Version and Contemporary English Version says Paul reasoned to them about living right and doing right. (Acts 24:25 NCV, CEV).

2) He reasoned with them about their need for temperance.

Temperance means self-control. The Greek word (Strong's 1466) means, "one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites." History tells us Felix's marriage to Drusilla was his third and he had to break up another marriage to secure her. His regime was marked by injustices that contrasted with the righteousness of God. And he was a man grossly lacking in self-control (The Bible Knowledge Commentary).

3) He reasoned with them about the future Judgment that was to come.

The Greek uses a future tense meaning the judgment will be coming in the future.

"For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid according to the things he has practiced while in the body, whether good or bad. Therefore, since we know the fear of the Lord, we keep persuading men, (It's no light thing to know that we'll all one day stand in that place of Judgment. That's why we work urgently with everyone we meet to get them ready to face God.)" (2 Corinthians 5:10-11 The Message Bible)

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

Felix had a demon's faith response. He believed what Paul had spoken, so much so that he trembled and was terrified. So it is, "the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19), but neither Felix nor the demons became followers of Jesus. What kind of faith do you have, a demon's faith or a faith that follows Jesus?

I was talking to a young man in a park. I began to speak to him boldly and he was not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit in which I spoke (Acts 6:10). Scriptures were pouring out of me like a river. Suddenly, he said, "Stop!" I said, "OK, but I would like to ask you one thing. Have you ever heard this before? He said, "I think about this every single day."

"Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts!"
(Hebrews 3:15 NKJV)

Questions

- 1** Is there a sinner's prayer in the Bible?
Yes or No
- 2** Is there an example of a person calling on God for salvation through prayer?
Yes or No
- 3** How do we call on the name of the Lord for salvation?
- 4** Salvation is from the heart and does not take the method of a formula.
True or False
- 5** You can talk to God like you talk to your friends. Open your heart to Him today!

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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Answer Key

1 Is there a sinner's prayer in the Bible?

Yes

There is a sinners prayer in the Bible, but it must be a person calling on the Lord from their own heart, not putting words in someone's mouth.

***"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
(Romans 10:13)***

2 Is there an example of a person calling on God for salvation through prayer?

Yes

***"¹³And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified..."
(Luke 18:13-14)***

3 How do we call on the name of the Lord for salvation?

I find two ways that people call on the name of the Lord for salvation.

- 1) Luke 18:13-14 *"¹³And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified..."***
- 2) In 1 Peter 3:21 people through baptism appeal to God to give them a clear conscience. See also Acts 22:16.**

4 Salvation is from the heart and does not take the method of a formula.

True

Look at the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. Are these elements there: repentance, faith, baptism, calling on the Lord from a sincere heart?

5 You can talk to God like you talk to your friends. Open your heart to Him today!