**Concerning the Faith in Christ**

*Acts 24:24-25*

**Introduction**

1. Paul journeyed to Jerusalem despite the prophecy concerning the danger that awaited him **(cf. Acts 20:22-23; 21:4, 10-14).**
2. While in Jerusalem, the Jews from Asia saw him, and sought to kill him based upon a mere assumption that he had brought a Gentile into the temple **(cf. Acts 21:27-29).**
3. Having been arrested, and unlawfully bound as a Roman citizen, the Roman commander, having learned of a plot against Paul’s life, sent him to Caesarea with a letter written to Felix the governor **(cf. Acts 23:23-35).**
4. After waiting for Paul’s accusers to come from Jerusalem, Felix heard the accusation of the Jews, and the defense of Paul **(cf. Acts 24:1-21).**
5. Felix tabled his decision on Paul’s case, having no hurry for justice despite his more accurate knowledge of Paul’s message, and the fact that he had done no wrong **(cf. Acts 24:22-23).**
6. With Paul in custody, Felix and his Jewish wife Drusilla decided, whether out of sincere spiritual interest, or simple curiosity, to hear Paul ***“concerning the faith in Christ”*** **(cf. Acts 24:24-25).** (Objective – THE faith)
7. The Holy Spirit reveals to us the specific topics of Paul’s discussion with them – **righteousness, self-control, and the judgment.**
8. These topics are worthy of our consideration.
9. The Faith in Christ Concerns Reason
10. The Faith is to be Taught and Heard
    1. **Acts 24:25** – Paul “reasoned…”
       1. **Reasoned** – *dialegomai*; to say thoroughly, i.e. discuss (in argument or exhortation). (STRONG)
       2. **1 Corinthians 9:16** – Paul was appointed to preach the gospel by the Lord.
    2. **2 Corinthians 4:7-10** – Such ministry brought hardships to Paul and the other apostles. Yet, they preached anyway.
    3. Here, Paul had an opportunity presented him to SIMPLY preach the gospel. This was not a part of his trial, nor his own defense.
    4. Felix and Drusilla simply asked to hear about the faith, and Paul preached.
    5. **Consider another implication from the fact that Paul “reasoned” to them 🡪**
11. The Faith Concerns Reason
    1. **Reasoned** – *dialegomai;* primarily denotes "to ponder, resolve in one's mind" (dia, "through," lego, "to say"); then, "to converse, dispute, discuss, discourse with;" most frequently, "to reason or dispute with." (VINE)
       1. While the word simply means to discuss, converse, or dispute, IT INVOLVES LOGIC AND REASON.
       2. **So many in the world claim that Christianity is illogical, and unreasonable. However, this couldn’t be further from the truth.**
    2. Later in Paul’s trials, before Agrippa and Festus – **Acts 26:24-25** – he speaks of truth and reason!
       1. **Reason** – *sōphrosynē*; soundness of mind, i.e. (literally) sanity. (STRONG)
       2. ***“I am speaking true and rational words.” (ESV)***
       3. The truths presented in the gospel are not far-fetched, but are rational, reasonable, logical, and have supporting evidence!
    3. **Romans 12:2** – As such, submitting to the faith revealed by God is a reasonable service considering what He has done for us.
12. The Faith in Christ Concerns Righteousness
13. The Standard of Righteousness
    1. How is man to stand righteous before God, having his sins forgiven? Then, what is the standard of righteousness man is to live by in order to continue in righteousness?
    2. **Romans 1:16-17** – The gospel of Christ is God’s power to make us righteous before Him, and it is the standard of righteousness we are to live by.
    3. Paul preached the gospel – **Romans 1:5, 13-15** – His apostleship was for obedience to ***“the faith”*** even among the Gentiles.
       1. ***“the faith”*** and ***“the gospel”*** – synonymous terms.
       2. Paul preached the gospel so that men could be saved – ***“power of God to salvation”***
       3. Paul preached the gospel so that men would know how to live right – ***“righteousness of God is revealed”*** – ***“the just shall live by faith”***
       4. **Cf. Galatians 2:16, 17, 20** – this is how Paul himself lived – submitted to the gospel of Christ by faith.
          1. Sought justification by Christ.
          2. Lived by faith in Christ.
14. The Requirement to Live Righteously
    1. **Romans 6:13** – Our bodies are to be used as instruments of righteousness.
    2. **1 John 2:28-29; 3:1-3, 7-9** – The children of God are required to practice righteousness.
       1. Because of who we are – children of the righteous God – we are to purify ourselves.
       2. We are to walk in righteousness.
    3. This takes self-control 🡪
15. The Faith in Christ Concerns Self-Control
16. Adding to Knowledge, Self-Control
    1. The way we escape sin, and partake of the Divine nature is through the knowledge of Christ – **2 Peter 1:3-4** – i.e. believing and obeying the gospel.
    2. Continued growth is required in the Christian – the one who has partaken of the Divine nature **– 2 Peter 1:5-6** – ADD TO FAITH.
       1. **Virtue** – moral excellence – desire for, resolve.
       2. **Knowledge** – revelation of the proper way to live.
       3. **Self-control** – that knowledge is to be applied.
          1. This way of living is contrary to that of the world.
          2. It is contrary to the pull of the flesh.
          3. IT REQUIRES CONTROL OF SELF. 🡪
17. Denying the Flesh
    1. **Galatians 5:16-18** – We are not to walk after the flesh, but the Spirit.
       1. This requires a resolve to live spiritually – according to God’s word.
       2. This requires self-control.
       3. **(vv. 19-25)** – Essentially, the way to deny the fleshly desires, and control self to prevent giving in, is to practice the fruit of the Spirit. (**NOTE: Self-control is one of the characteristics**)
    2. Crucified the flesh? – **Galatians 6:14** – Paul crucified the world to himself.
       1. He put it to death – a determination not to live that way any longer.
       2. **Even more so – an acknowledgment of the foolishness of living like the world – crucifixion was a shameful death.**
    3. **Romans 13:11-14** – If we are to maintain righteousness by self-control, WE MUST NOT PROVIDE FOR THE FLESH.
       1. **If we are constantly providing for the flesh by putting stumbling blocks in our own way, SELF-CONTROL IS GOING TO BE MORE DIFFICULT.**
       2. Recognize what is at stake **– (v. 11)** – ***OUR SALVATION IS NEAR*** *🡪 (when judgment comes will we receive salvation?*)
18. The Faith in Christ Concerns Judgment
19. The Judgment After Death
    1. **Hebrews 9:27** – we are appointed to live and die ONCE!
       1. We are only given one life, and we are judged by all that we do in it.
       2. **Romans 2:3, 6-10** – None will escape the judgment of God, but God will render unto EACH ONE accordingly.
    2. **John 5:28-29** – The hour is coming when men will be raised to life or condemnation.
    3. **2 Peter 3:10** – That hour, that day, will come at a time we do not know. Like a thief.
    4. **Will we be found righteous? Have we controlled ourselves? Are we ready for the judgment?**
    5. **No doubt these questions were on the minds of Felix and Drusilla as Paul reasoned with them concerning the faith in Christ.**
20. The Response of Felix
    1. The Jewish historian, Josephus, noted that Felix and Drusilla were in an adulterous relationship.
       1. Drusilla was married to another man when Felix convinced her to marry him.
       2. This is likely why Paul preached on the matters of righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come.
    2. Notice Felix’s response – **Acts 24:24-27**:
       1. Felix turned away from the truth by sending Paul away.
       2. He spoke of a ***“more convenient time.”***
       3. That time never came! Felix hardened his heart against the truth, and sealed his fate.
       4. DON’T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AS FELIX – ***“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).***

**Conclusion**

1. The faith in Christ requires us to appeal to God’s standard of righteousness for salvation, live righteously by faith, and to maintain self-control because of the coming judgment!
2. Let us be careful to do as God says and live acceptably before Him.
3. **Don’t turn away from the truth of the Gospel. Understand that it is reasonable for God to require these things of us, and for us to submit to Him!**