He Became Frightened

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday December 3rd, 2017

Text: Acts 24:24-25

### Intro

1. Peter’s “Rooster Call” in Lk. 22:55-62 can be applied to situations when we see the truth:
   1. David – II Sam. 11-12
   2. Naaman – II Kings 5
   3. The Prodigal Son – Lk. 15
   4. Judas – Mt. 27
   5. Jews on Day of Pentecost – Acts 2
   6. King Agrippa II – Acts 26
2. Before King Agrippa II there was Governor Felix!
   1. Famous for saying, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you” (NKJ: Acts 24:25).
   2. He basically said he would wait for a “more convenient day.”
   3. Often when people hear the truth they don’t want to hear, they say, “Go away!”
3. Felix had his “Rooster Call” and stands as an example of the wrong response for people today.
4. Now is the time to obey God *(II Cor. 6:2);* we may not have “a more convenient day!”

#### Felix’s Opportunity

* 1. Paul knew Felix and knew what he knew!
     1. Acts 24:10-11: Paul was happy Felix was the judge to whom he would make defense, “I cheerfully make my defense…”
     2. Acts 24:22: Felix had “a more exact knowledge about the Way.” He was familiar with Christianity, and is perhaps why Paul was eager to speak to him.
     3. Acts 24:24: Felix and his wife Drusilla sent for Paul and heard him speak to them about faith in Christ.
  2. Governor Antonius Felix (Governor of Judea 52-58 A.D.):
     1. A Greek freedman, he was the first slave in Roman records to rise up to be governor. His brother was Secretary of Treasury under Claudius and Nero.
        1. “He thought that he could do any evil act with impunity, backed up as he was by such power” *(Tacitus: Annals Book 12 [54])*
     2. He was married three times:
        1. 1st wife: Drusilla of Mauretania, the great-granddaughter of Cleopatra.
        2. 2nd wife: Drusilla, a Jewish princess, daughter of King Agrippa I.
        3. 3rd wife: An unknown woman after death of Drusilla at Pompeii, 79 A.D.
     3. The historian Tacitus said, “with all brutality and lust, ruled as a king with the mentality of a slave” *(Tacitus: History Book 5 [9]).* *(He felt owed & entitled!)*
  3. Drusilla (38 A.D. – Aug. 25, 79 A.D.):
     1. Youngest daughter out of three of Herod Agrippa I, the ruler that beheaded James and imprisoned Peter and was struck down by God *(Acts 12 – 44 A.D.).*
     2. Married at age 15 to King Azizus of Emesa (circa 53 A.D.).
     3. Left her lawful husband shortly after their marriage for an adulterous affair with Felix & later married him (circa 54/55 A.D.)
     4. She and her son Marcus Antonius Agrippa perished in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius at Pompeii on August 25, 79 A.D.
  4. These wicked individuals had an opportunity to hear the gospel preached by Paul!
  5. Acts 24:25: Paul spoke to them about:
     1. Righteousness: Felix and Drusilla needed to hear what was right to do!
        1. I Jn. 3:7, 10: Those who do not practice righteousness are not of God, but of the devil.
        2. Rom. 1:18: The wrath of God will fall on the unrighteous.
        3. *I Cor. 6:9:* “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?”
     2. Self-control: Felix, a man of unbridled lusts, didn’t have self-control.
        1. Rom. 8:5-8: Felix lived his life according to the flesh.
        2. Prov. 16:32; 25:28: One without self-control is like a city breached and invaded; a city without walls, laid bare.
        3. Gal. 5:16-17: We are to walk by the Spirit so as to not do the will of the flesh *(Gal. 5:19-21)* or whatever we please!
     3. Judgment: Judgment is impending for every man in the last day *(II Cor. 5:10)*.
        1. Heb. 9:27; 10:26-31: Felix heard the message of this judgment. He had a choice to make, to keep on sinning or change his life.
        2. I Pet. 4:17-18: There will be a day of reckoning for all of us, but for the ungodly it will be severe.
  6. Felix’s “Rooster Call” was seeing himself as God saw him: unrighteous, unrestrained, and guilty of judgment!

#### Felix’s Response

* 1. Once a person has heard the gospel, there are two choices:
     1. Refuse to obey (from hardened heart, or for another opportunity)
     2. Obey the gospel
  2. Felix did not react the same way as:
     1. Stephen’s audience – *Acts 7:51-60:* They put him to death!
     2. Some at Lystra – *Acts 14:19-22:* Stoned Paul & left him for dead.
     3. The Athenians – *Acts 17:32:* Mocked Paul.
  3. Acts 24:25: Felix “became frightened”
     1. He was not so hard of heart that he gave no response.
     2. He trembled!
     3. Men need to be frightened when their sin is confronted – Heb. 10:31
  4. Felix’s response was a good start, for some obey out of fear of the consequences!

#### Felix’s Uncertainty

* 1. Acts 24:25: Felix relied on an uncertain future to do the right thing!
  2. He said, “Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you.”
     1. Telling the messenger to “Go away!” will not nullify or change the judgment!
  3. He was looking to “a more convenient day” to do what is right. *(Similar to Athenians in Acts 17:32)*
     1. That more convenient day may never come! (Prov. 27:1; Js. 4:13-16)
     2. God commands all men everywhere to repent! (Acts 17:30-31)
     3. Sin can harden the heart – Heb. 3:12-13
     4. Death may overtake us, or Christ may return! (Heb. 9:27; Mt. 24:42)
  4. There is danger in delaying obedience when we hear the truth!

## Conclusion

1. Felix and Drusilla had opportunity!
2. Felix was frightened by the message of the judgment and chose to delay.
3. There may be those today who look for “a more convenient day” to obey the gospel:
   1. We may not have a “tomorrow” – Js. 4:14
   2. Judgment will be terrible for those who have waited – II Thess. 1:7-9
   3. “Now is the day of salvation!” – II Cor. 6:2
4. If righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come strike fear into your heart, then your heart is ready to obey!
   1. Do not make the mistake of Felix in making excuses!
   2. That “more convenient day” may never come!
5. Obey the gospel from the heart and hold fast to the truth!
6. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized!
7. If a Christian in error, can you say you have a good conscience? Repent & be renewed!

References:

* <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=93&letter=F&search=Antonius%20Felix>
* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonius_felix>
* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drusilla_of_Mauretania_(born_38)>]
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