

LIFE'S ABOUT OUR DECISIONS

(Part I)

Acts 28:17-27

Woodland Park Church of Christ

1 September 2019

QUICK FACTS FOR CHRISTIANS

- **Acts 4:11** – The stone rejected by the builders has _____.
 - **Become the chief cornerstone**
- **Acts 4:12** – Outside of Jesus the Christ . . . *there is no other name under heaven given among men* _____.
 - **By which we must be saved**
- **Acts 27:31** – Paul told the centurions and the soldiers, “[U]nless these men stay in the “the ship” you _____.
 - **Will not be saved**

- **Acts 17:29** – Paul told the Athenians that because we are the offspring of God, *“we ought not think that the Divine Nature is _____.*
 - *Like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.*

BACKDROP

- Paul's destruction had been an object of the Jews since the beginning of his conversion because he immediately became a witness for the Lord. **Acts 9:20, 23**
- His 180° turn confounded the Jews at Damascus. **Acts 9:21**
- At Ptolemais, Paul defied the counsel of Luke, Agabus and others to not return to Jerusalem. **Acts 21:7-14**
- When he returned to Jerusalem, Paul was seized, dragged out of the temple, and was being beaten in an attempt to kill him. **Acts 21:30-31**
- Commander of the garrison and soldiers took Paul into custody by putting him into the barracks. **Acts 21:32-35**

- Recall that the Jews' chief complaint was that Paul was teaching contrary to Moses and the Law.
- Paul provides his defense at Jerusalem (to the Jews). **Acts 22:1-21**
- The Lord stood by Paul and told him he would bear witness of Him at Rome. **Acts 23:11**
- Plot (by more than 40 men) on Paul's life quelled after his nephew hears of the Jews' planned ambush. **Acts 23:12-35**
- Ananias the high priest through Tertullus, the orator, called Paul a plague, *who created dissension among all the Jews throughout the world and was a ringleader of a sect of the Nazarenes.* **Acts 24:2-5**
- When appearing before Festus (the governor), Paul appealed his case to Caesar. **Acts 25:10-12**
- En route to Rome, Paul would become shipwrecked at Malta, where he was bitten by a viper (snake), but suffered no harm. **Acts 27:39-28:6**

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

- Making decisions, and a number of other matters, is common to us all.
- Life really is about making decisions.
- Quality of life hinges on the decisions we make.
 - Where and how we spend our time;
 - How we spend our money;
 - Who we choose to get close to or to get intimate with;
 - The direction we take when it comes to matters of right and wrong.

MY LIFE IMPROVED WHEN I STARTED MAKING BETTER DECISIONS!

In today's text . . .

- The Apostle Paul presents the Jews at Jerusalem with the gospel – they could either accept it or reject it. **Act 28:23**
- Like many situations, some will accept what's right, pure, or expedient; while others will reject the same. **Acts 28:24**

- *So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, **persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening.** ²⁴ **And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.** ²⁵ So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, ²⁶ saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; ²⁷ For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'" ' Acts 28:23-27*

Two Officials Blow It by . . .

1. Awaiting a Convenient Time

*And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. ²⁵ Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "**Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.**"*

Acts 24:24-25

- We often do not have the luxury of waiting for a more convenient time; now is the time to act.
- *Carpe diem* → "Seize the day (moment)." See Acts 8:34-39 (Ethiopian eunuch seized the opportunity)

**DECISIONS ARE THE HARDEST
THING TO MAKE, ESPECIALLY
WHEN IT'S A CHOICE BETWEEN
WHERE YOU SHOULD BE AND
WHERE YOU WANT TO BE!**

2. Being Indecisive (Waffling)

- ²⁶ *For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. ²⁷ **King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.**” ²⁸ Then Agrippa said to Paul, **“You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”** ²⁹ And Paul said, “I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.” Acts 26:26-29*

Mountain Mayhem . . .

- *And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, **How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him.** And the people answered him not a word. ²² Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men . . . I Kings 18:21 ff.*

KEYS TO MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

1. Avoid Pollution / Protect Your Mind
2. Be (Stay) Informed
3. Commit to Your Purpose (Mission)

1. AVOID POLLUTION / PROTECT YOUR MIND

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:8-9

- The mind is like a computer – garbage in, garbage out
- It's the central processing unit which allows us to make sound, quality decisions

*Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it
spring the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23*

THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME . . .

Choose ye this day . . .

Joshua 24:15

Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- **Be added to the Lord's body --**
 - Hear the gospel (Acts 15:7);**
 - Believe the gospel (Acts 8:37,15:7);**
 - Repent of sins (Acts 2:38);**
 - Confess Christ (Acts 8:37);**
 - Be baptized for the remission of sin (Acts 2:38).**