

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The Problem of Procrastination

SERMON REFERENCE: Acts 24:24-27

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1318

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Do you have trouble with procrastination?
- b) Most of us are plagued with some form of procrastination.
 - i) But some of us have a form of procrastination that is actually harming us and doing great damage to us.
- c) Procrastination is more than the thief of time.
 - i) It is the grave of opportunity, and it may be the road to Hell.
- d) Many people will not be saved for three basic reasons:
 - i) Some will not be saved because they are out-and-out sinners.
 - (1) They don't want to believe.
 - (2) They hate God, Christ, the Bible, and the church.
 - (3) They don't intend to be saved.
 - ii) The second category of persons who will hear and not be saved are self-righteous people.
 - (1) They think the Gospel is for the thief, murderer, and prostitute, but not for them.
 - (2) They are nice, cultured people who live good lives, do good deeds, and are even religious.
 - (a) They don't see their need to be saved.
 - iii) The largest category of people who are lost and will not be saved are people who are procrastinators.
 - (1) They don't intend to go to Hell.
 - (2) They sincerely intend that one day they will be saved, but not today.
 - (3) They put it off and refuse to receive Christ now.
 - (a) They think that they will receive Him later on.
- e) The sin of procrastination has blasted more dreams, blighted more lives, wrecked more careers, and doomed more souls than perhaps any other sin.
- f) The Scripture that we will look at today deals with a man who procrastinated.
 - i) He put off giving his heart to Jesus Christ.
 - (1) In all likelihood, he is in Hell today.
- g) Acts 24:24-27
 - i) Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea.
 - ii) The Roman judge was a man named Felix.
 - (1) Felix had some religious proclivities and inclinations.
 - (a) He wanted to understand the faith concerning Jesus Christ.
 - (b) Felix wanted Paul to tell him about Jesus Christ.
 - iii) Paul preached a Christ-centered, pertinent message to Felix.
 - (1) The conviction of the Holy Spirit was so strong that Felix trembled.
 - (a) He was right at the threshold of salvation, but then he did something that many people do.
 - (b) Felix knew he was under conviction, but he wanted to wait for a better time, or what he called "a convenient season."
 - (i) And so, the devil trapped him; and today, he is in Hell.

h) In today's message, we will look at three specific things from this passage of Scripture as we think about the problem with procrastination.

2) THE SERMON THAT CONVICTED HIM (ACTS 24:24-26)

a) Acts 24:24-25

i) When Felix called for Paul, he wanted Paul to tell him about Jesus.

ii) Paul preached a sermon that convicted Felix.

(1) "Felix trembled."

iii) Paul had three points in his sermon:

(1) Righteousness

(2) Temperance

(3) Judgment to come

(a) Paul took each of these points and expanded them and reasoned with Felix about these things.

b) The standard that Paul revealed:

i) The standard that God has set is absolute righteousness.

ii) Isaiah 64:6

(1) Felix may have been wrapped in royal robes, but God saw him dressed in filthy rags.

(2) In this verse, "filthy rags" literally means the bandages that a leper might wear and then discard.

(a) This is not what God thinks of the bad things that we do.

(b) This is what God thinks of the good things that we do apart from Christ.

(i) We will never be saved by doing good deeds.

iii) 2 Corinthians 5:21

(1) God made Jesus to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God.

(a) Self-righteousness prevails not in God's sight.

(b) The Lord Jesus Christ took our sins, carried them to the cross, and purchased forgiveness for us.

iv) The only way that righteousness can become ours is by faith.

(1) Romans 4:5

(2) Felix's righteousness was no good.

(3) God has provided righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ, who took our sins to the cross and died for us.

(a) We will not get it by working.

v) The standard that Paul revealed was righteousness.

c) The sin that Paul revealed:

i) Acts 24:25

(1) The word "temperance" here literally means "self-control."

ii) Felix was a sensual man.

(1) The Bible says that he was with his wife Drusilla.

(a) Acts 24:24

- (2) Drusilla was one of the most beautiful women who ever lived.
 - (a) She was said to be the most beautiful woman of her day.
 - (b) She was one of the daughters of King Herod Agrippa.
- (3) Drusilla was married the first time when she was fourteen or fifteen.
 - (a) But when Felix set his eyes upon her, he stole her away from her husband.
- iii) Felix was a politician.
 - (1) What buttered his bread determined his conduct.
 - (2) One of the reasons why he talked with Paul was that he was hoping to get a bribe.
 - (a) He was hoping Paul would give him money that he might release him.
 - (i) No judge is supposed to do that.
 - (ii) Acts 24:26
 - (3) Later on, we see him pandering to the Jewish people.
 - (a) He crucified his conscience for public opinion.
 - (b) He was willing to content the Jewish people, not that he did it according to principle.
- iv) Felix was a sinner by nature, by birth, by practice, and by choice.
- d) The summons that Paul revealed:
 - i) Acts 24:25
 - (1) Righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come.
 - (a) Here is what God demands, and here is what you are; therefore, a judgment is coming.
 - (i) You will face God.
 - (2) It was important for this man to understand this.
 - (a) Here he was on the throne living high, wide, and handsome.
 - (i) He had power, pomp, circumstance, and luxury.
 - (3) What Paul was saying to Felix was for him to not judge by appearance or by what happens now, but to judge by what is going to happen.
 - (a) Judgment is not now; judgment is coming.
 - ii) God doesn't judge an unsaved person now.
 - (1) Do the unsaved get in trouble because of their sin?
 - (a) Anyone gets in trouble because of their sin.
 - (i) If someone lives a life of promiscuity, then they may get a terrible, debilitating disease.
 - (ii) If someone takes drugs or alcohol, then it will take its effect in their body.
 - 1. This is not primarily the judgment of God; this is just a built-in judgment.
 - a. Every kick has a kickback, but the true judgment is coming.
 - (2) One of the most terrifying verses in the Bible is Romans 2:5.
 - (a) There is a day of wrath and a day of judgment coming.

- (i) People with hard hearts just simply store it up.
 - e) Paul preached a stern sermon.
 - i) He revealed a standard, a sin, and a summons that judgment was coming.
 - ii) Felix was a man whose hands were filthy with the sins of the flesh and whose heart was in need of the Savior.
 - iii) When Paul finished his sermon, Felix trembled.
 - (1) Acts 24:25
 - (2) He wasn't afraid of Paul; he was under Holy Spirit conviction.
 - (3) Acts 16:29
 - (a) The Philippian jailer trembled, and he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and was saved.
 - (4) Felix came right to the threshold of salvation.
 - (a) He was under the conviction of sin.
 - (b) But he said that when he had a convenient season, he would call for Paul.
 - (i) Acts 24:25
- 3) THE PRESSURES THAT CONFRONTED HIM (ACTS 24:25)
 - a) The devil never gives up anyone or anything without a struggle.
 - i) When the Holy Spirit of God moved in to convict Felix, the devil moved in to confront him.
 - (1) The devil did not want Felix to be saved.
 - b) There were three mighty forces that warred against this man's soul.
 - i) They are the same three enemies that we all face:
 - (1) The world
 - (2) The flesh
 - (3) The devil
 - c) The world worked on him and pressured him.
 - i) The world warred on this man.
 - (1) Felix was in Caesarea in a place of prominence, power, position, and praise.
 - (2) In order for him to be saved, he had to humble himself.
 - (a) He had to admit that he was wrong and that he needed Christ.
 - ii) A lot of people get under conviction.
 - (1) But the devil tells them to maintain their pride.
 - (a) Don't admit that you have a need.
 - iii) Pride sits in the seat with every sinner.
 - (1) We call this worldliness.
 - d) The flesh worked on him and pressured him.
 - i) He was living a sensuous life.
 - ii) He was taking bribes.
 - iii) He had all of these pleasures of the flesh that he might be asked to give up.

- (1) The only thing that God will ever ask us to give up are the things that will hurt us.
- (2) If it will make us healthy, happy, wholesome, and holy, then God says to help yourself to them.
 - (a) Psalm 84:11
- e) The devil worked on him and pressured him.
 - i) Acts 24:25
 - (1) We can read between the lines and see how Satan whispered in his ear to just think about it.
 - (a) That it wasn't convenient right now to make a decision.
 - ii) Many souls have been sent to Hell because they simply postponed the day of salvation.
 - iii) There was real pressure upon this man, and he simply said to Paul, "Not now, later."
 - f) All of these pressures you, too, will feel if you are not saved.
- 4) THE PRESUMPTION THAT CONDEMNED HIM (ACTS 24:25, 27)
 - a) Acts 24:27
 - i) This tells us that Felix never did get saved; He never received Christ.
 - (1) History tells us that Felix died by suicide.
 - ii) The name "Felix" means "happy."
 - (1) But he had no happiness; he had no joy.
 - b) Felix made the following three tragic miscalculations:
 - i) That convenience would come.
 - (1) He had the idea that now wasn't the best time, and tomorrow was a better time.
 - (a) But tomorrow is not a better time; now is the best time.
 - (2) If we wait until tomorrow, then we will lose today.
 - (a) We tell people to get right with God because they may die.
 - (b) Instead, we need to tell people to get right with God because they may live with Jesus.
 - (i) Being a Christian is not some penalty that we pay in order to get to Heaven.
 - (ii) In this life, there is joy and peace in knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (c) When Felix went for the world, the flesh, and the devil, it brought him no happiness; it brought him no joy.
 - (i) His life ended in misery.
 - (3) Tomorrow may not come.
 - (a) Proverbs 27:1
 - (b) We don't know when we are going to die.
 - (i) We are closer to death now than we have ever been.
 - (c) People die every day.

- (i) Some die by disease, disaster, decay (they just get old), and some by design.
 - (ii) Sometimes people die young.
- (d) 1 Chronicles 29:15
- (e) Job 7:6
- (f) Psalm 39:5
- (g) Psalm 102:3
- (h) Psalm 102:11
- (i) How unwise it was for Felix to say that he would wait for a “convenient time.”
 - (i) Convenience may not come.
 - (ii) Acts 24:25
- (4) Jesus may come at any moment.
 - (a) Matthew 24:42
 - (b) Matthew 24:44
 - (c) Are you ready if the trumpet should sound and Jesus should come right now?
 - (i) The Bible says, “Be ready.”
 - (d) When we say, “I don’t think He is coming today,” then that is the best sign that He might.
- ii) That conviction would continue.
 - (1) Acts 24:25
 - (a) Felix was under Holy Spirit conviction.
 - (2) Conviction is of the Lord, but the Bible says that His Spirit shall not always strive with a man.
 - (a) Genesis 6:3
 - (3) We can say no to God and that conviction can pass away.
 - (a) Hebrews 3:7-8
 - (b) If the Holy Spirit of God speaks to us and we say no, then it will harden our hearts.
 - (i) Each time we say no, our hearts get a little harder.
 - (ii) There will come a time when our hearts will be so hard that the Holy Spirit of God cannot and will not speak to us.
 - (c) Hosea 4:17
 - (i) Here was a man who had lived in idolatry and sin for so long that he was married to his sin.
 - (d) In Romans 1, we read three times where God gave them up, God gave them up, and God gave them over.
 - (e) John 12:37, 39
 - (i) Verse 37 says that they would not believe.
 - (ii) Then, verse 39 says that they could not believe.
 - (f) Isaiah 55:6
 - (4) We cannot trifle with the Holy Spirit.

- (5) We can bandage our eyes and keep a bandage on so long that when we take that bandage off, we will be blind.
 - iii) That conflicts would cease.
 - (1) Felix thought that somehow it would be easier later than it would be now.
 - (a) The devil never gives up on anyone or anything without a fight.
 - (2) There will never be a better time for you to be saved than now.
 - (a) Hebrews 3:7-8
 - (b) Proverbs 27:1
 - (c) 2 Corinthians 6:2
 - c) When you are waiting on a convenient season, remember the following:
 - i) Tomorrow, you will have less time to repent in.
 - ii) Tomorrow, you will have more sin to repent of.
 - iii) Tomorrow, you will have a harder heart to repent of.
 - d) Hebrews 3:7-8
- 5) CONCLUSION
- a) What was the mistake that Felix made?
 - i) That convenience will come.
 - ii) That conviction will continue.
 - iii) That conflict will cease.
 - (1) He just simply put salvation off, hoping that tomorrow would be the time to come to the Lord.
 - (a) It would not be so.
 - b) Isaiah 55:6
 - i) The Holy Spirit says, "Today."
 - ii) The Word of God says, "Today."
 - iii) Experience says, "Today."
 - (1) Come to Jesus today.
 - c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
 - d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16