

Walking Through the New Testament with Paul the Apostle by His Life and Pen

LESSON NO. 20 - Please read Acts 24 + 26 and read again Acts 9 + 16.

Theme: Omnipotent Omniscient God is the Perfect Bookkeeper. God records everything in His universe.

Context: Three government officials , Felix, Festus and Agrippa, ordered Paul to stand trial to answer for alleged crimes. At the end of each examination, a record was written down of the examination's conclusion for the government in Rome to review. What the three government officials failed to recognize was the clear fact that they, themselves, were simultaneously being examined by the Highest Authority in the universe, the Creator God! These men will one day stand before God to give account for every thought, word and action of each day of their entire lives on earth. This is true for all people and should be utmost sobering for all of us.

Review of Lesson No. 19: What are we going to do with the One who knows exactly **in advance when every rooster will crow** and when every sparrow will fall to the ground? What are we going to do with Jesus when He asks us to give all our life to Him as the rightful owner?

It might be good to continue our effort to think deeply and accurately about the infinite power and wisdom of God. In our last lesson we marveled that Jesus knew **in advance** every chirp of every bird in all His universe. In this lesson we will learn that NOT ONLY does Jesus know everything in His universe but that ALL people will give an account for every moment of their existence.

In today's lesson we will continue to marvel and be overwhelmed by the truth that **everything is open** to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account.

- Hebrews 4:12-13 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but **all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.**

Of course, all of us know that the fingerprints of every human being are unique to that person. No one shares the fingerprints of another person. We should think often and solemnly about the following great truth: Whatever we touch leaves a unique mark, our individual mark, which **even human scientists** can trace back to the individual who left that print.

Do we clearly understand that **whatever we think, say or do from birth to death** leaves a unique print which is recorded by Omniscient God?

For any person who has NOT been "born-again" and given a new supernatural heart filled with the Holy Spirit, this awesome truth should be the **most terrifying thought** which could ever pass through their minds.

But, for the "new born" child of God, our gracious Savior, Jesus Christ, declared His death to be sufficient to pay the complete penalty for every sin and act of rebellion committed against holy God and against their neighbors.

- Romans 8:1 There is therefore **now no condemnation** to those who are **in Christ.**
- Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, **having forgiven you all trespasses,** having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, **having nailed it to the cross.**

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- Hebrew 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and **their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.**”
- Hebrew 10:16-18 “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” then He adds, “Their **sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.**” Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.
- Psalm 103:12 As far as the **east** is from the **west**, So far has **He removed our transgressions from us.**

But, what about the many, the majority, who reject Jesus Christ?

One would have to conclude that having to give an account for every sin ever committed in one’s lifetime SHOULD FILL **their hearts with terror**. Remember our “fingerprint” is on every thought, word or action! What terror should fill the human heart to understand that, IF ONE’S SINS ARE NOT COVERED BY JESUS’ SACRIFICIAL DEATH AND SHED BLOOD, one will spend all ETERNITY reviewing ALL of one’s sins and continually paying the sin penalty of death and pain with no hope of relief or pardon!

In Acts 9 & 16 we read of the freedom, pardon, relief, joy and love brought into the hearts of a few who saw their hopeless position of being GUILTY and rightly deserving death and chose to love and trust Jesus Christ. Above all else, these few understood that their only hope was to trust in Jesus Christ who made the supreme sacrifice of death to cleanse them from their guilt. This truth turned their hopelessness and terror into complete joy and love for such a Savior!

Acts 9:5-6 And he [Saul] said, “**Who are You, Lord?**” Then the Lord said, “**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.** It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” So he, trembling and astonished, said, “**Lord, what do You want me to do?**” Then the Lord said to him, “**Arise and go . . .**”

Acts 16:4 [Lydia] The **Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.** And when she and her household were baptized.

Acts 16:29-31 [Philippian Jailer] Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, “**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**” So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. (v. 34) Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, **having believed in God with all his household.**

This brings us to the men of today’s lesson: Felix, Fester and Agrippa. These men heard the exact same truth which Saul/Paul, Lydia and the Philippian jailer heard. What was written down about their reaction and decision to this information about Jesus Christ?

Acts 24:25 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 26:24-27 Now as he thus made his defense, **Festus** said with a loud voice, “**Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!**” But he said, “I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention,

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since this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

Acts 26:28-32 Then **Agrippa** said to Paul, “**You almost persuade me to become a Christian.**” 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.” When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, “This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains.” Then Agrippa said to Festus, “This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

These men believed they were judging Paul, but, in fact, **they were being judged by Almighty God.** What would they do when confronted with TRUTH? What would they do when Jesus Christ, God’s Beloved Son, was openly declared to them?

Felix procrastinated. Festus mocked. Agrippa said (paraphrased) “It must be true. I am almost persuaded, but the cost of following Jesus is too great for me to pay.”

They made a decision. Their “fingerprints” were affixed to their decision and God wrote it down in His books.

There are two Books which Almighty Omniscient God, the Perfect Judge, writes down everything: 1.) **Book of Life.** 2.) **Book of Death.**

From that point of rejection all that awaits them is the fearful sentencing and carrying out of eternal death in hell. How tragic. Nothing could possibly be more fearful.

Revelation 20:12-14 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and **books were opened.** And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, **by the things which were written in the books.** The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each **one according to his works.** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.**

Are we slowly beginning to see with the clarity of Paul, that **everything** man thinks, says or does carries their “unique fingerprint”?

All people will one day stand before God and are judged either UNCONDEMNED or CONDEMNED. If Uncondemned, that person will NEVER have to answer for their sins committed in their lifetime. If Condemned, these people will stand before God and be called to acknowledge every sin, admit their total guilt and be sentenced to pay in full sin's debt. These condemned ones will receive their WAGES due them.

- Romans 6:23 "for the **wages** of sin is **death**".

Dear readers, it is absolutely eternally critical to make certain in what Book you have had your name recorded! **Book of Life** or **Book of Death.** Which will it be for you, for your family members, for your friends, your acquaintances, for those you work amongst?

God not only knows, before the rooster crows, when the rooster will crow and for how long, but He also **knows everything you will ever think, say or do.**

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This awesome truth is too weighty for us! This truth will crush us in fear and terror, UNLESS we have been born again and given a supernatural love for our Savior, Jesus Christ, who died to pay for every sin. This knowledge produces supernatural gratitude and banishes all fear!

Furthermore, this incredible truth should give us every power and encouragement to simply ask everyone we possibly can: Upon your death, which Book will have your name written within its pages?

Before we conclude this lesson, we must give full weight to the “other wing” of Truth concerning the omniscience of Almighty God. God NOT ONLY records every sin, but He is incredibly pleased to ALSO RECORD & REWARD as it pleases Him every single thought, word or action which has been initiated and fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit placed within those of us who have been “born again”.

What does this UNIMAGINABLE REWARD look like? Paul, through the Holy Spirit, opens our eyes in awesome wonder with the following incredible truth for our encouragement:

- Romans 8:14-17 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “**Abba, Father.**” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God**, and if children, **then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.
- 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 Therefore **we make it our aim**, whether present or absent, **to be well pleasing to Him**. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. **Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;** but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.
- Matthew 5:12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your **reward** in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
- Matthew 6:4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself **reward** you openly.
- Matthew 6:6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will **reward** you openly.
- Matthew 10:41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s **reward**. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s **reward**.
- Matthew 10:42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his **reward**.”
- Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your **reward** will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.
- 1 Corinthians 3:8 Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own **reward** according to his own labor.

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- 1 Corinthians 3:14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a **reward**.
 - Colossians 3:23-25 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the **reward** of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.
 - Hebrews 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great **reward**.
 - Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a **rewarder** of those who diligently seek Him.
 - Hebrew 11:26 [Moses] esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the **reward**.
 - 2 John 1:8 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full **reward**.
 - Revelation 22:12 And behold, I am coming quickly, and My **reward** is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.
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We will find much eternal treasure in NOT ONLY sweetly telling others the truth of **John 3:16** but also remember with great joy its parallel promise of reward recorded in **Malachi 3:16**.

- John 3:16-17 For **God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.
- Malachi 3:16-17 Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; So a **book of remembrance** was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name. "**They shall be Mine**," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I **make them My jewels**. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.

All our love to All,
In Christ -
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