

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

LESSON NO. 22 - Please read Acts 22,25,26.

Context of this Lesson: Paul is on trial before King Agrippa and Governor Festus. Paul recounts his “new-born” experience bringing him to the decision point to believe in Jesus Christ and to obey Christ’s commands becoming a Christ-follower. What decision did Agrippa make that day?

Theme No. 1: - Acts 26:27 “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

Question: What prophet would King Agrippa have read about who gives the clearest picture of Jesus Christ, the Messiah?

- Isaiah 53:1-12 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But **He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities**; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And **by His stripes we are healed**. All we like sheep have gone astray; **We have turned, every one, to his own way**; And **the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all**. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked — But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge **My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities**. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because **He poured out His soul unto death**, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

As you finish reading this inspired proclamation from Isaiah, do you fully realize you now have the very same information about Jesus Christ which King Agrippa possessed and which the Holy Spirit demanded a clear decision must be made?

In a very real essence, the Holy Spirit is putting before you the very same question which He had Paul put forth to King Agrippa: “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

In essence, every clear declaration of Jesus Christ from ANY PART of the Scripture carries the very same truth declaration about Jesus and also demands that a decision be made immediately. Just as the clear revelation of Jesus came to Saul [Paul] on the Damascus Road, so it is with every human being for **no one is left with any excuse**:

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- Romans 1:18-20 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that **they are without excuse.**
- Joshua 24:15 “. . . choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve . . . But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Question: What was Agrippa's response?

- Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”

Paul's response:

- Acts 26:19-20 “Therefore, King Agrippa, **I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that **they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.****

The most important Question: What is your response to this revelation of Jesus Christ and His call upon your life to follow Him wherever He leads?

Theme No. 2: Why are you waiting?

- Acts 22:16 And now why are you waiting? **Arise and be baptized**, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’
- Acts 22:12-16 “Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, came to me; and he stood and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers **has chosen you that you should know His will**, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. For **you will be His witness to all men** of what you have seen and heard. **And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized**, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’
- Acts 22:17-21 “Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance and saw Him saying to me, ‘Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.’ So I said, ‘Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’ Then He said to me, ‘**Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.**’ ”

Question: Are you willing to declare the Greatest Love Story Ever Told of how the Creator became your Redeemer by dying for you as clearly explained in Isaiah 53?

Question: Will you lovingly be able to echo Paul's simple plea of Acts 26:29 to everyone possible in whatever circumstances you are found?

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- Acts 26:29 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 [a Christ-follower], except for these chains.”

Solemn Truth: In each person’s lifetime, they will be asked by the Holy Spirit to make a decision about what they believe to be true about Jesus Christ. The individual decision which each person makes seals their eternal destiny, either heaven or hell.

- 2 Corinthians 6:2 For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the **day of salvation** I have helped you.” Behold, **now is the accepted time**; behold, now is the **day of salvation**.

Theme No. 3: What did Jesus feel towards Saul and Agrippa some 2000 years ago? What does He feel towards you and me today? **Love!** What prompted Almighty God to so love His creation that He would be willing to suffer and die for them AND CLEARLY write down that PAINFUL AGONY recorded in Isaiah 53 . . . 700 years before it happened? **Perfect Love!**

To tie our Isaiah 53 theme together with our responsibility, like Paul, asking people to hear and decide what they believe to be true about Jesus Christ, we will insert a paragraph by one of our favorite authors, A W Tozer (1897-1963) *Jesus the Author of our Faith*. It is well worth reading and thinking about often:

Jesus had come for the humiliation of death. He came to declare God’s redemptive will. The plotting of jealous men could not destroy His divine affection for a lost race. Putting Him on a cross did not drain away any of His love. That is why we believe with assurance and blessing that He is the very same Lord Jesus Christ now!

And it is this ever-living Christ who wants to demonstrate Himself through our faith and love those around us. How do you suppose Jesus feels today about the sinful men and women who walk our streets? He loves them! No matter how we feel about them, He loves them! We may be righteously indignant about the things they do. We may be disgusted with their actions and ways. We are often ready to condemn them and turn away from them. But Jesus keeps on loving them. **It is His unchanging nature to love and to seek the lost.**

- Luke 19:10 “. . . for the Son of Man [Jesus Christ] has come to seek and to **save that which was lost.**”
- John 15:12-14 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, **than to lay down one’s life for his friends**. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.
- John 3:16-17 even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 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.**

We cannot see any better way of declaring our love for Jesus Christ than by clearly declaring His love for mankind to everyone we possibly can. Truly, we have the incompressible privilege of declaring to our generation the **Greatest Love Story Ever Told!**

We love to receive your questions. Your questions can be sent to write2stm@gmail.com or WasItForMeRom832@gmail.com. All our love to you in Christ - Jon + Philis