

ALMOST, BUT NOT

Acts 26:24-32

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: The story of King Agrippa's encounter with Paul, the Apostle almost brought the king to being saved, but in the end, he refused. The way of life and salvation was set very clearly before him and he had opportunity to be saved, but he willfully disobeyed the command of the Gospel. In the hour of opportunity, he delayed, he put it off. He stopped up his ears when God spoke to him. In his own words he said that he was "almost persuaded" to be a Christian, but in the end, he never did. There are countless men and women who have been presented the Gospel and, like king Agrippa, were almost persuaded to believe and become a Christian, but never did. *"...Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation..." (1 Corinthians 6:1-2)*

I. WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

1. A Christian is one who is anointed of God, a follower of Jesus Christ, one who is trying to live like Christ.
 - Nothing, no one, can be properly called "Christian" except the Church and the people of God.
 - A Christian is a person who is taught of God, whose eyes God has opened to see and know the truth.
 - A Christian is one who has the "mind of Christ" to understand spiritual things.
 - A Christian is a person who has been taught to acknowledge and confess his/her sins.
 - Christians are sinners who have been transformed by the grace and power.
 - Christians have received the forgiveness of their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - A Christian is a person whose treasure is in heaven, with an inheritance among the saints, earned purchased and claimed for him/her by Jesus Christ.
 - Christians have been made holy by God's grace through Jesus Christ and are saved by their faith in Him.
 - A Christian is a person who trusts the Lord Jesus Christ and are saved by his/her faith in Him.
 - Any person who has not experienced and possess these graces is not a Christian.

II. HOW DID PAUL ALMOST PERSUADE AGRIPPA TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN?

1. Paul used the Word of God (vv22).
 - *"...Thus saith the Lord..."*
 - This is the only weapon of the battle to bring people to be saved.
 - Christians do not use science, history or reasoning.
 - Christians demand that to be saved, one must bow to the Word of God.
 - Believing the Word of God is the only way a person can be saved.
2. Paul told Agrippa about his own personal experience with God's grace. (vv6-19)
 - He spoke of what the Lord had done for him.
 - This is good witnessing - tell what one has experienced, there is no better way.
3. Paul gave Agrippa a very clear statement of the historic facts of the Gospel (v23).
 - God became human flesh (incarnate)
 - As a man, Jesus Christ bore the sins of the people upon the cross as the sinner's substitute.
 - As the sinner's substitute, God's divine justice was satisfied.
 - Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven and makes intercession as High Priest and Advocate for those who believe in Him.
 - The risen Jesus Christ is able to save all to the uttermost all who trust Him.
 - Paul demanded that Agrippa openly, publicly acknowledge the claims of Jesus Christ in the Gospel.

III. WHY WAS AGRIPPA ONLY "ALMOST" PERSUADED?

1. There was sitting at Agrippa's side a woman with whom he was living with immorally.
- He refused to give her and their relationship up.
2. If Agrippa turned to Jesus Christ, then he would have to turn away from the woman he was living with.
- He would not do so.
3. Agrippa counted the cost and was unwilling to pay that price.
4. Agrippa loved the world, the pomp, the pleasures, the fame, the riches, the sin, the power and the comfort of the world.
5. Agrippa was ALMOST persuaded but he could not and would not forsake the world and follow Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. Countless have almost been persuaded to do this or not do that but refused and bad, severe, even deadly consequences followed.
- Some have had sharp pains in the chest and a numbness in the arms and were told to rush to the emergency room but the pain eased up and they died of a heart attack.
2. The Holy Spirit gives everyone a warning through king Agrippa, "**To Be Almost Persuaded is to Be Altogether Lost! If/when one meets God almost persuaded, he/she will be forever altogether, totally lost.**"
3. Is there anyone here who is wrestling with that decision to believe in Jesus Christ? Stop wrestling and surrender to Him. To wrestle is still to be lost!