

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus: Will You Decide Now to Follow Jesus?

Scripture Text:

Continuing our series examining the invitation song “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.” Although not every songbook includes this verse, some do – like *Songs for Worship and Praise* – and I think it worthy of our inclusion in this series.

Staying primarily in Acts (almost in chronological order), let us examine our verse today.

- I. Felix – Acts 24:25
 - A. Background – Acts 24:1-24
 1. Paul gives a background of what he had been through as part of a defense:
 - a. v. 3 – he was thankful
 - b. v. 9 – the Jews claimed they were true
 - c. v. 12 – didn’t find Paul disputing in the temple
 - d. v. 15 – teaches of a resurrection of the dead
 - e. v. 16 – nothing on his conscience
 - f. v. 21 – called in question over the resurrection
 2. Paul is loosed from his sentence because Felix knows Paul’s statements are true – v. 23-24
 - B. Paul’s Preaching – v. 25
 1. Righteousness – cannot preach any sermon and not touch on God’s righteousness
 2. Temperance – often translated as self-control – Jesus, Peter, Paul all taught this
 3. Judgment to come – Jesus laid the groundwork – John 12:48; Solomon – Ecc. 12:14; and Paul – II Cor. 5:10
 - C. Felix’s Response – v. 26
 1. Trembled – like those at Pentecost – cut to the heart. True Gospel preaching always does this!
 2. Put off his response
 3. v. 27 is the final mention of Felix – led to believe his “more convenient season” never came

II. Agrippa – Acts 26:28

A. Background – Acts 26:1-27

1. Paul given permission to speak for himself
 - a. v. 2 – he is happy
 - b. v. 3 – hear him patiently
 - c. v. 6 – judged for the hope
 - d. v. 8 – why do you think this?
 - e. v. 10-12 – recounting his life as a persecutor
 - f. v. 13-19 – seeing the light
 - g. v. 21 – Jews sought to kill Paul
2. Paul is accused of being mad/crazy – v. 26-25

B. Paul's preaching – v. 23, 26

1. Showing Jesus' purpose
2. Things not done in secret

C. Agrippa's reaction – v. 28

1. Truly "Almost Persuaded"
2. To be almost persuaded is to be completely lost!!!
3. We really have no knowledge of Agrippa's conversion

III. Paul – Acts 22:16

A. Background – Acts 9, 22, 26 (22:3-15)

1. Saul's event on the road to Damascus is told in Ch. 9. He retells it in defense in Ch. 22 and 26.
 - a. v. 6 – appeared to on the road
 - b. v. 7-8 – conversation with God
 - c. v. 10 – not saved there, he must find Ananias
2. Ananias afraid at first to work with Saul – quickly changes

B. Ananias' preaching

1. v. 14 – chosen of God
2. v. 15 – be a witness
3. v. 16 – why are you waiting?! You know what to do, why are you putting this off?

C. Paul's reaction

1. Ac. 9:18 – immediately he was baptized
2. He didn't just jump to baptism – it represents the whole plan of salvation.

“Will you decide **now** to follow Jesus?”

Don't be like Felix and put off obedience until a more convenient season/tomorrow. Ernest Tubb sang it truly: “Tomorrow Never Comes.”

Don't be like Agrippa – don't be almost persuaded – commit fully!

Be like Paul and “arise, be baptized, and wash away your sins” today!

Will you decide now to follow Jesus?

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