

A Tale of Three Kings

1. The high priest Ananias arrived from Jerusalem, bringing along with him some elders and an attorney named Tertullus (24:1).
 - a. What four accusations did Tertullus make against Paul (24:2-6)?
 - b. Tertullus also accused Claudius Lysais of wrongdoing. What did he say the Roman commander had done wrong (24:6, 7)?

2. Tertullus misrepresented the facts in order to make the Jews' case against Paul look better than it was, he falsely accused Paul of wrongdoing and Claudius Lysais of obstructing justice. Since Felix was not present in Jerusalem during these events, it would have been difficult for him to know if Tertullus' accusations against Paul were accurate.
 - a. What did Felix do in order to determine the truth (24:10)?
 - b. What should a believer do when he hears only one person's version of a problem between two people (Prov. 18:17)?
 - c. What does the Bible say about the person who gives a quick answer before he has all the facts (Prov. 18:13)?

3. Three days after Festus' arrival in Caesarea as the new governor, he went up to Jerusalem where the Jews brought many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove (25:7).
 - a. At the time of Paul's original arrest in Jerusalem (21:30), God assured him in a night vision that he would be His witness in Rome (23:11). How did God use the wickedness of Festus to accomplish this objective (25:9-12)?
 - b. Often God's people become discouraged when they see the wicked plans and schemes of godless men. They can be tempted to think that evil will prevail and God's plans will be thwarted. What does the Bible say about God's reaction to the wicked and their unrighteous plans (Ps. 2:1-5)?

4. When King Agrippa agreed to hear Paul, he (Agrippa) was brought into the auditorium amid great pomp (25:23). Festus asked Agrippa, the commanders, and prominent men of the city to find some justifiable charge against Paul that he could send to Rome (25:24-27). Paul was given the opportunity to give his personal testimony to King Agrippa and others (26:2-23). Again, he presented the essential facts leading to his salvation in part one of his testimony, the actual events of his salvation experience in part two, and the critical events of his life since his conversion in part three. Every Christian should learn to give his personal testimony in a clear, organized manner. One effective way of giving your testimony is to identify the specific life need (e. g., fear of death, fear of going to hell, a feeling of purposelessness, etc.) in part one of the testimony. Part two should provide the essential details of the conversion experience and part three should explain how Christ solved the life need that was identified in part one.
 - a. What was your compelling life need before salvation that God used to bring you to Christ?
 - b. The apostle Paul was saved at midday on a road north of Jerusalem (26:13). Where and when were you saved? If you are not sure of your salvation, see your ENCORE leader or Pastor Troy and ask them to show you how you can receive the gift of eternal life.
 - c. In what way(s) has Jesus Christ solved your original concern about the life-need you identified in part one of your testimony?

5. In the third part of Paul's testimony he said that he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision (26:19).
 - a. What did he mean by this statement (26:16-20)?
 - b. If you are saved, God has called you to live a holy life and to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:16). Can you say with the apostle Paul that you have been obedient to do the things that God has shown you?
 - c. If not, what do you think you need to do to fulfill God's will for your life?

6. The apostle Paul refused to be silenced. He loved the Lord Jesus Christ too much to be disobedient to His commands and he loved the lost too much not to warn them of the coming judgment of God. Do you love Jesus Christ enough to be faithful to witness to the lost even if it means facing rejection and ridicule?

Read: Acts 27

Monday

v. 1-8 — The Augustan Regiment or Cohort was one of the most elite regiments of Rome. Also known as the Praetorian Guard, they were directly accountable to Caesar. The Centurion, Julius, was the cohort commander. The Centurion was a man “in charge,” he had authority and was accountable if his mission did not succeed. Verse 3 says that Julius treated Paul kindly. What did Julius risk if Paul abused his kindness and fled? Why do you think he took such a risk?

Tuesday

v. 9-12 — “The fast was already over.” The fast Luke mentions is the Jewish Day of Atonement, which falls sometime from late September to October. Sailing on the Mediterranean Sea was dangerous at this time of year and would cease from mid-November until at least February. How do verses 6-8 describe the voyage? Whose counsel did Julius (the Centurion) listen to (v. 11)? Julius probably felt like his options were limited and so he went with what seemed like wise counsel. At this point in the passage, who was Paul to Julius? Do you think Roman Centurions usually took counsel from their prisoners? It is easy to see why Julius did not listen to Paul. Today many people would like you to follow their direction or listen to their opinion; how do you discern good counsel from bad counsel (Prov. 19:20-21)?

Wednesday

v. 13-26 — The journey started out great, but the good weather didn't last. The “Euroclydon” (also known as a “nor'easter”) was a violent storm that would blow in from Europe. Living in Iowa, most of us cannot imagine what it is like to be on a small ship in the midst of a violent storm. What does verse 20 say about their hopes? What was Paul's response to this (v. 21-26)?

Thursday

v. 27-32 — The sailor's had heard Paul's “plan” to run the ship aground (that is never good news to a sailor). They either did not believe or did not trust Paul; in any case they decided to take matters into their own hands. Verse 30 says, “They had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors.” A “pretense” is a plausible lie, basically trying to make a lie more believable. The sailors' fear and unbelief led them into more and more sin. Christians often fall into these same sinful patterns. How often do you find yourself telling “white lies” or “half-truths”?

Friday

v. 33-38 — Can you imagine going without food for fourteen days? Can you imagine being on a small ship in the middle of a violent tempest for over fourteen days? What did Paul say in verse 34? What did he do in verse 35? What was the response in verse 36? Paul's example of faith encouraged the crew and passengers in the midst of a very frightening and difficult situation. What can you do this week to be more of an encouragement in the midst of a fallen and difficult world?

Saturday

v. 39-44 — “The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners.” The soldiers were responsible for the prisoners and if they escaped it would cost the soldiers their lives. Who intervened? Do you think it was “normal” for a Roman Centurion to show this kind of compassion on a prisoner? God was clearly at work in the heart of Julius. We should be encouraged by this account; God is faithful, God is trustworthy, and He is working out His will in this world; nothing is going to stop Him.
