

When I Find Time

Contributed by Jeff Trahan
Sunday, 30 August 2009

The account of Paul's encounters with the Roman governor Felix is interesting. Paul was being held in custody because of the accusations of the Jews, and I am confident Felix understood that the charges against Paul were false. He allowed Paul to have some freedom, although he did give orders to keep him in custody. The reason Felix didn't release Paul was because "he was hoping that money would be given him" (Acts 24:26). We're also told that he used to send for Paul often and talk with him for that reason—hoping that money would be offered for his release. Paul had the opportunity to talk with Felix about "faith in Christ Jesus" (Acts 24:24), and also about things like "righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come" (Acts 24:25). Felix had the opportunity to hear the gospel, and it seems to me that it had some kind of effect on him. When Paul talked with him about "righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you" (Acts 24:25). Felix apparently never found the time. The story of Felix tells us is that there's no time like the present to do what we know we need to do. That's certainly true for those who have never obeyed the gospel of Christ. There's no telling how many people have made, for all practical purposes, the same mistake as that made by Felix. They've heard the gospel of Christ, they know what the Lord expects from them, and yet they put off responding to it. That's one of the most dangerous things a person can do. For one thing, there's no guarantee that another opportunity to obey the gospel will ever present itself. Life is just too uncertain to put eternity at risk. More than that, however, there's no guarantee that another opportunity to obey the gospel will be desired. People sometimes see their need, and may even have genuine plans to do something about those needs someday, but those plans are often never fulfilled. It becomes easier and easier to put them off until there's no desire to carry through with them. The same principle also applies to those who are Christians. I'm convinced that although many people have good intentions, some Christians put off doing the things they know they need to do in order to grow in their faith and truly serve the Lord. They put off things like Bible study and prayer, opting instead for activities that may not be inherently sinful but contribute nothing to their spiritual development. We must come to terms with the fact that the kind of time it takes to faithfully serve the Lord is not found, it's made. "So, then, be careful how you live. Do not be unwise but wise, 16 making the best use of time because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16 ISV).