

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE
ACTS 26:24-32

**Woodland Park
Church of Christ**



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If I did not know already, recent events have reminded me that time is swiftly passing –

- Friends and family members transitioning – some “before their time.”
- Daughter reaching 16 years of age.
- Children in this congregation going off to college, starting careers and considering starting families.

**NO TIME TO WASTE –
TIME IS TRULY OF THE ESSENCE.**



SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

- Paul had averted ambush of an angry Jewish mob, as the Jews' plans had been intercepted.
Acts 23:12-31
- After appealing to Festus for a hearing before Caesar, Paul is on his way to Rome to have his case (brought by the Jews) heard. **Acts 25:9-11**
 - **Know your rights!!**
- Paul now addressing Agrippa before being shipped off to Rome.
- Even in dire straits, Paul is persistent in telling the “old, old story.”



- **Paul gets to testify –**
 - Grew up a Pharisee (the strictest sect of Judaism) and developed in the law.
 - Understands the promise made to the fathers; now desires to see it to fruition
 - Recounts conversion and obedience to the “heavenly vision” **Acts 26:19-20**
 - Preaches the very same things spoken by Moses and the prophets – which pointed to Christ’s suffering and resurrection.
Acts 26:22-23
 - On a mission to preach Christ crucified to the “Jewish people and the Gentiles.”
Acts 26:23
- **Festus accuses Paul of being mad! Acts 26:24**



KING AGRIPPA'S RESPONSE

- . . . “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.” **Acts 26:28**
- Some commentators assert that Agrippa's response was one of sarcasm, given that Paul had spoken with him briefly.
- Whatever the motivation or intent, Agrippa did not obey the gospel.
- No record of Agrippa ever obeying the gospel.
- But having been exposed to the truth, he is without excuse.



AGRIPPA'S RESPONSE IS NOT UNCOMMON

- “I was almost ready to make the move when I dozed off.”
- “I was just about to go when disaster struck.”
- “I was gonna visit the sick, but _____.”
- I had it in my heart, but it never came up again.
- I just did not get ‘round to it.’”



- Have to prepare the next generation for a world that is turning more and more hostile to morality and Christian values.
- Time is fleetingly passing.
- We must take time now to do the things necessary to advance the interests and causes we hold dear.
 - Christian values and aims
 - Family wholeness
 - Physical fitness
 - Financial discipline
 - Academic / vocational pursuits



INSTANCES WHERE ADVANTAGE TAKEN

I. Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-39)

A. Eunuch reading excerpt from Isaiah 53.
vv.32-33

B. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” **v. 30**

C. Eunuch acknowledges that he needed help. **v. 31**

D. Philip preaches Jesus to him. **v. 35**

E. “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” **v. 36**



II. Philippian Jailer & His Family (Acts 16:11-33)

- A.** Paul and Silas beaten and imprisoned after interfering with the profits of some Philippian merchants. **vv. 16-24**
- B.** Foundations of prison shaken and doors opened after Paul and Silas worshiped. **vv. 25-26**
- C.** Prison keeper was about to kill himself when Paul informed him that all prisoners were accounted for. **vv. 27-28**
- D.** Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to him and his household. **v. 32**
- E.** **At the same hour of the night . . . immediately he (jailer) and his family were baptized. v. 33**



As you do all this, you know what time it is. The hour has already come for you to wake up from your sleep. **Now our salvation is nearer than when we first had faith.** The night is almost over, and the day is near. So let's get rid of the actions that belong to the darkness and put on the weapons of light. Let's behave appropriately as people who live in the day, not in partying and getting drunk, not in sleeping around and obscene behavior, not in fighting and obsession. Instead, dress yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ, and don't plan to indulge your selfish desires.

Romans 13:11-14 (CEB)



Therefore see that you walk carefully [living life with honor, purpose, and courage; shunning those who tolerate and enable evil], not as the unwise, but as wise [sensible, intelligent, discerning people], making the very most of your time [on earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil. Therefore do not be foolish *and* thoughtless, but understand *and* firmly grasp what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:15-17 (AMP)



AVOID THE FELIX COMPLEX

Now as he (Paul) reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; **when I have a convenient time, I will call for you.**” Acts 24:25



**NO MATTER HOW MUCH
MONEY YOU HAVE AND HOW
MUCH YOU ARE WILLING TO
PAY FOR IT, YOU CANNOT BUY
ONE SECOND OF TIME!**



LORD'S INVITATION EXTENDED TO ALL

- **Be added to the Lord's body –**
 - Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7**)
 - Believe (**Acts 15:7; Acts 16:31**)
 - Repent (**Acts 2:38**)
 - Confess (**Acts 8:37**)
 - Be baptized for the remission of sin (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**).



- Be reconciled to the Lord. (**I John 1:9**)
- Desire prayer. (**James 5:16**)

