

# A Clear Testimony For The Lord – Part 2

## A CLEAR TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD – PART 2

**Acts 26**

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### **WELCOME**

Good evening and welcome to this meeting of the Joy Baptist Church.

We're so glad that you are here, and we're and we're honored that you have chosen to join in and worship with us.

**Song 1 –**

### **PRAYER**

### **FIRST TIME GUESTS**

If this is your first time joining with us today, we want to say welcome.

We are so glad that you're here with us.

I'd like to encourage you to do a couple things...

- 1) Visit **JoyBaptist.Church/Connect** to fill out a Connection Card  
(It's 4 simple questions).
- 2) If you're watching on Facebook, type the word "**NEW**" in the comment section below so that I can recognize you and personally express my gratitude to you.
- 3) Text the word **JOYFUL** to the number **84576** to stay in know about all things Joy.

## **FACEBOOK**

Let me encourage everyone to hit the like and the share buttons on Facebook and be sure to participate in the comment section as well.

## **SONG 2 –**

## **OFFERING**

You can also give safely through our website at **JoyBaptist.Church/give** or you can use the link that is in this Facebook post.

You can also text any amount to **276.285.5502**

We greatly appreciate your faithfulness and your generosity.

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## **A CLEAR TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD – PART 2**

### **MESSAGE**

Read **Acts 26:19-31**

If you're in the habit of marking things in the Word of God, I want to draw your attention back to two statements that are made in the passage that we just read:

Verse **22** where the Bible says, “...*saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.*”

Verse **31** where the Bible says, “...*This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.*”

This morning, I'd like to consider the third powerful principle to radically transform our life, and that principle is this: **A CLEAR TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD – PART 2.**

We're finding that the result of the first three practical principles that will radically transform our life result in a changed life.

As a reminder, here are our four principles ...

- 1) A CONFESSION OF PERSONAL NEED**
- 2) A COMMITMENT TO PLEASE THE FATHER**
- 3) A COMPASSIONATE HEART FOR OTHERS**
- 4) A CLEAR TESTIMONY FOR THE LORD**

We started to look at this one this morning.

Paul was given an opportunity to give a **DEFENSE**, but the reality is that everyone that was there that day was there for one reason –

they wanted to **DISCOVER**, and they wanted to **DIG UP AS MUCH DIRT AS THEY COULD** on the Apostle Paul.

I made this statement:

In this life, there will always be someone trying to get you, trying to dig up dirt on you, and trying to bring out the worst in you.

We need to recognize them for what they are – distractions designed to **DISCOURAGE** you, to **DEFEAT** you, and to **DESTROY** you.

**DON'T LET THEM.**

Let the work that God is doing on the inside of you shine through you, don't let who you use to resurface.

How did Paul keep a clear testimony when it seem like everyone was against him and nothing seemed to be working out in his favor?

A) He did not develop the mindset of a **VICTIM**; he was determined to have the mindset of a **VICTOR**.

He did not live like a **DEFEATED** person; he lived like a **DELIVERED** person.

In spite of everything that was a part of Paul's life so far, Paul was a **DIFFERENT** man, he was a **CHANGED** man, he was a **BETTER** man.

We found that Paul could have seen himself as a victim of both his **PAST CONDITIONS** and his **PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES**.

We considered the first one this morning and found that his past conditions included his **RELIGION** and his past **DECISIONS**.

**AND THAT'S REALLY WHERE WE PICK BACK UP THIS EVENING**

1) He did not develop the mindset of a **VICTIM**; he was determined to have the mindset of a **VICTOR**.

A) Paul could have seen himself as a victim of his **PAST CONDITIONS**, but he chose not to.

(1) Paul chose not to remain a victim of his **RELIGION**.

(2) Paul chose not to remain a victim of his **DECISIONS**

**Acts 26:9-11** says, *“I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.”*



Paul did not **DENY** who he used to be, but he did not allow himself to be **DEFINED** by who he used to be.

His **ATTITUDE** was different, and his **ACTIONS** were different because his **AUTHORITY** was different.

Paul was under new **OWNERSHIP**, and he was now **OPERATING** under a new set of standards.

The people of God would be better if we stopped living like we used to and if started living like we're supposed to.

**1 Peter 1:13-16** says, *"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of*

*conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”*

B) He could have seen himself as a victim of the **PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES**, but he chose not to.

**Acts 26:21** says, *“For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.”*

Here again, Paul does not **DENY** his present circumstances.

It was true that he had been falsely accused, it is true that he had been denied justice, it is true that he had been scourged by the Roman soldiers, and it is true that he had been kept in prison for two-years.

Paul doesn't deny that any of those things are true, but he did allow those things to **DEVASTATE** him.

That word *devastate* means “to waste; to ravage; to destroy improvements.”

In other words, Paul could have regressed, he could have reverted back to the mindset, to the emotions, and to the responses that he knew and used prior to knowing Christ as his Saviour, but he chose not to.

#### A) Paul chose not to **THROW A PITY PARTY**

This is often referred to as the “Woe-is-me” syndrome, and we all have been and are guilty of it.

We’re so busy focusing on what we deem to be bad and wrong (and indeed they may be.

After all, bad things do happen in this life), that we can’t see what God has done and what God is doing. In the Christian life, **PRESSURE** and **PROBLEMS** generally precedes the **POWER OF GOD** and **PROGRESS**.

Not everything in your life is bad and not everything is falling apart.

Yes, it may be a difficult season, but God is working to do something incredible.

B) Paul chose not to play the **BLAME GAME** and **CULTIVATE A ROOT OF BITTERNESS**

Paul could have blamed a lot of people for why he was where he was.

He could have blamed the Jews, he could have blamed Lysius, he could have blamed Festus, he could have blamed God, but he chose not to do any of that.

Why?

Because Paul knew that resentment and bitterness toward others would not result in the furtherance of God's plan.

**Hebrews 12:14-15** says, *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man*

*shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”*

You’re going to have a hard time showing the love of Jesus to someone that you blame for your problems.

As a matter of fact, a root of bitterness will only produce within you the desire to give up.

Look! Bad things are going to happen.

Trials and troubles are going to be a part of your life.

There just isn’t any way around it.

**1 Peter 4:12-14** says, *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also*

*with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.”*

**Job 23:10-12** says, *“But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.”*

What you need to remember is that when problems come and when people mistreat you the promise of victory that God has given you is just as good today as it was when He gave it.

Don't shut down and don't respond sinfully just because things get stirred up.

Whatever it is, it did not surprise God and it does not allude the sovereignty of God.

2) He did not let **DISTRACTIONS** prevent him from his **DUTY**

**Acts 26:19-20** says, *“Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.”*

**Acts 26:22** says, *“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.”*

Paul could have stood in front of King Agrippa and **COMPLAINED** about his level of comfort, but he didn't.

Paul could have stood in front of King Agrippa and **CRIED** about how his circumstances just weren't fair, but he didn't.

Paul chose to stand before King Agrippa and everyone else and he boldly proclaimed Christ and the change that Christ could make in their life as well.

Instead of shedding tears for some convenience or comfort, Paul shed tears because people didn't know Jesus.

I wonder, where are the tears of the people of God today for the lost.

Paul was so burdened for others that he didn't have time to be distracted with anything that didn't further the spread of the gospel.

By the way, Paul was just as burden in his day about the fact that more people weren't as burdened for souls as he was.



**Romans 15:14-16** says, *“And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.”*

Why aren't more tears shed on the altar for the lost around us and why aren't more people taking the gospel to the lost around us.

I'll tell you why:

we're more concerned about our own comfort in this world than we are the countless numbers of souls that will spend an eternity without Christ.

We are to be **PRAYING** for people to be saved and we should be **PERSUADING** people to be saved.

We must not allow ourselves to become distracted with things that really won't matter for all of eternity.

### 3) He did not let his **FRUSTRATIONS** trigger a **FLESHLY RESPONSE**

**Acts 26:24-25** says, *“And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.”*

How many of us like to be interrupted?

How many of us like to be called a “mad person”?

None of us do, but how would we have responded?

Paul tells Timothy that we are to “*Flee youthful lusts...*” and we are to “*...follow after righteousness...*”

Paul was **AGGRESSIVE** about souls and he was **AFFECTIONATE** about souls and he strove not to get **AGITATED** with souls.

Now, that might sound strange, but do people ever agitate you?

How we respond to those frustrating circumstances and even frustrating people may be the very cause of others seeing a difference in us and being persuaded to become a Christian, to put their faith in Jesus Christ.

The Devil wants you acting in your flesh because your flesh overshadows your faith.

#### 4) He did not let his **FEAR** keep him from **FUNCTIONING**

**Acts 26:22** says, “*Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to*

*small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.”*

Paul had no idea what tomorrow held for him, but he was determined not to let his fear **DEFEAT** him.