

Discipline of Delay

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Acts 24:1-27.

B. Acts is the character of normal Christianity.

II. Characters.

III. Charges against Paul.

A. He was called a trouble rouser. The Romans did not tolerate civil disorder.

B. He was called a religious radical.

C. He was called a sacrilegious fanatic.

IV. Paul's answers.

A. He had no time to start a riot, made no effort to do so and no proof has been offered.

B. He pleads guilty to the second charge, but he made it clear that the sect he was a part of accepts the Law and the Prophets as the Sanhedrin, that it had a hope in the resurrection as did the Jews, and that it stressed obedience to the Roman law.

C. He was not profaning the temple but fulfilling it. The people accusing him were not even there.

V. God's discipline of delay.

A. When we disobey God and are forgiven later, that forgiveness does not change the pathway that we have chosen. Forgiveness restores the power, joy, and gladness of that path though.

B. What Paul shared with the governor.

1. What is wrong with the world is that people are not behaving as they should in righteousness.

2. God has made provision for us in Jesus Christ for self-control.

3. Judgment will come.

C. The governor went away because he had a double eye—he wanted something from God but also money from men.

D. God's delays are always a time of learning—Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, etc were all written after this. (Philippians 4:11)

1. God's delays are not His final answer.

2. God has given you the prisons of your life so that you might learn that you can do all things through Him who strengthens you.

Application questions:

1. What poor choice did Paul make and how was he disciplined?

2. What kind of restoration can we look for if we sin and ask for forgiveness afterward? Can we expect all consequences to leave us?

3. How has God "delayed" in your life? What hope can you gain from Paul's experience in this? Explain.
