

### Almost Persuaded

*"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."*

(from notes on a sermon by Pastor Charles Surret)

You must be completely persuaded that Jesus is all He claimed to be, and then you must love and serve Him.

King Agrippa was

I. Acquainted with religion - Acts 26:1-3 <sup>1</sup>"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: <sup>2</sup>I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: <sup>3</sup>Especially *because I know* thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently."

- A. King Agrippa understood the customs and laws of the Jews.
- B. King Agrippa understood religion.
- C. King Agrippa was a religious man, but this was not enough to get him to heaven.

The Bible has several other examples of religious men.

1. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who came to Jesus by night to talk to Him. Nicodemus knew the law. He was a very religious man. But Jesus told him, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (See John 3:3)

2. Saul of Tarsus was a very religious man before he was saved. (Philippians 3:6) He was very zealous for God and blameless concerning keeping the Jewish law. Others could not find fault in him.

3. The rich young ruler who came to Jesus and asked what good thing he could do that he might have eternal life was a very religious man. He told Jesus that he had kept the commandments from his youth up. But Jesus showed him that he did not love God with all his heart and he did not love his neighbor as himself. He had tried to keep the commandments; he had tried to be good, but that was not good enough. None of us can keep the law.

All these individuals had religion, but none of them had Jesus. Religion was not good enough.

II. Acquainted with Paul's testimony - Acts 26:9-18, <sup>9</sup>"I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>10</sup>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*. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, <sup>13</sup>At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. <sup>14</sup>And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is hard* for thee to kick against the pricks." <sup>15</sup>And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. <sup>16</sup>But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this

purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; " <sup>17</sup>"Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, <sup>18</sup>To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

A. It is not clear if King Agrippa had heard Paul's testimony before this, but now he was acquainted with Paul's testimony for Paul explained it to him clearly.

B. Paul knew when and where he was saved.

C. Though we may not remember the exact date and time, we should be able to remember when and where we were saved.

D. Paul divided his testimony into five parts -

1. v.13 I saw
2. v. 14 I heard
3. v.15. I said
4. v.16 I witnessed
5. v.20 I continued

First Paul saw the Lord. Then he heard the word of the Lord. Then he confessed Christ with his mouth. Then he witnessed to others about Christ. Then he continued in the way of the Lord.

E. No one can get saved without hearing and believing the word of God. The word of God has more authority than all the degrees conferred by man. We understand about God through faith. Hebrews 11:3 says, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

III. Acquainted with the Gospel - Acts 26:20-23, "<sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*. <sup>22</sup>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: <sup>23</sup>That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

A. Paul based his witness on the authority of Scripture.

B. The Bible is the ultimate authority.

When Paul told the Jewish people about Jesus, he used Moses and the prophets. That was the Bible that Paul had during his day. And the Jewish people respected Moses and the prophets. It was Moses and the prophets who predicted that Christ would come and would suffer for the sins of all mankind and would rise again from the dead so that He might bring salvation to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.

IV. Acquainted with the Gospel - Acts 26:27,28 <sup>27</sup>“King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. <sup>28</sup>Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”

- A. King Agrippa knew the Scriptures.
- B. King Agrippa believed that what the Scriptures said was true.
- C. But King Agrippa would not get saved.

Knowing facts and being sincere and thoughtful are not enough. King Agrippa was almost persuaded, but he was lost.

Many people are like that today. They hear the word of God; they read the word of God; they believe that the word of God is true; they understand the Gospel message; they believe that Jesus is the way to salvation, but they will not get saved. They are almost persuaded, but they are lost.