

## ARE YOU “ALMOST” OR “ALTOGETHER”?

### INTRODUCTION

1. Text: Acts 26:22-29 (NKJV).
2. Key Phrase: “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”
3. A lot of people today don’t get the point, and have no idea what it means to be a Christian.
4. So I want us to talk about what it means to be a Christian.
5. Lead Statement: Let us examine...

### I. CHRISTIAN — THE “DIVINE” WORD

- A. There are many names, or descriptors, for Christians in the Bible (Acts 9:1, 2, 13, 14, 17; 5:14)
- B. But, Agrippa used the word “Christian.” (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16).
- C. Look for a moment at the first place this term is used (Acts 11:26).
  1. The term itself means “one who belongs to Christ.”
  2. Notice who these “Christians” were.
    - a. They were Jews and Gentiles.
    - b. The Gospel is open to all; not certain races, classes, or social sets.
    - c. All may become Christians.
  3. Notice how they became “Christians” (v. 21).
    - a. They “believed” and “turned.”
    - b. “Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).
    - c. They turned from idols; they turned from sin; they turned from their unholy ways.
    - d. All of this by the grace of God (v. 23; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11)

### II. CHRISTIAN — THE “DESPISED” WORD

- A. John 16:33 – “In the world you will have tribulation...”; “...you will be hated by all nations because of my name” (Matthew 24:9).
- B. 1 Peter 4:16 – “...if anyone suffers as a Christian...”
- C. I do not want you to be persuaded blindly — Christianity will not remove all your problems, it may create some (2 Timothy 3:12; Matthew 10:34; Acts 9:16)
- D. You see, a Christian is a person who has:
  1. Experienced a Change – “they believed and turned.”
  2. Made a Choice – “almost you persuade me to be a Christian.”
  3. Accepted a Challenge – “if any man suffer as a Christian.”

### III. PERSUADE — THE “DECISIVE” WORD

- A. If I can persuade you to become a Christian through faith in Jesus Christ, I have accomplished the mission of this message.
- B. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not forced upon people (2 Corinthians 4:2; 5:11)
- C. The gospel appeals to the whole of man.
  1. You have a mind to think with, and emotions to feel with, and a will to decide with.
  2. I am going to come at your will through your heart and your mind.
- D. Paul did this.
  1. Paul preached Facts — death, burial, resurrection — Gospel facts that go to the mind (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
  2. Paul appealed to the Emotions (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:11).
  3. Paul, by the Gospel, appealed to the Will (2 Thessalonians 2:14)

#### IV. ALMOST — THE “DANGEROUS” WORD

- A. Let’s describe the “almost” person.
  - 1. Festus is a picture of the “almost” person.
  - 2. To some degree, Agrippa, was an “almost” Christian.
- B. What is an “altogether” person?
  - 1. An altogether Christian is what Paul taught (v. 18).
  - 2. An altogether Christian becomes what Paul became (v. 29).
  - 3. Do you have that? Or, are you almost?
- C. “Almost” is the dangerous word because almost gets you so close, but it doesn’t get you in.

#### CONCLUSION

- 1. Now friend, I want to persuade you.
  - a. I want to come into your mind with facts; I want to touch your heart; and, if I can, I want to grab hold of your will.
  - b. I want you to say tonight, I will give my heart and life to Jesus Christ.
- 2. “Almost” is a dangerous word; “persuade” is the decisive word.
- 3. Will you commit to Jesus Christ right now?
- 4. Appeal.