

## “Almost”

In the book of Acts we read how Apostle Paul after having preached this Gospel of Jesus Christ through out Asia desired to go to Jerusalem to visit the other Apostles and to testify of all the mighty works that God performed in His ministry to the Gentiles.

In Jerusalem he went to the temple to worship and while there certain Jews which were from Asia saw Paul in the temple and stirred the people up against him and they forcibly took him and cried out; men of Israel, help! This is the man, that teaches all men everywhere against the people and the law and this place and then they lied and said Paul was polluting their holy place; the temple.

And as they went about to kill him, (the church, they hated Paul and desired to slay him). The Roman captain of Jerusalem with his soldiers ran into the crowd and rescued Paul as they were beating him.

The Roman captain bound Paul with two chains—and took him into custody. The next day Paul was brought before the High Priest, Ananias, and spoke to the Jewish Council and said, Because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called into question this day. And as Paul confessed Jesus to them once again, they desired to kill him and when the Roman captain saw they would bitterly pull Paul to pieces he sent his soldiers in and forcibly rescued Paul from among the Jews.

Then the Roman captain told the Jewish Council that he was taking Paul to Felix the Roman Governor at Herod’s Judgement Hall and if they wanted to accuse Paul they must appear before Felix.

After five days Ananias, the High Priest and the Elders went to Felix to once again accuse Paul and have him put to death. And Paul defended himself before Felix concerning his teachings of Jesus and of the Resurrection of the dead—and Felix would not turn Paul over to the Jews--- but after two years of imprisonment Porcius Festus became Governor of Jerusalem in Felix’s place--and Felix desiring to please the Jews left Paul, bound in prison. Then the High Priest informed Festus concerning Paul, and desired Festus to send Paul back to Jerusalem for trial all the time secretly they were laying in wait along the way to catch Paul and kill him.

But Festus refused to release Paul. Then there came a King named Agrippa to visit Festus and Festus told him of Paul and how the Jews went about to slay him and Agrippa desired to speak with Paul.

**Acts 26: 1-28** Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 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:

3 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.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5 Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:

7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?

9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 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.

11 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.

12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

13 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.

14 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.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 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;  
17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,  
18 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.  
19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:  
20 But showed 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.  
21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.  
22 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:  
23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.  
24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.  
25 But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.  
26 For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.  
27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.  
28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, **“Almost thou persuaded me to be a Christian”**

**Acts 26: 29** And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.

**“Almost is not enough!!!!** It takes more than believing, it takes obedience. I thank God for you that are here tonight, that you have chosen Jesus as your personal Savior; that are saved by the blood of the Lamb. That have chosen

Christianity----“*But woe* unto them that would say—to the church: Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian!

How terribly sad, how horribly tragic for a person to :

\*Only almost accept Jesus as their Savior

\*Only almost to come to repentance

\*Only almost to have been baptized in Jesus’ wonderful name

\*Only almost to have received the Holy Ghost

\*Only almost to have spoken in other tongues as the spirit of God gives the utterance

\*Only almost to have had their name written down in the Lamb’s Book of Life

But instead they have chosen:

*The pleasure of sin*

*The lust of the eye*

*The lust of the flesh*

*They have chosen to indulge themselves in evil*

*To gratify the carnal man.*

*They have become a slave to their own body*

*They have become a servant of sin*

Almost, almost. My God almost to have escaped a devils hell! But those that die leaving this world unsaved

Almost to have received Eternal life!

But now they have chosen the *wrong* way, the *wrong* door, the *wrong* gate. For they have chosen the *wide gate*, the *easy way* that leads to *death*.

*Almost they chose the Straight Gate, the Narrow Way, the Lord’s Path that would have lead them to Life!!*

But now Hell has enlarged itself. Hell has opened its mouth wide to receive them into eternal living death. To suffer day and night forever and forever. Where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, where the soul dieth not and the fire is never quenched!!

But now forever to eternally regret, they only , almost became a Christian. God’s word says: Therefore will I number them to the sword and they shall bow down to the slaughter, because when I called they did not answer, when

I spoke they did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes and did choose that wherein I delighted not,

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold my servants shall eat, but they shall be hungry. Behold my servants shall drink, but they shall be thirsty.

My servants shall rejoice, but they shall be ashamed. Behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but they shall cry for sorrow of heart and shall howl for vexation of spirit. For the Lord shall slay them.

Now if they could go back, they would choose differently. They would run to an altar of repentance.

They would plead with the Pastor to baptize them in the Holy name of Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins! They would tarry long at the altar, praying, crying unto God for the precious gift of the Holy Ghost. Now they would hunger and thirst after righteousness that they might be filled. Filled with God's Holy Spirit.

But there is no coming back from Hell. There is no second chances in Hell! Only we who are alive can change our minds from almost becoming a Christian to say, I will obey God's word; God's plan of salvation; I will be saved by the Blood of Jesus. I will make Heaven my Home! I will hear him say, well done my good and faithful servant! Enter into the rest of the Lord!

"I will be a Christian" It is our choice-----Heaven or Hell