

Almost, But Lost

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

Acts 26:27-28, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

King Agrippa was like a lot of people, from his day unto our day. He almost believed enough to confess Jesus as Lord. Why didn't he do it? For one thing he knew that to do so would cost him and he didn't want to pay the price. Although a puppet king, controlled by Rome, he was still a king. He knew that if he became a Christian he would not be allowed to continue as king. That was a price that he was not willing to pay.

A lot of people would confess Jesus as Lord if they could still live like they do now. They are afraid that they would have to give up the things that they like to do and miss the pleasures that they enjoy. They know that some of the things that they like are wrong, but still they hang on to them. Salvation, eternal life, and heaven sounds so good to them but these things seem so far away while they like the pleasures of this world here and now. Like the rich man that came to Jesus they are interested but when faced with the decision they go away. When it comes down to it the world just means too much to them.

Can this be what makes some to become hypocrites? They want to be followers of Jesus, but they also want the things of the world that they like, so they try to follow both ways. So instead of having the best of both, they lose both and are miserable. In Matthew 6:24 Jesus said that no man could serve two masters. The Lord will have all of our love, faith, and obedience, or he will have none of them. God is master of our life, all of our life, or he is not at all. To be almost saved is to be totally lost.

God will not accept part of our love and faith. He is possessive of his children and as he loves us totally he demands that we love him the same way. The same for faith, we either trust him without reservation, or we don't have faith in him at all. In this life we deal with relationships that give and take. If one falls through a person moves on to another. For many that works in this world, but it will not work in a relationship with God. To believe in him and to serve him is to be completely committed to him.

King Agrippa knew the law, prophets, and customs of the Jews. Paul said that he knew that Agrippa believed the prophets which meant that he believed what they said about the coming Savior. He believed but not enough that he was going to give up his place in the government, along with the wealth and power that it brought. Nevertheless among the chief rul-

ers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John 12:42-43. So many people have been like this king, believing but not willing to make the commitment to Christ and be saved.

People then, and now, have went through the motions of worshipping God. They may go to services, sing, and give an offering, but still not give the Lord their heart and love. Some may compare themselves to others and think that they have not done as bad in life. While that may be true, the one who has lived a sinful life may have repented, came to Jesus and been saved. But the person who had done few bad things in life may have never believed that he was a sinner in need of salvation. If he never truly repented he would be like the Pharisee in Luke 18. Leaving the house of God with the same sins that he came with.

A person can't think that he is better than someone else because of that person's life. We, each of us, have had our sins and without the forgiveness of the Lord we would be lost. It is time that men stopped looking at others and looked at themselves. God will look at the other person and judge. If we look to the Lord and confess our sins and faults instead of thinking of how someone else is living, we'll be doing better.

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MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL—WRONG!

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE HEARD THIS SAID AND ACCEPTED IT WITH NO FURTHER THOUGHT? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE SEEN IT HANGING AS A MOTTO ON A WALL OR OVERHEARD A GRANDFATHER INTONE IT SAGELY TO SOME YOUNGSTER? HUNDREDS UPON HUNDREDS OF TIMES—AFTER ALL, IT'S STRAIGHT OUT OF THE BIBLE, RIGHT?! BUT FEW OF US HAVE EVER REALIZED IT'S A BLATANT MISQUOTE!

THIS SAYING IS FOUND IN ONE PLACE, AND IN ONE PLACE ONLY, IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE! PAUL THE APOSTLE WROTE IT IN HIS FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY THE YOUNG EVANGELIST WHO WAS A DEVOTED FOLLOWER OF PAUL. IT CAN BE FOUND IN I TIMOTHY, CHAPTER 6, VERSE 10. PAUL WROTE, FROM LAODICEA, THE FOLLOWING "...THE LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL..."

IN OTHER WORDS, PAUL WAS ADVISING TIMOTHY THAT NOT MONEY ITSELF, BUT MAN'S INNATE GREED OR DESIRE FOR IT, WAS THE REAL TROUBLE-MAKER, THE REAL "ROOT OF ALL EVIL"—HIS FURTHER ADVICE WAS TO FOREGO THE PURSUIT OF GREAT WEALTH AND LUXURY AND RATHER BEND ALL EFFORTS TOWARDS A SEARCH FOR WISDOM AND A PURER LIFE DEDICATED TO GOD.

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