A. The arrest & trial of the apostle Paul is recorded in Acts chapters 24-26.

1. He was arrested in Jerusalem on the trumped up charges of defiling Temple & inciting a riot.

2. He was then moved to Caesarea & detained by governor Felix for two years.

3. Felix was then replaced by Festus, who offered Paul a trial in Jerusalem, which he refused by making an appeal to Caesar.

4. King Herod Agrippa paid a ceremonial visit to the new governor

   a. Festus told Herod about Paul’s case, & Herod agreed to hear the matter.

Acts 26:26-28 – For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.” 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”

[Both men, Felix & Agrippa, had an opportunity to act now in the welfare of their souls, but they used the opportunity to pretend that they might act later.

The point is that when it comes to our duty to God, later will never do; we must act now!]

I. ONE DAY EVERYONE WILL BELIEVE THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

NOW NOT LATER (2 Cor 6:1-2)
A. **There** are several reasons why people will not believe Him now.

1. They want to pretend they’re not accountable to Him so they can live unchallenged.

2. They think He ought to show them more proof of His existence & His authority (cf. Jn 20:25).

3. They just refuse to investigate the proof God has already given in His word.

B. **The** Scripture is the only body of evidence God ever intended to give us to prove His Son.

1. The NT is an accurate historical record written by eyewitnesses guided by the Holy Spirit – the evidence would stand up in any just court.

2. The day is coming when everyone will believe the words written about Jesus in this book.

3. Everyone will realize they were accountable to Him in their lives, & that they should have believed Him when they had the opportunity.

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**John 20:30-31** – And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, & that believing you may have life in His name.

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**Matt 25:31-32** – When the Son of Man comes in His glory, & all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations [ethnos – races] will be gathered before Him, & He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

**Matt 28:19** – Go THEREFORE & make disciples of all the nations [ethnos – races], baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit,

[Felix & Agrippa should have said, “There is no time like the present. We should believe Him now!”

The choice is the same for us; we may believe Him now from what God has reveled to the apostles, or we will believe Him later when the final evidence is given before He sends us away.]
II. ONE DAY EVERYONE WILL **CONFESS** THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

A. **We** think the number of people converted on Pentecost was large.

1. But there were about 100,000 Jews in the city on that day (Josephus).

   a. The number of disciples “multiplied” (6:7), but there were always more who **did NOT** confess Him than who did.

   b. And it has been that way ever since that glorious day of remembrance.

B. **Paul** tells us that God gave Jesus an exalted place & a name above every name.

1. And why did He do this for His Son?

2. In 1986 at Pittsburg, Texas – Sister Strickland came to the front to **confess** the truth about Jesus Christ.

   a. She was concerned that at her age, & in her isolation at home, she might not have another opportunity.

[**Felix** & Agrippa should have said, “There is no time like the present. We must **confess** Him **now**!”

**The** choice is the same for us; we may **confess** him **now** “unto salvation” (Rom 10:10), or we will **confess** Him **later** & face the terror of the Lord (2 Cor 5:11).]

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**Phil 2:10-11** – *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, of those in heaven, & of those on earth, & of those under the earth, 11 & *that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord*, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.

**Rom 14:10-11** – For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: “As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, & *every tongue shall confess to God.*” (Isa 43:23).
III. ONE DAY EVERYONE WILL BE BAPTIZED

A. There are four baptisms mentioned in the Bible.


2. Holy Spirit: the Father’s promise to the apostles (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8).

3. Fire: a metaphorical description of what will happen to those who are lost (Matt 3:12).
   a. Hell is a lake of fire (Rev 20:14-15).
   b. “Baptize” means to dip, plunge, submerge, overwhelm with some element – a lake of fire.

   a. Many will be baptized in the right element, but NOT for the right reason.
   b. Many will be baptized for the right reason, but NOT in the right element.

IV. ONE DAY EVERYONE WILL ASSEMBLE WITH THE SAINTS

A. How did the streets appear to you when you left home?

1. In married student housing, the streets were busy during the week, but quiet on Sunday.

2. At FC, students would sit in for one another during the morning chapel program.

[We may be baptized now, while we are free to choose the reason & the element, or we will be baptized later, when the baptism of fire goes into effect for all eternity.]
B. But there is an assembly scheduled that everyone will attend.

2 Thess 2:1-2 – Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ & our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

1. Paul presents one half the great assembly.

2. Jesus described the other half…in Matthew chapter 25 – we read it earlier.

Matt 25:31-32 – When the Son of Man comes in His glory, & all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him [saints & sinners], & He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

3. There will be a day & hour when every person must leave their homes, recliners, garages, lake homes, golf courses, work, hobbies & even their graves (Jn 5:28-29)—to assemble in the presence of Christ with His saints.

4. There will be a day & hour when forsaking the assembling of the saints will no longer be tolerated by God.

C. When England’s Queen issues a formal written invitation, it includes: “No excuses accepted”.

1. This will be true when the last trumpet sounds at the last hour on the last day (1 Thess 4:16)

2. And we have an assembly now, to prepare us for that great day (Heb 10:25).

[We may assemble with the saints now, or we can wait & assemble with them later when we will be forced to view them from a distance – over at the right hand of Christ.]

V. ONE DAY EVERYONE WILL BE JUDGED
A. **When** we talk about death & taxes being universal, we leave something out.

1. God’s final judgment of all mankind (*Heb 9:27*).

2. We can be preparing for that day by centering our thoughts on the words of Christ (*Jn 12:48*).
   
   a. Pop quizzes are not like tests, but it gave us a good idea where we stand.

   b. Personal introspection & evaluation by means of God’s word can effectively do the same thing for us (*2 Cor 13:5*).

   [**Our** choice is the same given to Felix & Agrippa—we may **judge** ourselves **now** by God’s rule, or we can wait until **later** when we stand before the **judgment** seat of Christ.]

B. **Today**, we can make a choice about these same matters.

1. The choice is not *if* but *when*!

2. The choice is between *later* & *now*!

3. The choice is between *eternal regret* & *everlasting life*—salvation!

   “**Now is the day of salvation**”

   Will you take advantage of it this hour?

CLOSING