

Almost But Lost

*“Then Agrippa said to Paul,
‘Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?’”
Acts 26:28 NIV*

Too many people in life have the uncanny ability to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. During the Civil War in the United States, President Lincoln had one officer who had a wonderful way of preparing his troops for war and was admired for making his soldiers into a fine army any man would be proud to lead into battle.

However the officer lacked the courage to attack the enemy when called on to do so. He would hedge with arguments like, “The enemy out mans us 5 to 1.” Sadly his excuses for not engaging the enemy proved wrong in the end and Lincoln had to remove him from his place at the head of a strong army.

The scene of Paul witnessing to Agrippa is an example of how a person can come very close to conversion and yet miss the mark. How sad it is to witness a person struggling with the Good News that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).

What makes the promising situation tragic is that Agrippa

was in the presence of the greatest witness to Christ the world has ever seen.

God holds us accountable for what we have known of Him and of His Son Jesus Christ. The greater our knowledge the greater is our accountability. Jesus spoke of this in Luke 12: 47-48 NIV where He said,

“The servant who knows the master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded...”

Today we have witnessed the decline of the Christian movement in the western world. It seems our wealth has ruined us regarding spiritual things. We have government programs to help shield us from otherwise harsh realities financially. Canada has universal healthcare.

Everyone who is ill can find the needed help by showing the doctor’s office—or the

Emergency department of a hospital—our health card, and we have access to the best medical care this world knows. From the cradle to the grave we have social assistance. Who needs the Lord in such a society?

Western people have ready access to the Gospel through radio, television, books and magazines. There are many evangelical churches and pastors who would love to sit down with individuals and explain what Paul told Agrippa, yet people flock to arenas for hockey and stadiums for football. As many as 80,000 fans crowd into a stadium for athletic events.

Sadly we do not have such great crowds at services proclaiming the Gospel. May the Lord wake up the spiritually privileged but impenitent world around us so that the Gospel may again become the great transforming power it has been in other generations.

© Rumford Ministries
www.RumfordMinistries.org
Some rights reserved