A MATTER OF INCHES

**Acts 26: 22-28**

# **Introduction**

* 1. Many times is sporting events the final outcome is determined “by inches.”
     1. Football, Baseball, and Horse Shoes.
  2. Spiritually we cannot miss by inches, we must not make that mistake!

1. **Spiritually We Are Driven By A Variety Of Things.**
   1. Many are at different levels spiritually
   2. Although in some things we have options on how to get to the end, spiritually we are told by the Apostle Paul that we are to have the mindset as a runner in a race!
      1. (Heb 12:1) ***“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,”***
      2. (1Cor 9:24) ***Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.”***
      3. This morning we are going to look at examples of men, and their challenges to reach the goal of heaven.

## **Among Those Who “Missed By Inches” would be Felix And King Agrippa!**

* 1. (Acts 24: 22-25) **Felix (governor)**
  2. (Acts 26: 22-29)  **Agrippa (king)**
  3. These men could not overcome the pressure of their positions. These men although hearing the truth, **gave up more than they could have ever imagined**. Even though they were so close to eternal salvation, they may as well have missed by a mile.

1. **Examples of Those Who Seemingly Had Overcome the “Matter Of Inches.”**
   1. **Judas Iscariot** who betrayed Christ. (Matt. 26: 14-16; Matt 27: 1-5).
      1. He allowed Satan to grab hold and take everything away from him. For a mere thirty pieces of silver!
      2. This is what we give up to ***“enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”***
   2. In (Colossians 4:10-14) Paul is at the end of his address to the Colossians, and as he does in many other books ends the letter with salutations. Naming those who are working with him in the Lord’s vineyard.
      1. (Col 4:14) ***“Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.”*** Many believe that because not much is said about Demas here is because he was already beginning to show his true character, and that the Apostle Paul did not have full confidence in him.
   3. (2Tim 4:9-10) We see later (During Paul’s second Roman imprisonment, when troubles multiplied and danger was imminent Paul writes:
      1. ***“Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica.***
   4. (1John 2:15-17) ***“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”*** 
      1. Don’t ever give up, and go back to the world!

## **Examples of Those Who Almost “Missed By Inches”**

* 1. **The Philippian Jailor** - (Acts 16: 20-33) **Read**
  2. This man almost lost his chance to everlasting life and happiness.
  3. Example of your life as a Storm.
     1. People think that God’s people have it all together, (Not always true).
     2. As Jesus calmed the storm in the boat with His apostles he does the same for our lives.
     3. (107 Psalm 26-30) **Read**
  4. **Zacchaeus** - (Luke 19: 1-10) **Read** 
     1. One way Zacchaeus overcame his lack of inches was by *running* and *climbing* the sycamore tree.
     2. He overcame the possible ridicule of the crowd for climbing the tree.
  5. Let’s look again at his position in (vs. 2), he was chief among publicans!
     1. Jericho was close to the fords of the Jordan and would therefore be a perfect seat for officer of such a superior rank to preside over the collection of revenues. Tax collectors were hated primarily because of two things. They were collecting for a foreign power, (which would have been Rome), and they also had to add for their own salaries.
  6. Zacchaeus had great wealth (vs. 2 “rich”) because of his power and position, and would have had very influential friends and acquaintances because of this position!
     1. He was a Jew by name and so a son of Abraham (vs.9).
  7. Zacchaeus did not care what anyone thought or would think. He did what was necessary to get to Jesus.

a. We can see many things by the example of Zacchaeus, “Rich, Lost, and Saved.”

1. **Invitation**
   1. Where are you in your spiritual growth, and with your relationship with God?
      1. Are you trying to just get by, “By Inches”?