

Title: **Righteousness, Self-Control, and the Coming Judgment**
Text: **Acts 24:1-27**
Date: **July 5, 2026**

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Big Idea

Paul reasons with Felix and Drusilla about righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment all with the aim of leading them to faith in Christ Jesus. God would reason similarly with us. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts . . . but believe!

When we look at these topics as they're addressed elsewhere by Paul, we can see that there is both a negative and a positive side to them. They cut in two directions. They form the essence of what we might call both the bad news and the good news of the Christian message. The gospel, after all, includes both an indictment of everyone everywhere for our sin *and* an invitation for us to turn from that sin and find forgiveness and salvation in the person and work of Jesus. It's a message that's both startlingly bad at its beginning and unimaginably good by its end.

1. The Bad News

Righteousness - The Ten Commandments as they were given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai were not some arbitrary list of rules chosen at random by God to enforce upon us. They are the very transcription of his character. To be righteous, then, is to be like the one in whose image we've been made, through and through. And here's what Paul says all over his letters: No one gets there. No, not one (Rom. 3:9-12).

Self-Control - *"A sure sign that I am in the presence of God is this lack of vagueness about sin. I realize I am a sinner not in a general sense but in a particular sense. I understand that there is a concentration of sin in a specific area of my life. It's easy to say, 'Oh, yes, I know I am a sinner.' But I can't get away with a vague statement like this when I am with God."* - Oswald Chambers

Coming Judgment - Paul is saying this judge will one day be judged: "As I've stood before you, you will stand before him. You may conduct

yourself like a king. But you will answer to the 'King of kings' (i.e. Rev. 19:16) soon enough!"

2. The Good News

Righteousness - He gets my sin with all its bitter consequence. And I get his righteousness with all its glorious reward—by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Rom. 3:21-25).

Self-Control - With justification God gets the legal stuff out of the way, all so he can come into our lives by the Holy Spirit and begin to renovate our nature. Grace doesn't just cover us, it changes us. We're not perfect, but we're not the same either (Gal. 5:22-23).

Coming Judgment - The cross is the judgement day come early for Jesus so that the judgment day can go well for me. There is no double jeopardy in the kingdom of heaven. If God has already dealt with your sin in Jesus on the cross, he's not going to come looking to deal with it again in you.

3. The Pivotal Choice

"Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today,' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts . . .'" (Heb. 3:12-15).



Reflection Questions

- Read Gal. 5:22-23. Which "fruit of the Spirit" would you say you are struggling most with lately and why? How might a growing faith in the gospel along with the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life help you to produce more of this fruit do you think?
- Is there any way that you relate to Felix in our text? Do you feel like God might be convicting you of things even now that you are not acting on? Is there anything you are putting off for tomorrow that you really should deal with today?

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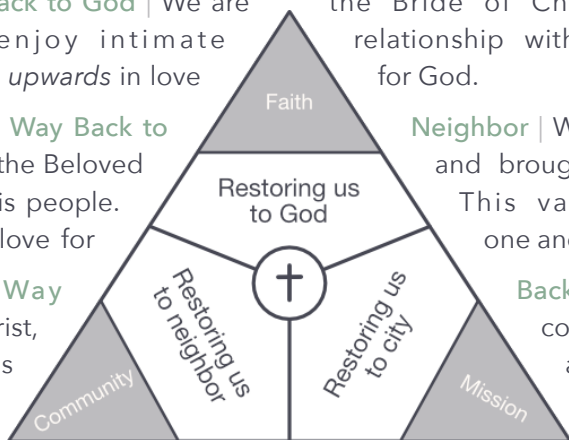
Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are the Bride of Christ, created and redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for one another.

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his ambassadors. This value presses our church *outwards* in love for the unbelieving.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Nicaragua Short Term Missions Trip Team Sharing - TODAY!

We'd love for you to join us after the service today from 12:30-1:30pm in the cafeteria during our All Church Hangout as our Nicaragua Mission Team (The Weber family, The D'Angelo family, Runo, Dominic and Joey) shares highlights from this year's trip.

You'll learn more about the ministry, see the impact it's having, and hear heartfelt reflections and unforgettable experiences from our team members. Whether you supported the trip through prayer, giving, or are simply curious to learn more, we hope you'll come be encouraged by what God is doing in Nicaragua! There will also be a slideshow, a time for Q&A, and some light refreshments (no lunch provided) as well!

Please reach out to Joey at joey@mercyhillchurch.org with any questions.

All Church Hangout - After Service Today!

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

Scan the QR code below for more info and clickable content!

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