

ACTS 24:1-27

Five days later the high priest Ananias went down to Caesarea with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus, and they brought their charges against Paul before the governor.² When Paul was called in, Tertullus presented his case before Felix: "We have enjoyed a long period of peace under you, and your foresight has brought about reforms in this nation.³ Everywhere and in every way, most excellent Felix, we acknowledge this with profound gratitude.⁴ But in order not to weary you further, I would request that you be kind enough to hear us briefly.

⁵ "We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect⁶ and even tried to desecrate the temple; so we seized him.^[7]⁸ By examining him yourself you will be able to learn the truth about all these charges we are bringing against him."

⁹ The other Jews joined in the accusation, asserting that these things were true.

¹⁰ When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: "I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense.¹¹ You can easily verify that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship.¹² My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city.

¹³ And they cannot prove to you the charges they are now making against me.

¹⁴ However, I admit that I worship the God of our ancestors as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets,¹⁵ and I have the same hope in God as these men themselves have, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.¹⁶ So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

¹⁷ "After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings.¹⁸ I was ceremonially clean when they found me in the temple courts doing this. There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance.¹⁹ But there are some Jews from the province of Asia, who ought to be here before you and bring charges if they have anything against me.

²⁰ Or these who are here should state what crime they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin—²¹ unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'"

Acts 24:6-7

Some manuscripts include here:

"...so we seized him, and we would have judged him in accordance with our law.⁷ But the commander Lysias came and took him from us with much violence,⁸ ordering his accusers to come before you."

²² Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the Way, adjourned the proceedings. "When Lysias the commander comes," he said, "I will decide your case." ²³ He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom and permit his friends to take care of his needs.

²⁴ Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ As Paul talked about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you." ²⁶ At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him.

²⁷ When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

| When growing up, who listened to conflicts between siblings or family members
| and decided who was at fault? How did that usually work out for you?

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| What specific charges does Tertullus bring against Paul? How does Paul defend
| himself? What key points does he make in his response?

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| What does Felix's reaction to Paul's defense reveal about his character and
| motivations?

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| How did Paul leverage the misunderstandings of his accusers as an opportunity to
| explain his faith in Jesus?

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| What do you learn about Paul's beliefs stated in verses 14-16? What is his specific
| conviction regarding the Old Testament scriptures (the "Law" and "Prophets")?

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| It appears that Felix was intrigued by his time with Paul but postponed responding
| to the truth. Is there an area of your life where you feel God calling you to respond
| to truth, but you have been putting it off?

DAILY READINGS

1. PSALM 37:1-20
2. ISAIAH 30:8-26
3. 2 CHRONICLES 24:15-22
4. LUKE 18:1-14
5. 1 PETER 2:11-25
6. REVELATION 3:7-13
7. ACTS 24:1-27