

CP - 5/219/24

## Acts 24 - Paul's Defense and Felix's Delay

### Sermon Outline

#### 1. Paul's Defense Before Felix (24:1–21)

- The Jews' charges and insults against Paul
  - troublemaker/plague/pest/causes all sorts of trouble
  - Stirs up riots among all the Jews - threat to public law & order (Egyptian from 22)
  - Ringleader of the Nazarenes - leader of a false Jewish-cult/sect; primary person of the Nazarenes - follower of crucified impostor (John 1:46)
  - Tried to profane the temple - Lysias interfered with us following our law
  - They insult Paul, lie about Paul - Luke 6:26, Prov. 22:1; What does the world say about us? (Harrison Butker) - Luke 6:22–23
- Paul's Defense (Luke writing to show that Christians were not bad citizens/threats)
  - From David Peterson (Pillar Commentary):
  - Paul's Piety: He went to Jerusalem to worship, not to stir up crowds (minding his own business) (12)
  - Paul's Accusers' Lack of Reliability: Jewish accusers are not credible (they cannot prove their charges against him) (13)
  - Paul's Confession of Faith: that through the Way, he truly worships the God of the Fathers; Paul serves the God of the OT through believing and following Jesus. - He was not trying to destroy Judaism! (14–16)
  - Paul's Accusers' Problem Was Theological, not Political - there is no legal ground to convict Paul - Witherington: "In a master stroke, Paul has made his accusers witness on his behalf that he had spoken only of theological matters!"

#### 2. Felix's Delay Before Paul (24:22–27)

- Felix "put them off" - "anaballo" - 3rd sing aor mid ind form for "defer, throw or toss up, to put back or put off, to delay" - this action continues moving forward!
- Felix's Person - Josephus and Tacitus tell us:
  - Marcus Antonius Felix, governor of Roman province of Judea from AD 52–59/60
  - Felix was a former slave; probably freed by Emperor Claudius' mother, Antonia
  - His brother, Pallas, was the secretary of the treasury during the reign of Claudius; Felix received his political appointments because of Pallas' friendship w/ Claudius
  - Anarchy and insurrections increased while he was governor; he would respond with brutality and bloodshed, alienating the Jewish population
  - Tacitus: Felix was "a master of cruelty and lust who exercised the powers of a king with the spirit of a slave"

- Three wives: the first was granddaughter of Mark Antony & Cleopatra; third wife was Drusilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12); 16 when married
- He knew about Christianity. - maybe from Drusilla or Caesarean church (Philip)
- He honored Paul's citizenship.

On 24:24–25: - Spencer: "Paul changes back from shrewdly defending his honor as a devout Jew to boldly proclaiming the gospel; in other words, he switches from apologist to prophet."

- Felix's Delay - How did he delay?
  - He put off conviction and only looked for physical comfort and convenience.
  - He put off true riches and only looked for a bribe.
  - He put off being right with God and only looked for the favor of people.
  - He put off believing the gospel and ran out of time.
    - Felix ran out of time. Nero put Festus in Felix's place.
    - Every time you delay, you essentially reject.

### **Small Group Discussion**

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the Bible passage and sermon Sunday? What stood out to you? What questions do you have?
2. What were the charges against Paul? Why were they serious? How were some of the charges personal insults to Paul?
3. Has anyone ever lied about or insulted you? How did you respond, and how did you pull through? How and why is it important that our lives be one of our biggest defenses?
4. Discuss the different parts of Paul's defense. How did he turn the tables on his accusers?
5. Discuss Felix's delay. What were the different reasons for why he delayed in believing the gospel that Paul preached? Why do people delay today? What is the danger in delaying?