



ACTS – Living in the Promises of Jesus

Acts 24, 25

Lesson 20

In Acts 24,25 we will see Paul standing before three different government officials: Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. Each heard Paul's defense. Each found him to be innocent. Yet, neither released him. Paul was a man who could not be moved from his convictions. In these chapters we will see men who were moved by people. May these chapters increase our conviction to be moved only by the Lord to whom we have committed our lives.

OBSERVATION: Read Acts 24,25

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?

2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *Paul* or *those who accused him*.

Key Words: *God, Jesus, Paul, the high priest and anyone who was an accuser of Paul*

3. The contrasting word *but* was used four times in Acts 24 and six times in Acts 25. Mark each time the word is used. Choose one of those times (in each chapter) and record what is being contrasted.

4. The term of conclusion, *therefore*, was used in Acts 24:26 and three times in Acts 25. Mark the word. Choose one of those times; record the conclusion and what it was based upon.

PAUL ACCUSED OF SEDITION: Read Acts 24:1-21

1. Acts 23 ended with Felix's announcement that he would hear Paul *after his accusers had come*. Acts 24 begins with the arrival of his accusers. Who were they?
2. Look back at Acts 21:27-28. Who had actually accused Paul originally?
 - a. What was their accusation?
3. Tertullus, an orator (or attorney), was brought along by Ananias. Scan his address in verses 2-8. What are some benefits of having a lawyer plead a case?
 - a. What method did he use in his opening statement in order to gain favor with Felix?
 - b. What accusations were made against Paul in verses 5,6?
4. Using Paul's defense, as recorded in Acts 24:10-21, answer the following questions:
 - a. What were the weaknesses of their accusations? verses 12,13
 - b. What did Paul confess (agree with)? verses 14,15
 - c. *This being so*, what did Paul do? verse 16
 - 1.) What statement did Paul make in Acts 23:1 that provoked the high priest to command those who stood by Paul to *strike him on the mouth*?
 - a.) Although Paul had a clear conscience, his actions still provoked anger in others. What can we learn from this?
 - d. What was Paul's version of what provoked his arrest? verses 17,18
 - e. What claim did Paul make? verses 19,20
 - f. What truth did Paul seek to emphasize in this defense? verses 15,21
 - 1.) Paul recounted this time before Felix in Acts 28. What does he call the *resurrection of the dead* in verse 20?

a.) Why is the *resurrection of the dead* the *hope of Israel*?

b.) Why is it also your *hope*?

i.) What did Paul write about this in 1 Corinthians 15:19?

ii.) What are your thoughts as you consider what your life would be like if there was no *resurrection of the dead*?

FELIX PROCRASTINATES: Read Acts 24:22-27

1. These verses describe Felix's reaction to the accusations and Paul's defense. What did he have an *accurate knowledge* of?

2. What privileges did he allow Paul? verse 23

3. *After some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ* (verse 24). What three things did Paul talk to them about?

a. Why is it important that we understand:

our failure to be *righteous*?

our inability to have *self-control*?

our impending *judgment* if the above two problems are not resolved?

b. How does Jesus resolve:

our failure to be *righteous*?

our inability to have *self-control*?

our impending *judgment*?

Challenge: Use Scripture to support your answers.

4. According to verse 25, what was Felix's response?
 - a. Felix had an *accurate knowledge of the Way*. Paul's message provoked *fear* in Felix. What is the difference between having a knowledge of Christ, and even being moved to fear by the truths of the gospel, and actually being saved?
 - 1.) What does John 5:40 say about this?
 - a.) How does a person *come* to Jesus?
 - 2.) What is the exhortation of Hebrews 4:7 and 2 Corinthians 6:2b?
5. What was Felix's verbal response to Paul's message? Acts 24:25
 - a. Why is waiting for a *convenient time* unwise?
 - b. According to verse 26, what was Felix's real motive for waiting for a *convenient time*?
 - 1.) What are some reasons people postpone a decision to commit to Jesus as their Savior?
 - a.) What was your reason?
 - b.) Share what happened in your life that caused you to stop *postponing* a decision for Christ.
6. Felix said (verse 22) *When Lysias the commanders comes down, I will make a decision on your case.* We have no record of Lysias ever coming. *But after two years, what did Felix do?*
 - a. Why did Felix *leave Paul bound*?
 - 1.) In what way does the desire to please others cause a person to be *bound*?

PAUL APPEALS TO CAESAR: Read Acts 25:1-12

1. Two years after Paul's arrest, the *high priest and the chief men of the Jews* were still intent to kill Paul. Festus had replaced Felix. What similar statement (Acts 25:5) did he make to them that Felix made (Acts 23:35)?
 - a. The Jews *came down from Jerusalem and laid many serious complaints against Paul*. What are we told about these complaints at the end of verse 7?

2. What was Paul's response to their accusations? verse 8
 - a. Refer to your answer for question 2 on page 2. We can assume from Paul's answer that their accusations had not changed. However, what defense did Paul offer in verse 8 that he had not been accused of in Acts 21?
 - 1.) What similar accusation was made against Jesus? John 19:12
 - b. In what way does harbored hatred, jealousy, or bitterness cause people to add to their grievances against a person?
3. Acts 25:9 reveals that Festus suffered from the same problem as Felix. What was it?
 - a. In an effort to *do the Jews a favor*, Festus asked Paul if he was *willing to go up to Jerusalem* to be judged. Using verse 10,11 summarize Paul's response.
 - 1.) Festus complied with Paul's *appeal*. What did he say? verse 12

PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA: Read Acts 25:13-27

1. Before Festus could send Paul to Rome, he had some visitors. Who were they?
 - a. Festus shared with King Agrippa his predicament with Paul. Using verses 14- 21, record some of his main points.
2. King Agrippa expressed his desire to *hear the man* (Paul) *himself*. The next day, who was present to hear Paul? verse 23
 - a. It seems incredible that all of this pomp and ceremony was because of one little Jewish man who preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Record the promise of Acts 9:15.
 - 1.) If you were Paul, how might the remembrance of this promise encourage you?
 - 2.) What are some promises that we can remind ourselves of when we are falsely accused and facing unjust reprisals?
 - b. Summarize Festus' statements and concerns which he expressed in verses 24-27.

REVIEW: Read Acts 24,25

1. What did you learn from Paul's responses to the accusations made against him?
2. Paul's defenses included at least some reference to a component of the gospel. Why is this important?
3. What are some important truths to remember in times when life is not going as you would like?
4. What does it feel like to yield to the pressures of others?
5. What important lesson have you learned from Acts 24 or 25?

But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go." But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.
- Luke 23:21-23

Observation Worksheet

Acts 24:1-27

Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator named Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul. ² And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, ³ we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. ⁴ Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us. ⁵ For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶ He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law. ⁷ But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, ⁸ commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." ⁹ And the Jews also assented, maintaining that these things were so. ¹⁰ Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself, ¹¹ because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹² And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. ¹³ Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me. ¹⁴ But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. ¹⁵ I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. ¹⁶ This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. ¹⁷ Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, ¹⁸ in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. ¹⁹ They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. ²⁰ Or else let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, ²¹ unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.' " ²² But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." ²³ So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him. ²⁴ And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. ²⁵ Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." ²⁶ Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him. ²⁷ But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Acts 25:1-27

Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem. ² Then the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they petitioned him, ³ asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem--while they lay in ambush along the road to kill him. ⁴ But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there shortly. ⁵ "Therefore," he said, "let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him." ⁶ And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought. ⁷ When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove, ⁸ while he answered for himself, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all." ⁹ But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?" ¹⁰ So Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. ¹¹ For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar." ¹² Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!" ¹³ And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus. ¹⁴ When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying: "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, ¹⁵ about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him. ¹⁶ To them I answered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.' ¹⁷ Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed, ¹⁹ but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. ²⁰ And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. ²¹ But when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar." ²² Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him." ²³ So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in. ²⁴ And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was not fit to live any longer. ²⁵ But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death, and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him. ²⁶ I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write. ²⁷ For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."