

Paul's Defense Before Felix (Summer 55)

Acts 24:1–23

- 1 After five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, with an attorney *named* Tertullus, and they brought charges to the governor against Paul.
- 2 After *Paul* had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying *to the governor*, “Since we have through you attained much peace, and since by your providence reforms are being carried out for this nation,
- 3 we acknowledge *this* in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.
- 4 But, that I may not weary you any further, I beg you to grant us, by your kindness, a brief hearing.
- 5 For we have found this man a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.
- 6 And he even tried to desecrate the temple; and then we arrested him. [We wanted to judge him according to our own Law.
- 7 But Lysias the commander came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands,
- 8 ordering his accusers to come before you.] By examining him yourself concerning all these matters you will be able to ascertain the things of which we accuse him.”
- 9 The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so.
- 10 When the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: “Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense,
- 11 since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship.
- 12 Neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city *itself* did they find me carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a riot.
- 13 Nor can they prove to you *the charges* of which they now accuse me.
- 14 But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;
- 15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.
- 16 In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience *both* before God and before men.
- 17 Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;
- 18 in which they found me *occupied* in the temple, having been purified, without *any* crowd or uproar. But *there were* some Jews from Asia—
- 19 who ought to have been present before you and to make accusation, if they should have anything against me.
- 20 Or else let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found when I stood before the Council,
- 21 other than for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, ‘For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today.’”
- 22 But Felix, having a more exact knowledge about the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case.”
- 23 Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and *yet* have *some* freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.