

Dear Heavenly Father,

### *Praise*

Paul said that Jesus sent him to the Jews and the Gentiles “that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me” (Acts 26:18). I praise you today as the God who forgives sin! You cleanse and sanctify the sinner, and you want everyone to join those who have found salvation through faith in your Son. Glory to God!

### *Today in Your Word*

When you sent Ananias to restore Paul’s sight, you told him that Paul would carry your name before kings (Acts 9:15). The time had come for this to be fulfilled, and in the space of about two years, Paul shared the gospel with Felix, Festus, and Herod Agrippa II. Antonius Felix was the first slave in the history of the Roman Empire to become the governor of a Roman province. He obtained his position through the influence of his brother Pallas, and the historian Tacitus described him as “a master of cruelty and lust who exercised the powers of a king with the spirit of a slave.” His wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, was the sister of Herod Agrippa II, and she was no less ambitious and scheming than her husband. Felix presided over Paul’s defense before the Jews, and in his speech, Paul mentioned that he had come to Jerusalem “to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings” (Acts 24:17). At the mention of alms, Felix became very interested, for he took bribes and hoped that Paul might give him some money. At the same time, Felix had a “rather accurate knowledge of the Way,” and thinking that Drusilla might be amused to hear Paul, he later invited her to hear Paul speak “about faith in Christ Jesus” (Acts 24:22–24). Paul took full advantage of this opportunity, and he reasoned with them “about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment” (Acts 24:25). Imagine—Paul boldly spoke the truth to an unscrupulous, scheming politician and his one-time illicit lover and current wife! This teaches me several lessons. First, it reminds me that you desire “all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). You loved Felix and Drusilla as much as you loved Paul, and you wanted them to hear the gospel and turn to you. Second, it challenges me to be bold in my interaction with others. Paul was not hostile or offensive, but neither was he timid in preaching the gospel. It is clear from Felix’s reaction that Paul told him that “the wages of sin is death” and that those who sinned would not escape your righteous judgment (Rom 3:3; 6:23). Indeed, I wouldn’t be surprised if Paul’s comments closely mirrored what he had just written to the Romans! Third, it teaches me the importance of integrity, for Paul refused to give Felix a bribe. Felix was no doubt frustrated by this, and his greed motivated him to send for Paul often and talk with him. In this way, Paul’s integrity created further opportunities to share the truth with Felix. Had he given Felix a bribe, he would have undermined the gospel and frustrated the working of the Spirit in Felix’s heart.

### *Reflection*

Felix was convicted by what Paul said, for Luke says that Felix became frightened. Yet he postponed his decision with the tragic words, “Go away for the present” (Acts 24:25). Do I put off until tomorrow what your Spirit is telling me to do today?

### *Request*

Father, give me the heart of Paul. He earnestly desired that all who heard his words would believe, and he willingly endured imprisonment and chains in order to preach the gospel.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thank you for promising to be with me when I testify of you (Luke 21:15). I can boldly proclaim the truth, knowing that your Holy Spirit will give me both the wisdom and the words to speak.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Suggested Hymn: “[Come and Be Saved](#)” – Daniel S. Warner.*

*Meditation Verse: Acts 26:28.*