

- The trials of Paul continue, both literally and figuratively
 - Last week in chapter 24 we watched Paul on trial before Felix
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 - Followed by two years spent in prison until Felix was relieved and a new procurator appeared
 - This week that new procurator, Festus, becomes our focus
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 - Followed by a third character, King Agrippa

[ACTS 25:1](#) Festus then, having arrived in the province, three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

[ACTS 25:2](#) And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul, and they were urging him,

[ACTS 25:3](#) requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem (at the same time, setting an ambush to kill him on the way).

[ACTS 25:4](#) Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly.

[ACTS 25:5](#) “Therefore,” he said, “let the influential men among you go there with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them prosecute him.”

[ACTS 25:6](#) After he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

[ACTS 25:7](#) After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove,

[ACTS 25:8](#) while Paul said in his own defense, “I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar.”

[ACTS 25:9](#) But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?”

[ACTS 25:10](#) But Paul said, “I am standing before Caesar’s tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know.

[ACTS 25:11](#) “If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.”

- Festus’ first meeting with Paul takes a circuitous route

- Initially, Festus arrives in Caesarea to take command, but within three days he decides he needs to travel to Jerusalem to meet with Jewish leaders
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 - You see the extent to which the Roman leadership felt the need to appease Jewish authorities for the sake of good order
 - Remember, Festus' predecessor Felix was disposed because he treated Jews harshly
 - Festus wisely makes mending fences with the Jewish leaders his priority
- One of the first things the Jewish leaders tell Festus is they want Paul returned to Jerusalem to stand trial
 - But as Luke writes, the real purpose for the request was to get Paul into a vulnerable stretch of road leading into Jerusalem and ambush him
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 - Even after two years, the only thing they care about is killing Paul
 - That's quite a testimony to how much the enemy wanted to put an end to Paul's ministry of spreading the Gospel
 - Festus immediately recognizes that this request is a test of his resolve and willingness to wield power against the Jews
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 - Festus answers that Paul is already under the custody of a higher authority
 - It would be like a lower court asking a higher court to return a case
 - Once the appeal has been made, the case remains in the higher court
 - Instead, he offers to let them come back to Caesarea with him to try Paul again
 - In less than 2 weeks, Festus is back in Caesarea and the trial begins
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 - The leaders cast numerous charges against Paul but still without proof
 - Paul simply maintained his innocence
 - And Paul was 100% innocent
 - He has done nothing to violate any Roman or Jewish law
 - Without proof, the proceedings go nowhere
 - Finally, Festus must have recognized that there wasn't going to be a way to give the Jews what they wanted concerning Paul
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 - He saw that their hatred for Paul was intense, so letting Paul go would have angered the Jewish leaders at the start of Festus' reign
 - But there was no way to convict Paul without ignoring Roman law, which could have brought Festus trouble with the Roman government
 - So to appease the Jews, Festus floats the idea of letting them take Paul back to Jerusalem
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- In a sense, Festus is offering to wash his hands of the whole thing and let the Jews take the matter into their own hands
- As a Roman citizen, Paul had the right to refuse this idea, since Jewish law could not overrule Roman law
 - Which is why Festus asks Paul first
- At this point Paul senses the danger, and refuses to accept this idea
 - Paul says he is standing where he ought to be, meaning he is where Roman citizens should be: in a Roman tribunal
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 - Paul adds that he has done no wrong, as you well know
 - This last statement is a jab at Festus
 - Paul is calling out Festus for not having the courage to make the judgment he knows he should
 - He should decide Paul was innocent and put an end to the proceedings
 - Instead, he is giving in to the Jewish leaders
- Paul adds that he is willing to respect the decision of the court
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 - If Festus found him guilty, he would face the executioner without protest
 - Obviously, Paul doesn't expect to be found guilty, since he knows the evidence was nonexistent
 - But don't think Paul didn't mean what he said
 - He was willing to go to death at the judgment of the court, but Paul knew that whatever the court did it was according to God's providence
 - Just as Paul himself wrote in Romans:

[ROM. 13:1](#) Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

[ROM. 13:2](#) Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

[ROM. 13:3](#) For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

[ROM. 13:4](#) for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

- At some point in the moment as Paul spoke his answer to Festus, Paul sensed that Festus was not inclined to do the right thing
 - So as Paul ends his statement with the words, “I appeal to Caesar.”
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 - Paul’s appeal to Caesar was a legal maneuver
 - He was availing himself of a right granted to every Roman citizen in the year 509 BC
 - In that year, the original Roman kingdom ruled by monarchs was replaced by a republic with a senate and constitution
 - This was the starting point for what would become the Roman Empire and would last in various forms for nearly two thousand years
 - One of the rights given Roman citizens in that constitution was the right to appeal to Caesar for judgment in any trial
 - Paul’s invoking of this special appeal immediately ended Festus’ authority over Paul and forced his hand
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 - Festus now had no choice or decision to make
 - He must send Paul to Rome to see Caesar
 - You might ask why wouldn’t every prisoner appeal to Caesar especially if facing conviction of a crime
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 - The answer is many did, but only as a last resort
 - Going to Rome to see Caesar meant spending a long time in chains, since there was no guarantee when Caesar might see you
 - Plus, Caesar wasn’t exactly a softy, so the decision probably wasn’t going to be in your favor
 - Still, it was better than death, so Paul makes the appeal
 - In Paul’s case, we might also wonder why Paul didn’t make this appeal sooner
 - The only answer that makes sense is that Paul wanted to remain in Caesarea as long as it appeared he might be set free to influence Felix and now Festus with the Gospel
 - Now it must be clear, that his time in Caesarea has run its course and he needs to move to Rome
 - After Paul’s appeal, Festus confers with his staff, and then he acknowledges the only thing he could say: it’s off to Rome for Paul
 - Before Paul is sent to Rome, an important visitor comes calling for Festus

[ACTS 25:12](#) Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, “You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go.”

[ACTS 25:13](#) Now when several days had elapsed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus.

[ACTS 25:14](#) While they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix;

[ACTS 25:15](#) and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

[ACTS 25:16](#) "I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges.

[ACTS 25:17](#) "So after they had assembled here, I did not delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought before me.

[ACTS 25:18](#) "When the accusers stood up, they began bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting,

[ACTS 25:19](#) but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive.

[ACTS 25:20](#) "Being at a loss how to investigate such matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters.

[ACTS 25:21](#) "But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar."

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- This King Agrippa is Agrippa II, son of King Agrippa I
 - Remember that Festus's predecessor Felix was married to the daughter of Agrippa I, Drucilla
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 - Agrippa II was the last descendent of Herod to rule over Judea
 - The Herods were not Jewish but descendants of Esau
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 - Agrippa was the last in a line of men who opposed the work of God
 - Herod the Great tried to kill the infant Jesus
 - Herod's son Antipas killed John the Baptist
 - And Agrippa's father, Agrippa I, killed the apostle James and imprisoned Peter
 - This family had been installed by the Romans as the Jewish kings to appease the Jews and create a puppet authority over the land
 - They thought themselves Jewish kings, though they had no credible claim to that title
 - Agrippa II was raised and educated in Rome and was essentially a Roman, though he assumed his father's role of King at a young age
 - As the declared King of the Jews, Agrippa II angered the Jewish authorities by his frequent

meddling with the priesthood and building his palace overlooking the temple

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- After the city and temple were destroyed in AD 70, he went back to Rome and died 30 years after childless, thus putting an end to the line of Herods
- Knowing this background, we can read between the lines for what is happening in this scene
 - Agrippa is paying Festus a visit on the occasion of his arrival as the new procurator for Judea
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 - Festus must have seen this visit as an opportunity to help himself out of the jam with Paul
 - Festus' problem was Paul's appeal to Caesar
 - Festus was now obligated to send Paul to Caesar for the emperor to review the charges and findings against Paul
 - But the problem for Festus was there were no findings against Paul
 - What charges was Festus going to send to Caesar to review?
 - There were no credible charge and certainly no proof of guilt
 - If Festus couldn't trump up credible charges, then he would be forced to release Paul rather than sending him to Caesar
 - And if he released Paul, his standing with the Jewish authorities would be on rocky ground from the beginning
- So Festus deliberately engages Agrippa in a conversation concerning the case of an insignificant Jewish teacher who has languished in prison for the past two years
 - Festus is hoping Agrippa might give him something to use in charging Paul before sending him to Rome
 - Festus quickly recount for Agrippa how Paul came to his attention and the case against Paul, what little there was
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 - He includes details on how the Jews wanted Paul in Jerusalem but Roman citizens are to stand trial by Roman courts
 - When the trial took place, Festus learned that the charges did not concern Roman law but disputes of Jewish religion
 - And in particular, Festus detected that the real issue was their disagreement over a man Jesus
 - Who the Jewish leaders claim was dead but who Paul said was alive
 - Even to a casual observer like Festus it was nevertheless clear that the real issue at the center of everything was Jesus
- Festus finishes by stating that he is at a loss to investigate such matters, so he suggested that Paul be tried in Jerusalem
 - But when Paul appealed to Caesar, Festus' hands were tied
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- At this point Festus stops and waits to see if Agrippa decides to get involved
- And right on cue, Agrippa takes the bait

[ACTS 25:22](#) Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I also would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” he said, “you shall hear him.”

[ACTS 25:23](#) So, on the next day when Agrippa came together with Bernice amid great pomp, and entered the auditorium accompanied by the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

[ACTS 25:24](#) Festus said, “King Agrippa, and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer.

[ACTS 25:25](#) “But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him.

[ACTS 25:26](#) “Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you all and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the investigation has taken place, I may have something to write.

[ACTS 25:27](#) “For it seems absurd to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him.”

- Paul’s time before Agrippa begins with pomp and circumstances befitting a king holding court
 - Paul is brought in before not only the king but an audience of commanders of the military guard at Caesarea
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 - Also present were the prominent men of the city
 - Festus begins the presentation with an overview of his predicament
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 - How he heard the charges, found nothing to charge Paul with
 - Yet because Paul appealed to Caesar, he must comply and send Paul forward, yet without charges
 - This seemed absurd to Festus, so here we are
 - In Festus’ own statement, he condemns himself to a degree
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 - He makes clear that Paul is innocent yet he continues to the justice process rather than letting Paul free
 - He says it’s absurd to send a man to Caesar without charges, yet he invokes this audience before Agrippa precisely to find an accusation against Paul

- In response to Festus' own words, the only logical thing to do would be to release Paul
 - Once again, we're confronted with the reality that Paul is here because God wants him here
 - And Paul will move to Rome for the same reason
- So then the moment arrives for Paul's defense before the procurator, a king and many prominent Roman citizens

[ACTS 26:1](#) Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and proceeded to make his defense:

[ACTS 26:2](#) "In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today;

[ACTS 26:3](#) especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among the Jews; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

[ACTS 26:4](#) "So then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem;

[ACTS 26:5](#) since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.

[ACTS 26:6](#) "And now I am standing trial for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers;

[ACTS 26:7](#) the promise to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly serve God night and day. And for this hope, O King, I am being accused by Jews.

[ACTS 26:8](#) "Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?"

- It should be noted that Paul is the first one called to speak at this trial
 - So even before anyone brings a credible charge, Agrippa asks Paul to defend himself
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 - As unfair as that was, Paul gladly complies because this is the audience he has been waiting for so his message will have its greatest impact
 - And Paul's response is to simply give his testimony
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 - Paul isn't defending himself in this moment...he's declaring Christ and he relishes the opportunity
- Paul's opening is a sincere statement concerning his excitement for the chance to speak to Agrippa

- Imagine the opportunity to preach the Gospel concerning the King of the Jews to the self-appointed king of the Jews.
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 - Paul must have been beside himself in anticipation for the opportunity
 - And Paul himself knew full well what was at stake
 - If God was prepared to take the Church's chief prosecutor in Saul and turn him into the chief evangelist, then what might happen for Agrippa?
 - The Herods had long been the chief antagonists for both the Gospel and for Jews in general
 - If God could turn Saul, He could certainly turn Agrippa if he chose
 - And if that happened, what might it mean for the nation of Israel and the church?
 - Paul must have wondered if such a conversion was possible on this day
- Paul adds that his excitement was also the result of Agrippa's knowledge of Jewish Scripture and custom and teaching
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 - Though Agrippa was Roman educated, he was also part Jewish and was devoted to the Jewish people and Jewish culture
 - Paul knew that his message of the Messiah would hold meaning for Agrippa even though it would be lost on most of the Gentile audience
- Paul then moves to his testimony prior to faith
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 - He is well-known as a Pharisee and a well-known one at that
 - But he is standing trial because he believes in the fulfillment of the promises made to the father's of Israel
 - Paul says in v.6 that he ironically begin tried for a hope that all Jews are supposed to have, yet Paul's being persecuted for having it
 - Specifically, Paul is referring to the promises for a coming Messiah
- In v.8, Paul turns from Agrippa and speaks to the watching crowd, probably Jews in the audience who were opposed to Paul
 - His aside asks the rhetorical question why he would be hated for claiming that a man was resurrected from the dead
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 - When orthodox Judaism held to resurrection without debate
 - But Paul's willingness to declare that Jesus was resurrected is considered grounds for death
 - Paul points out the ridiculousness of their hatred, yet Paul himself knew the source for it
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 - The enemy works hardest against threats that are real and true
 - Christianity's declaration of a risen Lord is the greatest threat to Satan's domination of

unbelievers

- So this is the focal point for Satan's attacks

[ACTS 26:9](#) "So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

[ACTS 26:10](#) "And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

[ACTS 26:11](#) "And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

[ACTS 26:12](#) "While so engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests,

[ACTS 26:13](#) at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.

[ACTS 26:14](#) "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

[ACTS 26:15](#) "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

[ACTS 26:16](#) 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

[ACTS 26:17](#) rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

[ACTS 26:18](#) to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

- Paul moves now to reminding the audience of his conversion
 - This is the third time we see an account of Paul's conversion
 - In this account we have a more specific description of how Paul participated in the killing of Christians
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 - When early Jewish Christians were tried by the Jewish council, Paul was a voting member of the council
 - He was one who voted against these persecuted Christians and ushered them into death for

their faith

- Literally, the Greek phrase is “I cast down my stone”
- Votes were cast by holding or dropping small stones
- From there Paul went out to synagogues and in the Temple to find those Jews who worshipped Jesus so they might be removed
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 - He tried to force them to blaspheme
 - Paul was either trying to cause them to commit an offense worthy of the death penalty so they could be killed under Jewish law
 - Or Paul means he was working to get believers to speak against Jesus, which Paul now recognizes would have been blasphemy
 - Either way, the Christians didn’t cooperate and that enraged Paul, causing him to pursue them in foreign cities
 - Paul’s testimony is always an opportunity for him to remind the crowd from whence he’s come
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 - Once a hater of Christians, now the leader
 - That’s a testimony that’s hard to dismiss or ignore
- In describing his conversion, Paul tells essentially the same story, but adds a few details
 - We are reminded that the light of God was even brighter than the light of a noonday sun in the desert
 - And we learn that Jesus spoke to Paul in Hebrew
 - And we hear that Jesus spoke an idiom to Paul
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 - Is it hard to kick against the goads?
 - Goads are spikes on the front of plows designed to deter oxen from kicking backward against the plow
 - The spikes or goads are painful for the ox, and if the ox continues to kick against the spokes, it only succeeds in injuring itself
 - And it accomplishes nothing in terms of removing the weight and burden of the plow
 - Jesus compares Paul’s burdens in persecuting the growth of the Church as kicking against the goads
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 - It’s hurting Paul and it’s not stopping God in establishing His church
 - So why keep persecuting Jesus?
- Finally, Paul says he was appointed to be a minister and to be a witness of the resurrected Jesus, not only on the road but additional times as well
 - So we know Paul received personal instruction from the resurrected Lord, much as the other

apostles received their instruction from the Lord before His death

- And Paul in v.17 is called to the Gentiles specifically
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 - Leaving the dominion of Satan and becoming a fellow heir in an inheritance appointed for us
 - This too is our claim on the basis of faith

[ACTS 26:19](#) “So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,

[ACTS 26:20](#) but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

[ACTS 26:21](#) “For this reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death.

[ACTS 26:22](#) “So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place;

[ACTS 26:23](#) that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”

[ACTS 26:24](#) While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, “Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad.”

[ACTS 26:25](#) But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth.

[ACTS 26:26](#) “For the king knows about these matters, and I speak to him also with confidence, since I am persuaded that none of these things escape his notice; for this has not been done in a corner.

[ACTS 26:27](#) “King Agrippa, do you believe the Prophets? I know that you do.”

[ACTS 26:28](#) Agrippa replied to Paul, “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.”

[ACTS 26:29](#) And Paul said, “I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains.”

[ACTS 26:30](#) The king stood up and the governor and Bernice, and those who were sitting with them,

[ACTS 26:31](#) and when they had gone aside, they began talking to one another, saying, “This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment.”

[ACTS 26:32](#) And Agrippa said to Festus, “This man might have been set

free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”

- Finally, Paul testifies that his trial is merely the result of his obedience to Christ in testifying that the Messiah has come and risen
 - And in particular, on this day Paul says his testimony was the result of having obtained help from God
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 - Without God’s help, Paul would have already died at the hands of his enemies, but instead he stands here to testify
 - Notice that relationship: Paul is alive because God has sustained his life
 - And his life has been sustained so that he can testify in this moment and later moments
 - Paul understood that his life was not his own, just as our lives are not our own
 - We live each day because there is something more we must testify concerning
 - Else the Lord would have already called us home
 - At a point, Festus has heard enough and declares that Paul is mad with his great learning
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 - From Festus’ unbelieving perspective, nothing Paul said made sense
 - It seemed insanity to believe such things
 - This is the universal perspective of unbelievers
 - The Gospel is nonsense unless and until the Lord’s Spirit brings an understanding
 - Paul’s response is to rebuke Festus and declare he spoke sober or sound-minded truth
- Since Festus had spoken up and cast his vote against Paul’s testimony, Paul sensed the opportunity to press Agrippa for a point of view
 - He turns to the king and makes a direct appeal
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 - Paul says do you believe in the prophets? I know you do
 - Paul is taking some advantage here of the king
 - As the king of the Jews, Agrippa would have to publicly agree with Paul
 - He couldn’t deny his belief in the writings of Jewish prophets
 - So Paul was hoping that Agrippa’s willingness to agree with the prophets would cause him to go the next step and agree with Paul’s message
 - Agrippa responds with a very politically astute but noncommittal response
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 - He couldn’t agree with Paul or else risk countering Festus’ public statement and ruining his new relationship with the procurator
 - My version translates the phrase Agrippa speaks in a light-hearted and dismissive way
 - In reality, there are four possible ways to translate the meaning of that phrase

- First, a matter-of-fact “You are working quickly to persuade me to be a Christian”
- Secondly, a question “Are you trying to persuade me to be a Christian in such short time?”
- Third, “In summary, you are trying to persuade me to become a Christian.”
- Fourth, another question, “Do you think you can persuade me to be a Christian in such a short time.”
- Some Bible choose a fifth rendering of “I am almost persuaded to become a Christian” but this translation is not proper given the Greek construction
 - And there is no such thing as an “almost Christian” in any case, so the sentence would have no meaning in that sense
- Paul responds by saying he doesn’t care which way it happens (i.e., fast or slow), but only that Agrippa and everyone else in the room come to faith
 - This is the heart of an evangelist
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 - Paul understood and taught Biblical truths of election and God’s sovereignty in salvation
 - He recognized that human power is not a function of salvation
 - Yet he also knew that God purposed to work through men and the proclamation of the Gospel
 - So Paul worked for every soul and didn’t care what techniques or methods worked so long as faith arrived
 - We should work equally hard and with equal willingness to move as the Spirit leads
- At the conclusion of the trial, the verdict is the same as before
 - Paul is clearly innocent of any charge, and his powerful testimony is enough to put an end to the proceedings
 - Luke’s account reaches a climax with the recording of Agrippa’s final words concerning Paul
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 - He was innocent and would have been set free had he not appealed to Caesar
 - This is Luke’s footnote to prove what is so clearly evident in the events depicted: Paul was innocent
 - And therefore, his incarceration and his continuing movement to Rome were orchestrated by God and not by men