



Hey Christ Church!

I have been struck by what Paul went through and what we are going through. Paul had been kept in custody by the governor of Caesarea for over two years. Apparently, he could have people visit him and he could send letters, but it was truly a “shelter-in-place” requirement. Knowing that many of Paul’s letters were written from times that he was in custody, we should understand that this time that we are going through is still a time to be the Church. Paul when he was confined to a place, Paul was still reaching out and doing what he could do to make sure the church was strong and moving forward. It is a reminder to me that we are not just to survive, we are to thrive for Jesus Christ in all aspects of our lives. To God be the glory!

Stay Safe, Pray Always and Press On!  
In Christ’s Greater Love,  
Roger

## **SESSION FORTY-FOUR**

**6/4/2020**

### **Acts 25:1-12**

*Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.<sup>3</sup> They requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.<sup>4</sup> Festus answered, “Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.<sup>5</sup> Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there.”*

*<sup>6</sup> After spending eight or ten days with them, Festus went down to Caesarea. The next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him.<sup>7</sup> When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them.*

*<sup>8</sup> Then Paul made his defense: “I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar.”*

*<sup>9</sup> Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?”*

*<sup>10</sup> Paul answered: “I am now standing before Caesar’s court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well.<sup>11</sup> If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!”*

*<sup>12</sup> After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: “You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!”*

1) It seems that the new Governor of Caesarea—Festus—has inherited the problem of Paul from Felix. Felix’s wife was of the Jewish faith and had kept Paul for two years, talking with him frequently. Now Festus has to figure out what to do with Paul. After being on the job for three days, he goes to Jerusalem and is confronted by Jewish leaders who want him to deal with Paul. Two years had gone by since the last encounter. Why do you suppose that they still were eager to deal with Paul?

2) Why did some of the Jewish leaders want Festus to bring Paul to Jerusalem?

3) Why did some want to just kill Paul and not deal with him through the court system? What could Paul have done that kept their hatred burning after such a long period of time?

4) Festus did not agree to bring Paul to Jerusalem. Do you think he recognized that some would try to kill Paul on the way to Jerusalem?

5) Festus stayed in Jerusalem eight to ten days and kept Paul in Caesarea. When he and Jewish leaders came to Caesarea, he ordered that Paul be brought before him. He sat as judge to hear complaints against him. Look at verse 8. What was Paul's defense?

6) It was obvious that Paul is not going to be found guilty of any of the charges that were brought against him. But the Jewish leader knew that there was a better chance of killing Paul back in Jerusalem. What was Paul's response to their request to have a trial in Jerusalem?

7) When a Roman citizen appeals to Caesar, they are given that right. Remembering who Paul was and what he lived for, why do you suppose he asked to be tried by the emperor himself?

#### FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

8) Paul's career as an apostle is now going in a new direction. He has appealed to Caesar which means that he will be able to speak directly to the most powerful man in the world. Who is God calling you to speak to about Jesus? What lengths are you willing to go to make it happen?