

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025

FIGHT, FLIGHT, OR FAITH?

PRAY Father, use your Word to build in me greater trust in your power to save and sustain me.

READ **ACTS 24:22–25:12**

REFLECT Are there areas where you are frustrated in sharing the gospel? What is your remedy?

Paul is now a prisoner of Felix. Felix has the power to indulge his interest in the Way without the troubling interjections of the Jewish authorities. It becomes clear, though, that Felix doesn't want the troubling interference of the Holy Spirit, either! We read that he becomes afraid when Paul talks of righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come. Of course he was afraid—it is God's Spirit, not just Paul, who is speaking to him through Paul's prophetic words.

Jesus teaches that the Spirit is a disturber of the peace of the world; the Spirit will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment.¹ Felix is experiencing the conviction of the Spirit, and he is frightened by the power; he resists and runs. Felix would rather accept a bribe from Paul than the gospel; he'd rather seek the favor of the Jews than the favor of the Lord. Paul is passed on to Festus, who, like Felix, tries to use Paul's imprisonment as a bargaining chip to curry favor. Festus decrees that Paul will go to Caesar, but it is clear that the real power is with the Spirit and with Paul.

We partner with the Spirit in bringing the truth of Jesus to unbelievers, but it is agonizing to see God's Spirit clearly speaking to people only for them to resist. It can make us weary, dispirited, and discouraged. Paul must have been wearied too. Yet, despite this, the will of God is coming to pass—Paul is going to Rome. Paul must have been encouraged by this. May we, too, find encouragement in Paul's faith and eagerness to persevere.

APPLY 'I eagerly expect and hope that I will ... have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.'²

PRAY Lord Jesus, thank you for those who founded and built your church. Inspire me with their examples of faith and courage to stand for what is right and boldly stand for the gospel.

¹ John 16:8. ² Phil 1:20.