Acts Chapter 24 Verses 1 – 3

* (Tertullus means, *“triple-hardened”*) **GAG!** All of this is **dishonesty** just to get Felix on their side! Under Felix there most certainly ***WAS NOT*** great peace…and then, *“prosperity being brought to this nation by your foresight,”* please…give me a break! And on he goes…talking about how the Jews had accepted Felix’s rule in all places with ***thankfulness***…that’s just ridiculous…GAG! All of this is just **flattery** to try and get something they want out of Felix!
* Be careful of the danger of flattery! Although we gag, **flattery is very powerful!** Because of flattery, families fall apart as spouses are lured award from each other. (Proverbs 7:21) Because of flattery, horrible decisions are made every day and *paths are traveled* that people would never have thought they’d go and at the end of it, they’re left **beside themselves** at what they were duped into doing. **Flattery is a key strategy of the devil**…to draw you away.
* We gag but I bet Felix, even knowing this was a bunch of *malarkey*, didn’t gag at all! We have to be on guard because each of us **love** to hear flattering words but the Bible condemns flattery. Proverbs 26:28 says, *“A flattering mouth works ruin.”* Now understand, **flattery is not complimenting.** Complementing is based on truth or fact or something real…***flattery is double tongued***…saying one thing to *get or persuade or deceive* and the truth or how you actually feel is very different. Flattering people seeks to gain advantage and its wickedness. Complimenting is kind and honest with no thought of selfish gain. **Definitely NOT** what is going on here…
* So don’t fall for it…mark it when you see it and walk in wisdom. Children fall for these easy ploys/tools, but we ought to be grown ups in the Spirit and be able to mark these **counterfeits.** (Paper Towel story)
* I want you to watch for this, **the same person who found it so easy to flatter also found it easy to accuse with no evidence.** ***The two almost always go together.***

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 4 – 5

* **SWEET!** A plague! That’s a huge compliment! Not that he was a jerk to be around! Not at all, a guy that anyone could get along with no doubt…but he was preaching freedom while they were preaching bondage and just like a plague, ***his message was spreading!*** Huge compliment! That’s not flatteruing at all is it? But I bet Paul smirked a little bit with that statement! HA!!

Acts Chapter 24 Verse 6

* That’s a lie. Their law ***mandated*** a trial which he was not going to get!

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 7 - 9

* Notice how Lysias is painted in a very negative light. Be weary of flatterers…*loose lips eat chips*…or something like that. But here’s the thing, if Lysias was **there**…*you see what I’m saying*…flattering lips, **you better believe that the tune is different when you’re not around.**

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 10 - 13

* Paul makes the case that he had been in Jerusalem for 12 days during the time of a **huge** event…and yet, they could provide no impartial witnesses or evidences that Paul was inciting the crowd or disputing in the temple.
* They couldn’t provide evidence…but ***where is James? Where is Peter?*** The Bible is silent and Paul doesn’t rebuke **or** exalt them in any of his letters…here’s the thing…sometimes even your friends, your friends that love the Lord, **have not the backbone to stand with and for you**…***what will you do then?*** That doesn’t reveal who they are…it reveals who **you** are. Don’t get so upset when you don’t get respect. *(I don’t need respect…I’m the threat)*

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 14 – 21

* It’s evident that Paul is not only giving his defense, but he is ministering directly to Felix. Speaking right to Felix, trying to reach him for the Lord. He says, *“According to the Way, I worship and in that I believe and accept ALL things written in the Law and in the Prophets.”* To worship and believe how they do, there were scriptures they had to disregard and/or contradict. Always a sign that you are off of *“home row.”* And remember, ***you only believe the scriptures that you live…***

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 22 – 25

* Drusilla was the sister of Herod Agrippa II and Bernice who will be mentioned in the next chapter. Felix had seduced her away from her husband and made her his third wife. Paul reasoned with them concerning ***righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come.*** **Exactly** what they both needed to hear and interestingly three topics which are somewhat avoided in Christianity today…but they shouldn’t be…***they are absolutely key!***
* The **righteousness** of man within Christ is entirely ***reasonable!*** At the Fall Festival, my kiddos got a lot of candy! Now, I may of had one or two or 30 pieces! That crispy crunch bar (or those crispy crunch bars), **you don’t see it anymore do you?** No, now they are a part of me! Now you might see the ***affects*** of them but everyone of those demonic fat calories…unhealthy cholesterol and fattening eggs…not gone…right her….**on my waist!** HA! And so the candy is gone, it is hidden now (somewhat) in me.
* So too the new believer or the seasoned Christian…we are in Christ. Galatians 3:27-28 says, *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew not Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all* ***one in*** *Christ Jesus.”* Here’s what being **in** Christ is all about…
* In Christ is where God’s grace is. (2 Tim 1:9) In Jesus we become chosen of God. (Ephesians 1:4) In Christ we enter into inseparable love. (Romans 8:38-39) In Christ we are redeemed and forgiven of all sin. (Ephesians 1:7) In Christ we are justified before God and made **entirely** righteous. (2 Cor 5:21) And 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!”* Apart from Christ, we are just unfortunately ***fattening, artery clogging, demonic cosmic calories***…and we have none of these things apart from Jesus Christ…but in Christ, we are something **entirely different…**
* In Christ, and Christ in us, God the Father looks on us and sees Jesus…we have ***put Him on***…we are wearing **His** robes of righteousness…and although we remain in the flesh, and although we remain imperfect and unable to be sinless, everyone of those sins, past, present and future has been paid in full by the perfect blood of the sinless man…God Himself made flesh…who gave His life for us.
* **Why MUST we be in Christ?** Entirely reasonable question for which God has given in His Word and explained through the Holy Spirit within you when you come to Him by faith…you see ***all men have a debt.*** A debt of perfection **owed** to God for His perfect creation. For creating us in His image, perfect and without blemish. And that debt must be paid in full by sinlessness…and that is something no man could do. And so God looked on man…knowing **well** man’s debt…and with an act of mercy, compassion, love and grace, He stepped into the debt…assumed the debt Himself…and paid it with His perfect life. It is absolutely reasonable. Do you know what is ***not reasonable?***
* It’s not reasonable to think that God will weigh your goods against your bads. Number 1, where is the line? How do we know truly what is good and what is bad, and…everyone would **still** go to hell! We just like to fool ourselves. Its not reasonable to think that when you die that’s just it…you have ***such intelligence, such awareness, such capability***…you’re telling me that all you and mankind are and are capable of…in truth, is **without purpose and meaningless?** Not reasonable. It’s not reasonable to believe when you die you go to a holding tank where loved ones must pay your way into heaven through offerings to the church or post mortem baptism. Righteousness through Christ, forgiveness and removal of all sin…in light of truly a perfect and Holy Creator God and heaven stands ALONE as ***truly entirely reasonable.***
* And so Felix, Drucilla, there is a God, there is a heaven, there is a hell and the only way to live eternally in the new heaven and the new earth, once God has done away with all of this mess…is to be completely righteous for which there is only one Way.
* He spoke to them about self-control. These two, one a former slave controlled by his past hurts and ***in-the-moment*** emotions. The other a young powerful woman on her second husband after being seduced away by her current husband. The daughter of the Herrods and the granddaughter who beheaded John the Baptist because he promised something he didn’t want to deliver…what is needed to ***rule well***, for ***righteousness***…self-control. One of the gifts of the indwelling Holy Spirit of God.
* And finally of the judgment to come…that one day all things will be made known. And all will stand before God **on their own** and give an account. And so Felix, Drucilla, dear brother, dear sister, there is a God, there is a heaven, there is a hell and the only way to live eternally in the new heaven and the new earth, once God has finally judged and done away with all of this mess…is to be completely righteous for which there is only one Way. And they feared…

Acts Chapter 24 Verses 26 – 27

* How amazingly off man can become without the presence of the Holy Spirit…without the presence of wisdom. Even a heart that has the Holy Spirit but is not submitted to the Him in their lives. Felix had been presented with eternal life…available to him right then and there…**but his hope was for money.**  Money that today you can’t buy a toy with…the flattery of the enemy is often times with things such as these…be aware and on guard. God has such wonderful truth and life for those that will seek Him above all else. Eternal life, life alive now…where you’re not so controlled by your fears and emotions anymore…but hidden and secured in Christ!