



to  
the **ENDS**  
of  
the **EARTH**

Studies in the Book of Acts

Sermon-Based Study Guide  
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Acts 24.1-27 | February 19, 2017

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I. Introduction to this Study

This week we continue our series To the Ends of the Earth, engaging Paul's imprisonment and his interaction with Felix and Drusilla.

II. Connecting with One Another

John F. Kennedy once said, "There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction.

Recall a time action was needed on your part, but for some reason you did not act? What was the situation? Was there a reason you did not act? What reasons did you tell yourself at the time that your in-action was justified? Looking back, how do you feel about your decision?

III. Study the Text

- a. We pick up the story with Paul's trial before Felix. Paul, afraid his fellow Jews want him dead, goes into prison peacefully but with a strong case for his release. As a Roman citizen, his trial must be heard and must be fair. Paul's situation must have been frustrating to him. He's not the type of person who sits around with idle hands.

b. Read Acts 24.1-9

Can flattery get you anywhere, even if truth isn't on your side? Tertullus is the representation for the High Priest Ananias and the Elders who are bringing false charges on Paul. These erroneous charges are custom wrapped in an attempt hide the truth from Felix.

What are the false charges Paul is facing?

What are the lies we tell ourselves in order to not face truth?

Take a few moments to ask God to open your heart and mind to not only hear his voice...but to even admit that some "truths" you have held onto have been custom wrapped lies in order to keep you from acting on your faith.

c. Read Acts 24:10-23

What contrast can you find between Paul's defense and the charges brought by Tertullus?

Read verses 22 and 23 again. Felix is an expert in Roman law, so he knows Paul's rights. He's also familiar with Jewish politics and with the Way (at this time Christianity was known as "the Way"). Why do you think Felix is delaying his decision? What/who is he afraid of?

What decisions have you been putting off or have been paralyzed in deciding?  
What areas of your life are being put on hold, waiting for something to happen?

d. Read Acts 24.22-27

What an example of what it means to be a follower of Christ! In the midst of an unfair and difficult situation, Paul seizes the opportunity to bring the Gospel message to Felix and Drusilla. Though he must have known that it would not aid in his release, his message of righteousness, self-control and judgment to come were exactly what Felix and Drusilla needed to hear. Those words probably pushed away hope for his release but Paul's obedience to Jesus was a higher call to action than his release from prison.

What kind of reasons could Paul have come up with to convince himself that he should not have shared his message with Felix and Drusilla?

Do you think Paul ever regretted his course of action?

If you were Paul's lawyer at the time, what counsel would you have given him?

It's clear that Paul's word had an affect of Felix, but it's not clear if he or Drusilla ever gave their lives to Christ.

Hindsight being 20/20, does this make Paul's decision to act any less the right course of action?

How do you think the story would have turned out if Paul only focused on trying to get out of prison?

Years later, Drusilla and her son died at Pompeii during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Paul may have been the only person to ever share Jesus with her. Does this change your answer to the previous questions? Why or why not?

IV. Pray

- a. Pray that we would faithfully live out this mystery of Christ, becoming a multi-generational and multi-cultural family of God,
- b. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to act or make a decision.
- c. Lift up the upcoming mission trips to Haiti, Mexico, and the Central Valley.

Weekly Reading Schedule

Monday, February 20th	Acts 25.1-12
Tuesday, February 21st	Acts 25.13-27
Wednesday, February 22nd	Acts 26.1-8
Thursday, February 23rd	Acts 26.9-18
Friday, February 24th	Acts 26.19-32