

## Episode 113

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*Felix also hoped that Paul would bribe him, so he sent for him quite often and talked with him. After two years went by in this way, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And because Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jewish people, he left Paul in prison.*

- Acts 24.26-27

Governor Felix is a rather interesting character in Paul's story. Simply put, he was a terrifying ruler. He was involved in the slaying and plundering of cities that opposed him, publicly flaunted his willingness to accept bribes, and even hired assassins to murder a High Priest who called him out on his behaviour.

On the other hand, Acts tells us that he was quite familiar with the Way, a term used to refer to Christianity. In his interaction with Paul, we see that he is clearly moved by the gospel. The Governor even goes as far as bringing his Jewish wife along with him to court, something that was considered extremely unprofessional at the time, so that she too could hear Paul share about faith in Christ. It was also evident to those who were there, that when Paul spoke of the coming day of judgement, Felix became frightened and sent Paul away. But still, over a two-year period, he sent for Paul quite often to speak to him.

And yet nothing came of it. Felix went on to commit further atrocities, and Paul was left in prison.

This has to be one of the toughest elements of our journey with Jesus. He is so indescribably wonderful. There is nothing that compares to the privilege and wonder of time in his presence. The way he has carried us, cared for us, forgiven, and restored us is unprecedented. And yet, when we share the gospel with others, it often drops to the floor like unwanted garbage.

I don't know why I spent my entire high school life being ridiculed and ostracised because of my faith, and then had to endure the pain of eleven friends dying in the first year out of school. I don't know why some family members cling to their unbelief while their lives fall apart and loved ones turn on them, leaving them for dead, while Jesus says 'I have heard your cries, I have seen your pain, I am concerned, and so I have come down...' I don't know why I hear of half a conversation that leads to salvation, while those I pray for and love on and stand by and care for, turn around and scoff at the gospel.

I don't know why nothing comes of it. We continue to share the love of the Father, and they continue to push God away.

However, I am encouraged by the fact that even the great Apostle Paul had the same experience, as did Jesus, the very one we preach. But he didn't stop loving those who rejected him and didn't stop sharing the gospel, leaving the outcome in his Father's hands.

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