

**Devoted and Unshaken: The Book of Acts**  
**“Faith On Trial” (#28) Acts 24**  
**Cornerstone Church of Poway**  
**Pastor Ed Turley**  
**November 2, 2025**

**Sermon Notes**

**Big Idea:** Faithfulness means standing firm in your convictions, speaking truth with courage, and trusting God’s timing when life feels on hold.

**When Your Faith Is On Trial:**

**1. Stand Firm in Your Convictions When They’re Questioned (vv. 1–21)**

<sup>1</sup> Five days later the high priest Ananias went down to Caesarea with some of the elders and a lawyer named Tertullus, and they brought their charges against Paul before the governor. <sup>2</sup> When Paul was called in, Tertullus presented his case before Felix: "We have enjoyed a long period of peace under you, and your foresight has brought about reforms in this nation. <sup>3</sup> Everywhere and in every way, most excellent Felix, we acknowledge this with profound gratitude. <sup>4</sup> But in order not to weary you further, I would request that you be kind enough to hear us briefly. <sup>5</sup> "We have found this man to be a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world. He is a ringleader of the Nazarene sect

<sup>6</sup> and even tried to desecrate the temple; so we seized him. <sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> By examining him yourself you will be able to learn the truth about all these charges we are bringing against him." <sup>9</sup> The Jews joined in the accusation, asserting that these things were true. <sup>10</sup> When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: "I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense. <sup>11</sup> You can easily verify that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. <sup>12</sup> My accusers did not find me arguing with anyone at the temple, or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. <sup>13</sup> And they cannot prove to you the charges they are now making against me. <sup>14</sup> However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, <sup>15</sup> and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. <sup>16</sup> So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. <sup>17</sup> "After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings. <sup>18</sup> I was ceremonially clean when they found me in the temple courts doing this. There was no crowd with me, nor was I involved in any disturbance. <sup>19</sup> But there are some Jews from the province of Asia, who ought to be here before you and bring charges if they have anything against me. <sup>20</sup> Or these who are here should state what crime they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin-- <sup>21</sup> unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'" **Acts 24:1-21 (NIV)**

On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, <sup>20</sup> for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. **Matthew 10:18-20 (NIV)**

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## 2. Speak Truth With Courage When It's Costly (vv. 22–26)

<sup>22</sup> Then Felix, who was well acquainted with the Way, adjourned the proceedings. "When Lysias the commander comes," he said, "I will decide your case." <sup>23</sup> He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom and permit his friends to take care of his needs. <sup>24</sup> Several days later **Felix** came with his **wife Drusilla**, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> As Paul discoursed on **righteousness, self-control** and the **judgment** to come, Felix was **afraid** and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it **convenient**, I will send for you." <sup>26</sup> At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him **frequently** and talked with him. **Acts 24:22-26 (NIV)**

The **integrity** of the upright **guides** them, but the **unfaithful are destroyed** by their **duplicity**. **Proverbs 11:3 (NIV)**

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## 3. Trust God's Timing When Life Feels On Hold (vv. 27)

<sup>27</sup> When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison. **Acts 24:27 (NIV)**

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. **Romans 8:28 (NIV)**

I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

<sup>14</sup> Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

**Psalms 27:13-14 (NIV)**

- Where is my faith being tested right now?

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### My Next Right Steps, I Will:

- ☐ Stand on truth with grace and confidence
- ☐ Be patient when God's plan seems delayed
- ☐ Accept Jesus as My Savior and Lord
- ☐ Be baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ



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**Talk It Over**

**Big Idea:** Faithfulness means standing firm in your convictions, speaking truth with courage, and trusting God's timing when life feels on hold.

**Icebreaker – "When Have You Been Misunderstood?"**

Share a time when you were misunderstood for doing the right thing. How did you handle it, and what did you learn about trusting God through that experience?

**Read Aloud: Acts 24:1–27**

**When Your Faith Is On Trial:**

**1. Stand Firm in Your Convictions When They're Questioned (vv. 1–21)**

What stands out to you about Paul's tone and attitude in his defense?

How can we keep our conscience clear before God and others, like Paul (v. 16)?

When have you felt pressure to stay quiet about your faith? How did you respond?

**Takeaway:** Faithfulness means calmly standing on truth and confidence in God.

**2. Speak Truth With Courage When It's Costly (vv. 22–26)**

Felix wanted to hear Paul speak, but his motives were selfish. What does this reveal about people who "like" spiritual talk but resist spiritual truth?

Where might we be tempted to compromise our integrity to gain approval, success, or comfort?

What helps you stay centered on pleasing God rather than people?

**Takeaway:** Integrity is doing what's right even when it costs you.

### **3. Trust God's Timing When Life Feels On Hold (vv. 27)**

Paul sat in prison for two years. How would you have felt in his situation?

What do you think God was doing in Paul and through Paul during this waiting season?

How can waiting strengthen our faith rather than weaken it?

**Takeaway:** God's delays are not His denials. Waiting seasons are often His preparation for the next step.

#### **Group Reflection:**

Which of these challenges—being questioned, pressured, or delayed—do you most relate to right now?

What truth from Paul's example encourages you most to stay faithful?

#### **Next Steps:**

- Pray daily for courage to live with integrity this week.
- Identify one area where you need to stand firm in truth or trust God's timing.

**Memorize Acts 24:16** — "I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man."