

Acts 44 – **Motives & Actions - Acts 24:1-27**

In our **Previous Ch** - God was working “**Behind The Scenes**”
in order to get **Paul started** on the Road to **ROME**

There had **been** a couple of “**Close Calls**” with the **Sanhedrin** **AND**
with the **Roman Commander** in Jerusalem

AND after a **PLOT** by **40 Assassins** to **KILL** Paul
was **Uncovered** by Paul’s **NEPHEW**

Finally the **Roman Commander** in Jerusalem sends Paul -
Under **HEAVY Guard** - to the **Roman Governor** in Caesarea

Who put Paul in **Jail** - in order to **Wait** for his **Accusers** to Arrive
before giving them a “**Hearing**” regarding their “**Charges**”

Today - we’re going to **LOOK** at that **Hearing**

& we’re going to see **THREE** Distinct **MOTIVES** in our Text
The **Jewish Leader’s** - **Paul’s** - & **Felix the Roman Governor**

Three very **Different MOTIVES** -
That create Three **Different RESPONSES**

You know - Our **MOTIVES** drive our **ACTIONS**, *Right?*

In fact - **Webster’s Definition of MOTIVE** is;
something that causes a person to act

So - We’re going to look at **Motives & Actions**
of **3 Different People** today

& **hopefully** - we’ll be **willing to consider**
how our Own **MOTIVES** Effect Our **ACTIONS** (*LET’S PRAY*)

Have you ever considered

We tend to SEE things in a way that BEST SUITS - US

We tend to CONVEY things in a way that BEST SUITS - US

& sometimes - we tend to "COLOR" the facts a little
in a way that sounds best - to achieve our own ends

Or we may even SLANT the facts - just a little bit
to try to get people around us - to agree with us

Motives are one of the HARDEST things to address
because they can truly ONLY be seen - by GOD

But we need to Recognize - Either SELFISH - or GODLY
our MOTIVES influence our ACTIONS

& so - we're going to look at how SELFISH MOTIVES influence
the actions of TWO people today

AND - We'll see how GODLY MOTIVES influence the actions
of ONE person today

& If we'll just be HONEST with Ourselves & God
then I think we can LEARN a LOT from this text today

Acts 24:1 (esv)

1 And after five days (since Paul arrived in Caesarea) the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul.

Just 5 days after Paul escaped the Assassination Plot
that THESE GUYS were a Part of

The High Priest (that Paul had offended), some Jewish Elders,
AND - One LAWYER named Tertullus - came to ACCUSE Paul

Tertullus was a hired GUN (Lawyer) - Brought in to do the speaking

To SLANT the facts in the Right Direction - to say the "Right Things"
to try to get "RID" of Paul - *Once & For All*

THAT was their MOTIVE - & their MOTIVE was Definitely going to
SLANT their Presentation of the FACTS

So - Governor Felix is there - Paul is brought in from prison
& they're going to state their CHARGES against him

But - the "Professional Speaker" begins with Pure FLATTERY
to try to COLOR what the Governor HEARS

Acts 24:2-3 (esv)

2 And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying (to the Gov): "Since through you we enjoy much peace, and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation,

3 in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude.

Those may sound like NICE words - But NONE of them were TRUE -
These Jews KNEW IT - AND the Governor KNEW IT

NONE of it was true !!

The Jews were NOT enjoying PEACE under Felix . . .

Felix had made NO Positive Reforms

The Jews certainly DID NOT accept his rule with Gratitude

In fact - there had been nothing but PROBLEMS between
this Roman Governor & the Jews - since he came to Judea

But these guys have a very specific MOTIVE
& so their words are PLANNED carefully - to achieve that outcome

Really - Don't we do this - in our Sin Nature

We learned it when we were a baby
trying to get GrandPa to give us Candy for Breakfast

We learned to SCHMOOZE & FLATTER
to try to get what we want

& so after the SCHMOOZING & FLATTERING . . .

these guys are going to take the "FACTS" - & "MASSAGE them" a bit -
BEND them a little - to try to get the outcome they want

& honestly - we've ALL done this at some level

When we want someone to "COME OVER" to our way of thinking -
When we want them to SUPPORT US in what we're doing . . .

We kind of press our Motives ONTO the Facts - & then we present
the facts in a way to SWAY that person - to OUR SIDE

So WATCH - as the hired gun - Bends & Embellishes the facts -
to try to achieve the Desired outcome

The Lawyer has Flattered & Schmoozed the Judge
now he's ready to present his VERSION of the facts

Acts 24:4 (the Lawyer cont's)

4 But, to detain you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly.

& then - in Vs's 5-6 - we have FOUR Accusations against Paul

Acts 24:5-6

5 For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

6 He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him.

So - let's **Review** the **FOUR Accusations** against Paul

FIRST - This man is a PLAGUE

Most Translations use the word **Trouble-Maker** here

But I like the **AMP Bible** - ***we have found this man a perfect pest***

Now - if **that means** - **using** God's Word - to **AGITATE** Sinners
then I guess "**Perfect Pest**" might fit **Paul**

But it's hardly worth **IMPRISONMENT** - or **DEATH**

SECOND - He stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world

Paul **HAD** been involved in some **RIOTS** - On 2 different Continents

But - - It was **actually** people working with **THIS** Group of Accusers -
who were **STIRRING UP** the Riots - **NOT** Paul

In fact - they **FOLLOWED PAUL** around
with the **sole purpose** of stirring up these **RIOTS**

& so they **take a TRUTH** (about the Riots)
& they **MIS-STATE** it - to try to **INFLUENCE** the Judges opinion

THIRD - *He's a Ringleader of a sect called "The Nazarenes"*
(no, that's not a 60's Rock Band)

This accusation is actually **TRUE** - Paul **WAS** a leader
of a **movement** - whose **Chief** was **A NAZARENE**

But **there's a SLANT** on the truth - *isn't there?*

The **implication** here - is this is some **dangerous sect** -
Like the **40 Assassins These Guys** Hired to try to **KILL** Paul

Sometimes, when our **MOTIVES** are wrong - we can even **speak**
something **GOOD** - & **SLANT it** enough make it sound - **BAD**

Which is **exactly** what this "**Professional Lawyer**" is doing here -
& it's **what** we see in our **courts** all the time

BUT - **Should WE** be using this **same approach**
to try to **achieve** our own **MOTIVES** *within the Church ??*

FOURTH accusation - *he even TRIED to Profane the Temple,
but we stopped him*

If Paul **HAD Profaned** the Temple - the **Roman Governor**
would've **allowed** the Jews to **Stone** him to **DEATH**

But they **knew** this **wasn't** true -
so they **SAY** he **TRIED** to Profane the temple . . .

They're saying -
We know that's what he WANTED to do - But WE stopped him

**The guys with the IMPURE Motives
Are Accusing Paul of having IMPURE Motives**

I've seen so much of this inside the church . . .

& when someone VILIFIES a Pastor (makes them a Villain)
they almost always attack their MOTIVES or CHARACTER

Because those things are INTANGIBLE - & can't be SEEN

So those are the FOUR Accusations - All Designed to achieve the
Desired Response from Felix the Governor

As Christians - We need to really search our own hearts

to see if SELFISH MOTIVES are causing us to BEND or MASSAGE
the truth - in order to SWAY a person for our Own Motives

& so the Lawyer "Wraps Up" his argument
& then he gets all the Jews to join in for Emotional Impact

Acts 24:8-9 (esv)

8 (the lawyer cont's) *By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him."*

9 *The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all these things were so.*

& so - the Prosecution RESTS - & the Governor allows Paul to speak

& I LOVE how Paul responds here

God's been Grinding me for YEARS - to get ME to a place
where I can respond more like this - when people Accuse me . . .

Acts 24:10

10 And when the governor had nodded to him to speak, Paul replied: “Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense.

Paul begins with a **customarily positive greeting** to the Governor

But notice - **ALL he says** is - ***“Sir, you’ve been a Judge of these Jews for many years - You know exactly How they ARE - & so I’m happy to make my defense”***

& then Paul just **“Sticks to the FACTS”**

Acts 24:11-13 (ESV)

11 You can verify that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem,

(meaning - how could I do all this in 12 days)

12 and they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or in the city.

13 Neither can they prove to you what they now bring up against me.

very simply - their **“Facts” AREN’T TRUE** -

& my **accusers can’t prove** any of this stuff

& **then Paul** just **moves on**

No big **“Emotional Melt-Down”** - No **“Over-Reacting”**

He just moves on - **TO WHAT IS TRUE**

Acts 24:14-15 (ESV)

14 But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, 15 having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.

Paul says - **On this Point** - You **Got Me**

I Confess - ***that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers . .***

& **then** Paul makes a **HUGE Statement**:

I believe everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets

He says - **It's True** - **I AM** a Follower of **THE WAY** . . .

But I **ALSO believe** everything **laid down** by **the Law**,
& **written** in **the Prophets**

& HOW can Paul say BOTH of those things??

Because - Jesus Christ IS the **FULFILLMENT**
of everything **Laid Down** in the **Law** - & **Written** in the **Prophets**

Jesus Christ Himself said in - Mat 5:17 (ESV)

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Paul had **NOTHING** against - the **Biblical Law**

He was a **Follower** of the **ONE** who **FULFILLED** the **Biblical Law**

& **NOTICE** (V.15) how Paul works **The RESURRECTION** in there
He's going to **return to that** in just a minute

& so then - Paul makes it clear in **Acts 24:16 (esv)**

16 So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.

BECAUSE I follow **Jesus Christ** - Who **IS** The **Fulfillment** of the **Law**
I take **PAINS** to **Live RIGHT** - before **God** & **Man**

We could do our **whole LESSON** - On **JUST** that **ONE Verse**

That's a **Great Defense** already

But **Paul's NOT Done** . . . He wants to "**clarify**" a bit

Acts 24:17-21 (ESV)

17 Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings. (the offering from Gentile churches)

18 While I was doing this, they found me purified in the temple, without any crowd or tumult. But some Jews from Asia -

(the Jews who've been following Paul around starting Riots)

19 they ought to be here before you and to make an accusation, should they have anything against me.

20 Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council,

21 other than this one thing that I cried out while standing among them: 'It is with respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.' ”

That was **the approach** Paul used to **get out** of the **Sanhedrin** Alive

But **isn't it interesting** - that **PAUL** - & **the Writers** of the **N.T**
ALWAYS come back to - **The RESURRECTION** of Jesus Christ

It **ALWAYS** comes down - to **the RESURRECTION**

& we **need to learn** from that - If **someone says** to you - ***YEAH BUT:***
Oprah has some really good “Rules For Living” . . .

Well - **that’s fine** - But has she ever **Risen From the DEAD** ??

Or - How about - **Buddha**, or **Confucius**, or **Mohammed**, or **Sun Yun Moon**, or **L. Ron Hubbard** - or ANY other of the Thousands . . .

The **DIFFERENCE** between **ALL** of them - & **Jesus Christ** . . .

IS that there is **Historical**, **Verifiable PROOF**
that **Jesus** Christ **ROSE** from the **DEAD**

& **THAT** puts Him in a **LEAGUE of His OWN**

& so **as Paul continues** his Logical **DEFENSE** - He **AGAIN**
Turns it BACK to the **Resurrection**

& **He’s turning** the Court hearing - into an **Evangelism Opportunity** !!

WHY ?? - - Because **THAT** is Paul’s **MOTIVE**
That’s what’s in **His HEART**
That’s what **He’s LOOKING FOR**

& his **MOTIVE** - **CAUSES** His **ACTION**

Paul’s **MOTIVE** is to **GLORIFY GOD**
& to **TURN** the **FOCUS** to **the GOSPEL**

& Because **THAT** is his **MOTIVE** - **That** is what His **ACTIONS** Are

& so - the REST of this CH is NOT about Paul's Innocence At All

- 1) The Governor is going to Send Paul's Accusers AWAY
- 2) He's going to Procrastinate - considering his Political Options
- 3) And he's going to be Drawn to Hear More from Paul

The BIGGEST Lessons I learn from this "Courtroom Scene" are:

1st) Paul was ACTUALLY Innocent of these charges
Which is absolutely critical for all this to work

2nd) Paul calmly Refuted the accusations - & then turned the Entire
Conversation - toward Jesus Christ & the Resurrection

Paul DIDN'T get all worked up - Defending His Honor or Character
& he was also NOT Primarily Focused on getting out of Jail

His PRIMARY Motive in ALL of this - was to bring Glory to GOD
& get an opportunity to SHARE the GOSPEL Msg

& so - Please listen carefully - while I talk to MYSELF

#1 - Our Primary MOTIVE Must Be - to Bring Glory to God
by how we LIVE, How we ACT, & how we RESPOND
including when someone is accusing us

#2 - We've got to Remember - The situation is Ultimately about the
GOSPEL Message - & we've GOT to Keep the Focus - THERE

& - THAT is exactly what Paul does in This Situation

Finally - let's **LOOK** at how the **Governor's MOTIVES** influenced **HIS ACTIONS**

Acts 24:22

22 But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case."

Felix "Puts Off" a decision = Procrastination

But HOW did he get - "***an accurate knowledge of the Way***" ??

Maybe it was from his Illicit **20 yr old JEWISH Wife - DRUSILLA** who'll **we'll meet** in a second

But - Felix **KNEW** there was **NOTHING** worthy of **Imprisonment** in Paul's actions

But Felix's **ONLY Motive** - was **SELF Promotion**

& so he **needed some time** to figure out how **HE** could **BENEFIT** from **this situation** - So he wants to **Keep Paul** around a bit

So in Acts 24:23 we read

23 Then he gave orders to the centurion that he (Paul) should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs.

Certainly **LUKE** was with Paul here - & a **Disciple** named **ARISTARCHUS** - we'll see that in **Ch 27**

But then - as the **CH closes** - we see that **Paul's MOTIVES** **Open the Door** - to really **SHARE** the **Gospel** Msg

In Every situation we're in - God calls us to be SALT & LIGHT to cause THIRST for the Gospel - & to shine LIGHT into darkness

THAT is Paul's MOTIVE - No matter what his circumstances & God makes a way for him to achieve that Motive

Acts 24:24 (esv)

24 After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus.

This guy Felix - is a Rotten, No Good, Self-Absorbed, Scoundrel

We have a ton of history on this guy & his life & his actions - were ALL BAD

His young Jewish Wife here (Drusilla) was even another King's Wife WHEN he married her

The Guy is BAD to the CORE - Yet he says - *"I'd like to hear that Scrawny Paul talk about his Faith a little more"*

THAT was PAUL'S MOTIVE in this whole thing & God Granted it to him

But notice - when Paul gets his chance to talk - he doesn't WASTE it with pleasantries or SOCIAL chit chat

Acts 24:25 (esv)

25 And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you."

Paul was **Brought to the Guy**

who had the **POWER** to **release him** immediately

& **IF** Paul would've just "**Played Up**" to him - **like** the **Jews** had
He **may've been** a **FREE** man

But **in Christ** - Paul was **ALREADY** a **Free man**

& so **Paul shared** with this **Worldly Ruler**
Exactly what **HE** needed to **HEAR**

& **WHAT** did this **Powerful Roman Ruler** **NEED** to hear . . .??

He **needed to hear** **Exactly** what he **DIDN'T WANT** to hear

He **needed** to hear about **RIGHTEOUSNESS** - which he had **NONE**
He **needed** to hear about **SELF-CONTROL** - which he had **NONE**
He **needed** to hear about the **COMING JUDGMENT** - Which he
definitely **DID NOT** want to **hear about**

God **opened the door** for Paul to share the **TRUTH**
about this Governor's **PERSONAL NEED** for **Jesus Christ**

& **no matter** what the **consequences** were
Paul **shared the truth** - in **Love**

& the Truth **SHOOK** Felix to the **CORE**

Again - **V.25** says *Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you"*

But then - in **V.26** we see - what **MIGHT'VE** been
Governor Felix's **TRUE MOTIVE**

Acts 24:26 (esv)

26 At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him.

We know that this man's DRIVING MOTIVE was Purely SELFISH

& Paul had TOLD him - that he'd brought an Offering to the Church, so he was thinking maybe he could get a little CASH from him

Certainly Felix's MOTIVES were BAD - -

But Paul NEVER Stopped sharing the TRUTH with him . . .

EVEN AFTER TWO YEARS !!

Acts 24:27 (esv)

27 When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

Really ?? - After ALL THAT,

This guy let Paul sit in Prison for TWO YEARS ?? (Unbelievable)

We know from History - that Felix was actually REPLACED by ROME Because he was TOO EVIL & SELF-SEEKING - *Even for ROME*

His MOTIVES - AND so, His ACTIONS - were ALL BAD

& he DISAPPEARS into history - MISSING his opportunity to Truly HEAR & RESPOND to the Gospel Msg that Paul was Sharing with him that entire time

So we've seen **THREE** People's **ACTIONS**
all **CAUSED** by their **MOTIVES**

In the **Jewish Leaders** - & the **Roman Governor** - we see
SELFISH MOTIVES = **SELFISH ACTIONS**

These **two people** were Looking out for **themselves**

& **they were** willing to **BEND** - & even **BREAK** the Truth
because of their **SELF-Centered MOTIVES**

& then - there was **PAUL** -

His **MOTIVES** were to **GLORIFY** God - & **SHARE** the Gospel

NO MATTER what the **CIRCUMSTANCES**
NO MATTER what the **CONSEQUENCES**

& so he **Spoke the Truth** in Love
& **Let GOD** handle the **OUTCOME**

Now - - - **WE CHOOSE** . . .

Selfish MOTIVES = **Selfish ACTIONS**

Godly MOTIVES = **Godly ACTIONS**

May we have the **COURAGE** to Check our **MOTIVES**
& **when necessary** - **CHANGE** them

Let's Pray