

# It's Hard To Change Washington

## Acts 25:1-12

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 7-12-2009

### Introduction

I think most of us find it very frustrating to see principled men getting elected to Congress and unable to change a thing. One aid to Ron Paul said that he had no idea where some of 1500-page-bills even came from. They try to track them down, and they know that they are not written by the Congressmen who introduce them, and they are not written by their staff or aids. So where do the bills come from? This disgusted aid said,

The Government Printing Office produces 200 pages of the *Congressional Record* each day at an estimated \$300 per printed page. It is sitting on each legislator's desk the day following the proceedings, waiting to be read. (No one ever reads it.) Then there is the *Federal Register*, another daily production of 200-plus pages, filled with new regulations from the bureaucracy, all having the force of law...

About 60,000 pages of these regulations are published each year, in three column fine print, most of it incomprehensible. No one but lawyers read it. This is the law of the land. Congress proposes, but the Federal bureaucracy disposes....

Is it any wonder that people with principles get eaten up and spit out by this system? ...

In fact, some people have even given up on being involved in politics because they have become so cynical. But you know what? If you read the writings of the first century Jewish and Roman historians, you will discover that there is nothing new under the sun. Well, I guess the photocopiers are new and the 60,000 printed pages are new, but not the bureaucracy that drives it. It's always been difficult to change deeply entrenched political machines. But what we will see in this chapter is that God's hand is not too short that it cannot save in even such a wretched system as existed in Palestine in late 59 to early 60 AD.

### I. Citizens had hoped for political improvement (see Josephus)

#### A. *Felix was as corrupt as they come (24:27)*

Let me remind you a little bit about Felix. We're going to back up just a little bit to the previous chapter, last verse. There were many reasons why Jews wanted Felix out of office at any cost. And they had tried and tried

© Copyright 2009 by Phillip G. Kayser. Permission is granted to all readers to download, print, and distribute on paper or electronically any Sermons, provided that each reprint bear this copyright notice, current address, and telephone number, and provided that all such reproductions are distributed to the public without charge. They may not be sold or issued in book form, CD-ROM form, or microfiche without prior permission.

Phillip G. Kayser • Dominion Covenant Church • 307.N 41st Ave. Omaha, NE 68131 • 402.934.3300

again unsuccessfully. But finally Felix's immorality, cruelty and corruption were so outrageous that that he got successfully impeached. You maybe didn't know that impeachment happened back then, but it did. Even though Nero was Felix's friend, he felt like he needed to do something. Chapter 24:27 says, "**But after two years, Porcius Festus succeeded Felix...**" Nero replaced Felix because things were falling apart in Palestine. I don't think that Nero cared about Felix's immorality, or about his graft, bribery, plundering and other forms of corruption. The only thing that Nero was upset about was that Felix had lost control. When the state pretends to be Messiah, you can't lose control. That is the unforgiveable sin. And Felix had lost control. His wanton slaughter of Jews in 60 AD was the final straw that made the Jews willing to go to war rather than put up with him for one more day. There was rioting all over the place and his corruptions became so well publicized that you can read about them to this day in the Roman historians.

You would think that it would be the end of Felix's career. But you learn in the political world that Barney Franks, Ted Kennedys, and other well-connected people can bounce back after just about any scandal. It's an amazing thing. Felix's brother Pallas was enormously wealthy and was able to buy time for Felix, and Felix had become so well connected with the power brokers in Palestine, that he was able to get their testimony on his side. That is hinted at in the last phrase of that verse - **and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.** Everyone knows that Felix hated the Jewish leaders, so why does he want to do them a favor? Well, I'm convinced that it was to change the Jewish testimony against him. There's a lot of greasing of palms going on. And despite criminal activities by this governor, no one seems able to touch him. It's frustrating.

But you know what? God is still on His throne, and even invincible guys like Felix are not outside the touch of God's judgments. All the pagan players in this chapter – Felix and his wife, King Agrippa and Bernice – just happened to be vacationing in Pompeii when Mount Vesuvius erupted, and they were all killed. God had the last word. But usually we don't have patience for God's judgments. And some Christians today don't believe in praying for God's judgments. But they want change, and they only way they think they can get it is by playing along with the world's games. It won't work. Politics will never change politics; only God's grace can change politics in a God-pleasing way.

### ***B. Festus was at least new (25:1)***

But change did come in this chapter. In fact, it was change that people were excited about. With Festus coming into office, Jewish citizens were breathing a sigh of relief. “Finally we are going to have some change!” At least Felix is out of office. From all the records that we have, Festus was a fairly decent guy. And it looks like things are going to turn around. They’ve finally got a conservative governor! Yay! Yay! Yay! But we’ve got to remember – it doesn’t matter how conservative an unbeliever might be, Satan can still manipulate him. Do not put your trust in princes.

Anyway, look at chapter 25:1 – **“Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem.”** Here is a man of action who makes no delay in trying to meet with and understand his constituents and make them feel like he is listening to their issues. He’s being a good politician here. Unlike Felix, he is not aloof. He is mixing it up with the grassroots. It gave the Jews some of the same hopes that a newly elected conservative to Congress or the Senate gives to Americans who are absolutely disgusted with what is happening in Washington DC. Festus was at least new, and not yet part of the corrupt system in Jerusalem. That seems like a good thing to Jews like Josephus.

## **II. The powers-that-be were intending to control the new appointee**

### ***A. A new guy needs information (v. 2)***

But Festus has some of the same disadvantages that new Congressmen have today. He’s a new guy on the block and doesn’t know how things work in Israel. So he goes to get information in verse 2. But who is it that gives him the information? The same rotten group that worked with Felix. Look at verses 2 and 3: **“Then the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they petitioned him, asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem...”** There are two things that Festus is going to need if he is going to rule effectively – information and allies in politics. But the problem is that corrupt politicians have the information that he needs, and they are the allies that he needs. It stinks, but that seems to be the way it works, unless you are willing to consistently vote “No” like Ron Paul did, and lose by a margin of 407 to 2. Even conservatives like Festus fall into this mess without wanting to.

***B. A new guy needs friends/allies (v. 3a)***

Most guys want to be effective, so they try to rub shoulders with the power brokers. And those power brokers are always asking for favors. Verse 3 says, “...**asking a favor against him** [that is, against Paul], **that he would summon him to Jerusalem...**”

***C. A new guy is ignorant of their agendas (v. 3b)***

Festus is likely naïve about their true agenda. Their true, unspoken agenda is given in the last phrase of verse 3 – “**while they lay in ambush along the road to kill him.**” It’s unlikely that they told him that part. He’s not a dummy. He knows that there are going to be agendas, but he doesn’t know what those are. He just knows that if he is going to clean up the mess that Felix has left behind and not have his own head on a platter, he needs help. He needs to regain control of this unruly province.

So we see that new administrators are at a disadvantage. Just as no Congressman can possibly learn the ropes overnight, and no Congressman can possibly read every bill and know how to plan every day without help, Festus would not be able to govern this unruly nation without help. But the problem is that you can’t totally trust the help that you are getting. And numerous Congressmen have discovered this. It’s another frustrating reality if you are going to work in politics.

**III. Festus tries not to be controlled*****A. He dictates the place (v. 4-5)***

So in verses 4-6 we see hints that Festus was trying to be somewhat independent in his thinking. He was trying to be somewhat principled. He was a halfway decent guy. In his case there would be no underhanded favors. Verse 4 – “**But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there shortly. Therefore, he said, ‘let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him.’**” It would make him look weak if he instantly gave up jurisdiction on Paul, but at the same time he can’t offend these guys. So he makes a move that shows that he intends to be in control, yet that he also wants to work with these guys. He probably feels good about this. He has the illusion of controlling the situation.

***B. He dictates the time (v. 6)***

He has just dictated the place that they would meet. Then in verse 6 he makes it clear that he isn’t going to be rushed into a decision. It says, “**And**

**when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought.”** Festus gives the illusion of controlling affairs under his jurisdiction.

#### **IV. But he is not successful**

##### ***A. The Jewish leaders stack the deck (v. 7)***

But he soon learns that these Jewish leaders know how to stack the deck in a way where it will be impossible for him to give justice and still survive as a governor. Verse 7 says, **“When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.”** Festus is no dummy. He’s been around the block a few times. He knows what is going on. Paul says so in verse 10 – **“To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know.”** As a judge he had to have read all the proceedings of the previous court cases in Jerusalem and in Caesarea. Just based on that evidence alone he knows that Paul is innocent. But now you have all the power brokers complicating things and insisting on Paul’s head, but not able to prove their charges. They are in effect asking him to ignore the evidence. He’s kind of stuck. If Festus wants to start off on a good foot with the power brokers, he is going to have to figure out a way to please them on this case. But he can’t ignore law too freely or he might be impeached for that reason too. In fact, they might use that against him later. He knows that these Jews have gotten Felix out of office, but he also knows that Felix has managed to buy their support somehow. But he’s inexperienced. It’s going to be hard to keep his hands clean.

##### ***B. It’s Paul’s word against the word of the most powerful men in the region (v. 8)***

If he sides with Paul, which all the evidence shows that he should, he will be stymied at every point during his tenure in Palestine. Actually, as it turns out, he doesn’t last more than two years. And the reason is that he is just too conservative. He hates being manipulated and controlled, and he wasn’t a corrupt manipulator like Felix was. And so, he doesn’t last. This is a machine that chews up conservatives and spits them out. The parallel to Washington DC is very similar.

## V. **Another half-decent magistrate crumbles to the pressure**

### *A. He wants to please the power-brokers (v. 9a)*

In any case, in verse 9 we see a half-decent magistrate crumbling to the pressure. **“But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor** [there’s that nasty little phrase again – it is a phrase that has led many a conservative to become what one Ron Paul aid called “gray sludge.” You will never retain clean hands if you want to do the powerbrokers a favor in order to retain your seat, or get on an influential committee, or be heard in committee. In fact, if retaining your seat is important at all, it is unlikely that you will make the tough decisions that will make God pleased. I could give you story after story of how potentially good Congressmen have become gray sludge and useless to the cause because they didn’t want to be on the outside looking in; because they wanted the favor of the power brokers. It is a death trap. And it became a death trap for Festus who was another conservative chewed up and spit out within two years of arriving.

### *B. But he still wants to appear just (v. 9b)*

You can see in the second half of verse 9 that Festus wants to have his cake and eat it too. He knows that he can’t legally relinquish jurisdiction, so he asks Paul, **“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?”** Now wait a shake! If he is going to judge the case in Jerusalem, why can’t he do so here in Caesarea? I think Festus knows that Paul is going to be a sacrificial lamb, but it is a small sacrifice in the interests of peace and in the interests of the nation as a whole. It’s pragmatism. It stinks.

This is why I do not put my hopes in getting men elected to Washington. Will I support and vote for the right men to go there? Yes I will. But I have no illusions about them being able to change much of anything at all. Congress has very little control over the vast Federal bureaucracy. Just see what happens when they do the audit – if the senate approves the audit of the Federal Reserve. I don’t think much is going to change at all. It is much more important that we focus on training and electing local magistrates who can give some protections from the corruptions from above. Apart from massive Reformation we are not going to see massive change for the good.

## VI. Paul rebukes Festus

### *A. For relinquishing jurisdiction (v. 10a)*

In any case, Paul is not timid about blasting Festus for his obvious hypocrisy. And if you think that Christians must always be polite to political officials, you haven't read much of Paul's working with politicians in this book. Paul's words would have stung. These are tough words. They were not designed to please or to appease. They are an outright rebuke of Festus. We'll get to verse 11 in a second, but let me read verse 10. **“So Paul said, ‘I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know.’”**

There is no way that Festus should be relinquishing jurisdiction to the Jews. His presence in Jerusalem meant nothing if he was not willing to judge Paul right here and now in Caesarea. So the first part of the rebuke is saying that Paul's jurisdiction belonged in Caesarea.

### *B. For playing politics with Paul's liberties (v. 10b)*

The second part of the rebuke is that Festus knows Paul is innocent, so sending him to Jerusalem is simply playing political games. It's ridiculous. Paul knows that if Festus concedes to Jewish desires on this point, the Sanhedrin will easily be able to extract further concessions in Jerusalem. Besides, Paul knows how dangerous it is to travel to Jerusalem. He could be killed at any point along the road. So he rebukes Festus for failing to do his duty as an officer of the law to protect Roman citizens from injustice.

But before I move on to the third part of Paul's rebuke in verse 11, let me make some brief applications of that phrase, **‘I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged.’** Notice the word “ought.” That stands in contradiction to those who believe themselves to be sovereign individuals who do not need to recognize the jurisdiction of pagan courts. People argue the distinction between corporate America and non-corporate America. But States as corporations really started with Rome, and the situation is parallel. Yet Paul acknowledged that Rome did have legitimate jurisdiction in his case. I think this is a flat out contradiction to the sovereign individual theory. I think it contradicts four other theories too. Let me list them:

The word “ought” also stands in contradiction to the position of anarchism, which denies the legitimacy of any civil government. That word “ought” also stands in contradiction to Anabaptists who believe that the civil government is so totally evil that a Christian should have nothing to do with

it. Paul said that he “ought” to be judged at this court for his own protection. That word “ought” also stands in contradiction to those who say we should only use church courts and may never use the civil courts.

This last one might take a little more explaining because when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 6 five and a half years earlier, in 54 AD, he was quite perturbed that the Corinthians were taking each other to civil court. That may seem like a contradiction to this “ought.” It really is not. So turn there with me to 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.

**1Corinthians 6:1 Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?**

**1Corinthians 6:2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?**

So he is saying that church courts ought to be experts in Biblical law. We ought to be able to give justice far better than any pagan court would. But Paul is saying that a believer should not take another believer to a pagan court. They should settle it within the church. Continuing to read in verse 3:

**1Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?**

**1Corinthians 6:4 If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?**

**1Corinthians 6:5 I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?**

**1Corinthians 6:6 But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!**

**1Corinthians 6:7 Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated?**

**1Corinthians 6:8 No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do* these things to your brethren!**

So I do not question the fact that Christians should not take each other to secular courts. They should take their issues to a church court, or Christian mediation, or binding arbitration. Of course, if one of them is excommunicated the other party is free to take that person to a pagan civil court. Why? Because that person is now treated as an unbeliever (Matthew 18).

There have been some Christians who have said that churches should never go to court to defend their million dollar properties from seizure by a liberal denomination (like the PCUSA). I disagree. If anything is parallel, it is Paul’s dispute with the liberal apostate denomination of Judaism. He’s taking them to court by appealing. And here Paul knew he would not get a fair hearing in the Jewish court. He says that this has become a civil matter and he is bound and determined to have it heard by a civil court. So I think



this passage helps to bring correction to some errors that are out there regarding the role of pagan courts. They do have a role in God's plan. Romans 13 discusses that role, and Paul wrote Romans about four and a half years earlier.

## VII. Paul bypasses Festus' authority

### *A. Paul is not an anarchist (v. 11a)*

Look at verse 11: **“For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.”** Paul completely bypasses Festus's authority, but he does not do so like some anarchists do. He has already declared his willingness to stand in a Roman court. He is saying that Festus really should have taken jurisdiction. He does not declare himself to be out of Rome's jurisdiction. Instead, Paul appeals to a higher court within Roman jurisdiction. Those of you who are wrestling with legal issues and governmental authority from a libertarian perspective need to wrestle with these kinds of verses. They are key verses in understanding true authority. Festus did not have authority to abdicate jurisdiction. Since he was proving to be incompetent, Paul insists on his right of appeal.

### *B. He has no problem with the death penalty (v. 11b)*

The second thing to notice is that Paul is not opposed to the death penalty being imposed by a civil magistrate. That's very interesting. His statement is utterly incompatible with anarchism. He says, **“For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying...”** Paul sees the civil magistrate as having a very limited but real authority to inflict the death penalty. Again, I think this is a needed correction for some in this church who have bought into faulty ideas on politics. Civil magistrates do have legitimate authority – even pagan ones.

### *C. But he refuses to submit to injustice (v. 11c)*

But that does not mean that Paul takes injustice passively. He fights for justice. That's what he has been doing at every stage of the game when he defends himself in court. If he had simply told the magistrates that he did not recognize their authority over him, he would have been dead long ago. But Paul operates within their jurisdiction while still fighting for his Roman rights. He knows how to fight within the system. We should never be passive in the civil realm. In upcoming years we may face many unjust

attacks. I have no plans on taking them passively. I believe Christians are duty bound to defend themselves from illegitimate punishments just like Paul did here.

***D. He appeals to Nero (v. 11d)***

And Paul's appeal to Nero was a calculated but risky move. And the reason it was risky was that Nero was no paragon of justice. He was already involved in some rather scandalous behaviors. It's true that Nero was still in his "golden period" of relative justice. For the next two years he would still be under the moderating influence of Burrus and Pliny. And Paul figured that he stood a better chance of surviving under Nero than he would of going to Jerusalem. And when you operate within the realm of pagan politics you sometimes have to calculate similar risky options.

**VIII. Festus is obviously blindsided (and upset) by Paul's move (v. 12)**

***A. They are bound by precedent***

Well, let's move on to point VIII. Festus is obviously blindsided by this bold move. And he also appears to be a little upset with the way Paul has treated him. So verse 12 says, "**Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, 'You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!'**" He confers with the council to see what he must do. But Roman law is quite clear. Roman citizens had the right to appeal to Caesar. It didn't mean they would get justice, but they clearly had that right.

***B. Festus is obviously a bit irritated (v. 12b)***

The way Festus says this shows that he is a little bit irritated. His pride gets hurt, but there is nothing he can do about it.

***C. But the council thinks that Paul has hung himself by this decision.***

And the council doesn't seem to have too many objections. They probably think that Paul has signed his own death warrant. Claudius (the previous emperor) obviously didn't like Jews. Nero is proving to be impatient, and anyone who knew him knew that he was a bit of a scary guy. For example, six years previously Nero came to the throne by getting his mom to poison Claudius. Five years before Nero poisoned his half brother who was a rival. Within the last year he killed his own mother, Agrippina the Younger for criticizing Nero's mistress. So as far as they were

concerned, Paul was finished. Who wants to go to Nero? But for Paul it really was a better option. He sees this as being God's means of preaching in Rome, and though it is a risky move, it is far less risky than going to Jerusalem.

By the way, it proved to be a good move because Paul does not get executed for another five years. That's a lot of time for continued ministry. And though there is debate on it, it appears that Paul gets released from prison, continues his ministry as planned, and then get's arrested and executed around the same time that Peter does.

## Conclusion

So what are we to make of all this? Why am I preaching on politics? Why not just skip over this passage? Shouldn't we just stick to the Gospel? And my response is that even though he is in prison because of the Gospel, this text doesn't mention the Gospel or Jesus. *But (and this is a big "but") it highlights one of the reasons why Paul's Gospel and Paul's Jesus were more offensive than the Gospel and Jesus of the modern church.* The Gospel of many churches today will never get them in trouble. The Gospel and the Jesus of Paul were constantly getting him into trouble. And I think we need to investigate why. Paul's Gospel is not only about justification by faith alone. As precious, wonderful, and central as the doctrine of justification by faith alone is to us, it is only part of the Good News. The Good News is that everything that was forfeited by the first Adam through sin has been regained by the Second Adam (Jesus) through grace. The Gospel includes election (from eternity past), redemption on the cross, regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. It includes a New Heavens and a New Earth. Christ's grace will eventually reach "far as the curse is found." Which means that the Good News is even good news for politics. His grace will take over politics.

This means that there is no square inch of planet earth that Jesus doesn't claim and doesn't speak to. After all, all authority had been given to Him in heaven and on earth. Well, if you start preaching that, you will get in trouble with authorities on earth.

Now there is a balance here. Even though magistrates may rebel against God's purposes for magistrates, they are still useful tools in God's hands. We can't ignore them. On the other hand, it is the duty of believers to press for grace, righteousness, and the crown rights of King Jesus to penetrate even into the deep darkness of Washington. This is why I appreciate Capitol Ministries so much. They are imitating Paul by preaching

the Gospel to kings. The commission given to Paul in Acts 9 was “**to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.**” That mentions three mission fields. You have missions to Gentiles and you have missions to Israel, but almost nobody has taken on that task of preaching to kings. But that’s right in the middle of his commission – to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. Pray for Capitol Ministries. They are seeking to disciple magistrates in this neglected missionfield. If they are successful, America could be turned upside down just like Nineveh was at the preaching of Jonah.

It may seem like a hopeless cause to turn Washington around. But remember that Isaiah 9 does not guarantee that *our* zeal will turn it around. Instead, it guarantees that *God’s* zeal will turn it around. From the time that the Christ Child is born, and He ascends to heaven to inherit His kingdom, Isaiah 9 promises that “**Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.**” The zeal of the LORD of hosts *will* perform this. Don’t ever say that justice and judgment in Washington is hopeless. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

It doesn’t deny the need for cynicism over what happens in the DC’s of this world. In fact, it assumes gray sludge will be there until it is redeemed. Psalm 110 commands Christ, “**Rule in the midst of Your enemies!**” It assumes enemies. So the presence of enemies should never keep us from believing that Christ is ruling. But it also means that Christians must not abandon any area over which Christ is ruling. We need to penetrate every area of life. DC is corrupt mainly because Christians have pulled out. And if we are to let the Good News have its full sway in our lives, we will be passionate to extend Christ’s rule even into the midst of His enemies in DC. Let’s pray and work for change rather than getting discouraged over lack of change. But let’s realize that it will only happen if the Gospel first penetrates the lives of politicians on every level. It’s not politics that will change politicians. It is the Gospel and the Gospel alone that can do so. Amen.

Charge: Though it is hard to change Washington, Lincoln, Des Moines and other capitols, let’s penetrate those areas with the light of the Gospel and the guidance of God’s Word as Paul did. And let’s be

encouraged with the promise of Isaiah 9 that the zeal of the Lord of hosts *will* perform this. Amen.

# It's Hard To Change Washington

## Acts 25:1-12

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 7-12-2009

### Introduction

- I. Citizens had hoped for political improvement (see Josephus)
  - A. Felix was as corrupt as they come (24:27)
  - B. Festus was at least new (25:1)
- II. The powers-that-be were intending to control the new appointee
  - A. A new guy needs information (v. 2)
  - B. A new guy needs friends/allies (v. 3a)
  - C. A new guy is ignorant of their agendas (v. 3b)
- III. Festus tries not to be controlled
  - A. He dictates the place (v. 4-5)
  - B. He dictates the time (v. 6)
- IV. But he is not successful
  - A. The Jewish leaders stack the deck (v. 7)
  - B. It's Paul's word against the word of the most powerful men in the region (v. 8)
- V. Another half-decent magistrate crumbles to the pressure
  - A. He wants to please the power-brokers (v. 9a)
  - B. But he still wants to appear just (v. 9b)
- VI. Paul rebukes Festus
  - A. For relinquishing jurisdiction (v. 10a)
  - B. For playing politics with Paul's liberties (v. 10b)
- VII. Paul bypasses Festus' authority
  - A. Paul is not an anarchist (v. 11a)
  - B. He has no problem with the death penalty (v. 11b)
  - C. But he refuses to submit to injustice (v. 11c)
  - D. He appeals to Nero (v. 11d)
- VIII. Festus is obviously blindsided (and upset) by Paul's move (v. 12)
  - A. They are bound by precedent
  - B. Festus is obviously a bit irritated (v. 12b)
  - C. But the council thinks that Paul has hung himself by this decision.

### Conclusion