

Felix; Festus; Agrippa

Memory Verse: *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Pet 3:15 NIV).*

Background Helps:

This week we are considering three rulers before whom Paul stood trial: Felix (A. D. 52–60) and Festus (A. D. 60–62), who were Roman procurators (governors) of Judea (just as Pilate was procurator during the trial of Jesus), and Agrippa (Herod Agrippa II), who was the great grandson of Herod the Great (king of Judea at the time of Christ's birth). Agrippa was a Jew of Idumean (Edomite) descent who ruled as king (by Roman appointment) over territories north and northeast of Palestine.

Lesson Helps:

The Bible readings this week give us the opportunity to study these three officials in their response to the apostle Paul and the gospel: Felix in Acts 24:23–24:27, Festus in 25:1–26:32, and Agrippa in 25:13–26:32. A possible aim: My aim is to teach my students about the trials of Paul before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, so that they will not delay in putting their faith in Jesus Christ. Pick out some key verses in these three chapters to discuss this question: Compare and contrast how each of these three rulers (Felix, Festus, and Agrippa) treated Paul. Then focus on verses 24:24-26 and 26:24-29 to discuss this question: How did each of these three men respond to Paul's presentation of the gospel? (Of course, you will want to include the message of the gospel itself in your lesson, perhaps using 24:14-15, 21, 24-25 and 26:8, 18, 22-23, 27 to do so.) Then challenge your students to put their faith in Christ without delay.

An alternative lesson plan would be to focus on Paul's trial before Agrippa only (Acts 26) with a similar aim as above but limiting your discussion to Agrippa's response to the gospel.

The memory verse relates more to Paul's personal defense of the gospel before these three rulers, but you can include it by asking the question: Do you have this hope in your heart?

Assignment:

-  Read about Luke (personalities around Paul).
-  Memorize 1 Corinthians 12:6.