

Christians & The State

ACTS

Bulletin

Acts 24-26 – Paul makes his defense before Governors and Kings, preaching the gospel and asserting his rights as a Roman citizen.

5 Biblical Principles for Christians & The State

1. Christians should pray for its government and its leaders.
2. Christians should submit to its government and treat its leaders with respect.
3. Christians should disobey and oppose our government when its laws conflict with God's laws.
4. Christians should use our rights as citizens for the advancement of the gospel and the betterment of society for all people.
5. Christians should preach the gospel, make disciples, build up the church, and raise up families in a way that honors God, regardless of what the government does or doesn't do.
(Proverbs 19:4, 1 Timothy 2:2-4, Romans 13:1-7, John 18:36, Acts 4:19-20, Acts 5:29)

Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most in Paul's interactions with Felix, Festus, or Agrippa?
Was anything surprising or especially relatable from Acts 24–26?
2. Where do you see the tensions Paul faced in these chapters—misunderstanding, unfair treatment, political complexity—show up in everyday life today?

3. Paul kept trying to persuade people about Jesus, even while on trial. What does this show you about his priorities? Where do you see this kind of courage or clarity in someone you know?
4. Principle 1: Christians should pray for their government and its leaders (1 Tim 2:1–4). What makes it difficult or easy for you to pray regularly for leaders, especially ones you disagree with? Where might prayer soften fear, anger, or cynicism?
5. Principle 2: Christians should submit to the government and treat leaders with respect (Romans 13:1–7). Where do you think Christians today struggle most with the balance between respect and honest disagreement? What examples in Acts 24–26 help you think about this tension?
6. Principle 3: Christians should obey God rather than people when laws contradict God’s commands (Acts 5:29). Where do you see this line being tested in today’s culture? How can believers prepare their hearts now for moments when conviction may cost something?
7. Principle 4: Christians should use their rights as citizens for the advancement of the gospel and the good of society (Acts 25:10–12). Paul used his citizenship purposefully, not reactively. What might this look like for ordinary Christians today—in local choices, at work, or in community involvement?
8. Principle 5: Christians should preach the gospel, make disciples, build up the church, and raise families that honor God regardless of the government (Matt 28:18–20; Eph 6:4). Which of these everyday callings do you feel most drawn to right now, and which feels most difficult? Why?
9. Where did this passage challenge or expose something in your own heart—maybe fear of the future, frustration with politics, or a desire for control? How might the gospel reframe that feeling?
10. As you think about all five principles together, what is one practical, hope-filled step you sense God calling you to take this week—something small, faithful, and rooted in trust rather than fear?