

CP - 4/21/24

Acts 21:37–22:16 - Paul's Defense in Jerusalem

Sermon Outline

- The crowd beat Paul; they shouted “away with him” and were trying to kill him.
- The tribune came into the temple with at least 200 soldiers into the temple court and seized Paul. (21:32)
- Paul is taken back toward the Antonia Fortress when he asks the tribune for permission to address the crowd from the steps.

- This speech is the first of Paul's five defenses in Acts:
 - 22:1–21 (before the crowd at the Antonia Fortress)
 - 23:1–10 (before the Sanhedrin and Roman tribune)
 - 24:10–21 (before Felix in Caesarea)
 - 25:7–12 (before Festus in Caesarea)
 - 26:1–29 (before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice in Caesarea)

1. Paul was always eager and ready to share Christ. (21:37–22:2)

- Paul believed in God's providence. (9:15; 20:23–24)
 - This moment is the opportunity he has waited for/possibly dreaming about for years to share the gospel with his people in Jerusalem! (Rom 9:1–3; 10:1–4)
 - Tommy Middleton: We are more concerned about the injustices of the moment than the opportunities to share the gospel. Paul put the gospel first!
- Paul knew his audience and seized the opportunity. (Greek, Aramaic)

2. Paul's Life Before Christ (22:3–5)

- Religious Heritage and Learning
- Religious Zeal and Action
- Religious but Lost

3. Paul's Conversion to Christ (22:6–16)

- Revelation of Christ (6–9) - personal, pointed, powerful
- Conviction of Sin (7-9) - personal, pointed, powerful
- Submission, Repentance, and Faith (10-16) - “What shall I do, Lord?” He obeyed Christ!

- Baptism in itself does not bring forgiveness
 - Acts 8:13, 20–23 - Simon was baptized but still lost.
 - Acts 10:44–48 - Cornelius and family receive the Holy Spirit and are baptized later.
 - 1 Corinthians 1:17 - Baptism is separated/distinguished from the gospel.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 - Baptism not listed with the description of the gospel.

Application:

- **What is your testimony? Do you have a testimony of salvation?**
- **Who are you sent to share your testimony?**
- **Do you believe God orders your circumstances for you to share?**

Small Group Discussion

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the Bible passage and sermon Sunday? What stood out to you? What questions do you have?
2. Discuss the background of Paul's speech. Where was he speaking, and what is the significance? How were these circumstances a result of God's providence and Paul's prayer? (See Acts 9:15; 20:23–24; Romans 9:1–3; 10:1–4)
3. How did Paul's actions and words show his knowledge of his audience? Does our audience change the way we share the gospel? If so, in what appropriate ways? Discuss as a group.
4. Discuss who Paul was before he knew Christ. Why is it so dangerous to be religious without truly being saved? Why is it so easy in our culture? Discuss as a group.
5. Discuss Paul's conversion experience. What were the different parts of his conversion? (See Main Point 3 above.) How do these parts correspond to every Christian's testimony? Discuss both the mystery of conversion and yet certainty of it. Ask a few people in your group to share their conversion testimony.