

Acts
“Jesus” The Sequel
III.) Chp. 13-28 “Witnesses to the end of the earth”

Chp. 18:22-28 The royal route to Rome (3rd trip)

22:1-29

“The truth of a testimonial”

I.) Intro.

II.) Vs. 1-21 Before, during and after

III.) Vs. 22-29 Takes a beating and keeps ticking

I.) Intro.

Paul has asked for and been granted an opportunity to give his defense against three charges. **But he does so not on the basis of theological grounds but rather he defends himself and the truth based upon his personal testimony.** I love personal testimonies, as all that it requires is that you have tried the product. You don't have to understand everything about the product to know how well it works!

II.) Vs. 1-21 Before, during and after

I've noticed that most testimonials have a before, during and after picture and so does Paul's as he shows the Jews what knowing Jesus personally did in his life! Paul is going to share with the very crowd that had just finished beating him and would have killed him had not the Roman's stepped in, that in its self is a testimony of Jesus' love.

Vs. 1-2 Paul starts his defense in a familiar way using the same words that Stephen had used in chapter 7:2 over 20 years earlier before a hostile crowd that wanted to kill him saying, “*Brethren and fathers*”. That day according to 7:58 a young man named Saul heard Stephen address the. Can you imagine what must have been running through his mind?

The word “*defense*” is where we get our word apology. Today the word means to say you're sorry for some wrongdoing on your part but that is not what the word

originally meant. Christians use the word apologetics in the same way that Paul uses the word here **“to give a defense for the things we believe.”** Peter said it this way in 1 Peter 3:15, *“always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”* **Paul’s defense of the things he believes is not a theological teaching but rather his personal testimony.** Most people say, *“Oh I can’t talk to people about Jesus I just don’t know the Bible all that well!”* Hey, remember in John 9 when Jesus healed the blind man who was in that condition since birth? After Jesus touched him he was told to *“wash in the pool of Siloam”*. The folks that were from his neighborhood seeing that he was no longer blind sent him to the Pharisees who questioned him on who and how he was healed. They kept telling him that Jesus was a sinner to which he replied in verse 25 *“One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.”* This guy did not share the theological implications of healing, he just give his testimony! Folks, **nothing speaks louder of the truths of the Bible than its proofs seen in your changed life!**

BEFORE

Vs. 3-5 Paul makes sure that he speaks to them in their native tongue, which instantly silenced them. They had accused Paul of teaching everyone everywhere in 21:27 that he was against **The people** *“He doesn’t like you!”*

So in their language he shares:

- a. *“I am a Jew”*: They said they he taught everyone everywhere against “the people” and Paul’s first answer is, **“I am a Jew!”** *“Why would I speak against my own ethnicity?”*

- b. *“Born in Tarsus”*: Now we can’t be sure here but it’s a safe bet that the reason he brings up his birth place is because of the Hellenists or Greek influenced Jews. In other words he says, *“I’m one of you!”*
- c. *“Brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law”*: Paul was sent to Jerusalem to study under the famed Gamaliel who had only died a few years earlier. Every Rabbi was classified by how his students called him. They would say *“Rab”* or teacher. Or if they held him in a little higher regard they would say, *“Rabbi”* or my teacher. Now if they really held him high regard they would call him, *“Rabban”* or our teacher. Gamaliel is one of seven in all of Judaism that every received that title. Paul is telling them, *“Man I had the best teaching concerning the law that any Jew could ever have.”*
- d. *“Was zealous toward God as you all are today”*: That’s an interesting statement made by the man whom they had just beaten. Paul is sharing that like them his convictions concerning the Law led him to do just what they had done towards him (*persecute those whom he believed was against the truth*). *“Man, I used to do just what you did to me to others!”* Paul says.

Vs. 4-5 Paul explains that prior to meeting Jesus He exceeded their zeal for the law by putting to death those that followed Jesus. He bound both men and women for trial so that they would be executed for following Jesus, (*in chapter 26:10 Paul says that he cast his vote against them so that they were put to death*). This must have sounded incredible as they looked at this beaten and bloodied man before them. So he adds, *“You can go ask the High Priest, elders and the council as they gave me letters to pursue the Christians*

all the way to Damascus to bring them to trial.” Paul had been a member of the Sanhedrin; he had been a part of all this. They accused him of speaking against the Jews and he shares that he once pursued the Jewish Christians to death and the Jewish leadership knew it. Paul’s testimony was leading his listeners to the question, “*What happened to you to change you from being the hunter to the hunted?*” He brought these folks to where they would want to know what had caused the change.

DURING

Vs. 6-16 They had also accused Paul of speaking against: The law so Paul is going to share with them **Who** changed him in how he now practiced the law. Look at the amount of time Paul spends in sharing ***Who and how*** he was changed compared to what he once ***was!*** In *three verses* he shares his **BEFORE** now when it comes to the **DURING** he shares in *11 verses* what God had done. I think **that is always a good ratio!** Paul’s points in his conversion:

- a. Vs. 6 “*It happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus*”: Paul makes it clear that it was God who initiated this not him. He was still on his mission to persecute Jewish Christians, he was not looking to change nor was anyone forcing him to do so quite the opposite. In other words Paul was still practicing his brand of the law when this took place.
- b. Vs. 6b-8: Paul says that **what changed him was an encounter with the Living God in the person of Jesus Christ**. He came to realize from encountering Jesus that even though he was “**sincere**” in his faith and practice of the law he was going against the very One who is the Word of God! Can you imagine the shock and horror that must have come upon Paul as he heard the words of Jesus? Paul was exercising the law to

rid the world of Jewish followers of Jesus. Notice the detail here, “*about noon*”. In other words it was the brightest time of the day when God’s glory shown around him and he fell to the ground. **“Saul, Saul, WHY!”** That is what Jesus still asks people apart from him, WHY! “*Dale, why are you going against me?*”

Vs. 9 Paul anticipates their next question, “*What about those that were with you?*” In Acts 9:7 we are told that those with him “*heard a voice but saw no one.*” And here we are told that they saw the light but they did not hear the voice. In the Greek the word for “*heard*” in 9:7 is where we get our word phone and it means to hear a noise. Where as the word in this passage for “*hear*” means to hear and understand. So the bottom line is that those with Paul **heard a sound but not the Word of Life as Paul did. They saw light but they did not see the Light of the World, which Paul did.**

Vs. 10 The Lord asked “**Why?**” and Paul’s response was “**What shall I do?**” You can always see when someone has truly been saved by Jesus as they will always say, “*What shall I do!*” Paul went from Jesus’ adversary to become His ambassador. They accused Paul of preaching against **THE LAW** and the most important part of the Law recorded 22 times in the O.T. is to **obey the voice of the Lord.** Paul says, “*Hey, I am not against the law in fact I’m here before you because I followed it for the first time 20 years ago!*”

c. Vs. 10b-16 After asking “*what shall I do?*” the Lord responded by giving him one small step at a time. He went to the house of a devoted Jewish man named Ananias who God enabled to give Paul back his sight. As Paul shares the words of Ananias to him we see a **fourfold purpose to why the Lord chooses us to follow Him:**

1. Vs. 14 “*should know His will*”: God has chosen us so that we might personally understand what His pleasurable purpose for us is. In Ephesians 2:10 Paul

wrote that, “*We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*” **That you**

would understand that you are his work of art for good works!

2. Vs. 14 “*see the Just One*”: The word “*see*” means to perceive. Secondly the Lord has chosen us that we might see Jesus! In Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians He prays that; “*Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*”

That you would grown in the grace and knowledge of Jesus!

3. Vs. 14 “*hear the voice of His mouth*”: Third, God has chosen you to hear the voice of His mouth which is the Word of God. Paul to the Romans, “*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” God wants you to know his voice as Jesus said in John 10:27 “*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*” **That you would continue to follow Him**

wherever He leads you!

4. Vs. 15 “*you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard*”:

Finally, in Ananias’ words Paul says that the purpose of this was to do just what he was right at that moment doing, **sharing to all men what he had**

seen and heard.

Vs. 16 What else could Paul have done but obey the law as revealed in the person of Jesus and be baptized because his sins had been forgiven.

AFTER

Vs. 17-21 Paul leaves out the three years he was in Arabia and picks up his testimony when he arrived in Jerusalem for the first time since his conversion saying, “*Hey I’m not against this place it was here that Jesus gave me my mission.*” It was again obedience to the Lord that caused Paul to leave Jerusalem and the temple. Paul had argued with the Lord that he was the perfect one to testify concerning Jesus. “*I love this place but Jesus says that I’m not going to affective for Him here!*” How ironic this whole scene is as they accused of being against the temple but it was his desire to be in the temple that had gotten him beat up! Paul thought that his testimony seen in his radical transformation would convince the unbelieving Jews to trust in Jesus, but it didn’t.

III.) Vs. 22-29 Takes a beating and keeps ticking

Vs. 22-29 The Jews could not handle the thought that Gentiles could be saved apart from first becoming Jews as it offended their pride. Friends, that’s what offends people today when you speak about Jesus’ death on the cross. The commander orders Paul to be scourged in order to find out his crime but Paul says that he is a Roman citizen so he is spared the flogging. The fact that Paul was there testifying of the work of Christ proved what he was saying. **Folk’s share your story with people!** Oh they may not receive it all to well at times but the fact that you have a testimony proves the power of God that you proclaim!