

PAUL'S CONVERSION ACTS 22

When there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying. . . Paul's pulpit was on the stairs leading into the castle of Antonia, and his audience was a multitude of Jews. Paul will tell them of the change that took place in his life. They listened up to a certain point, but became enraged again and wanted him killed. He will have to answer before his accusers (Acts 22).

- I. Paul introduces self (22:1-5).
 - A. Hear my defense (vss.1,2)
 1. The circumstances and the audience must have been providentially arranged.
 2. His address was respectful.
 3. Such was a testimony to the measure of the man.
 4. Paul spoke in the Hebrew language, which would appeal to the Jews, but not necessarily to the Roman soldiers
 5. They kept the more silence.
 - B. His defense (vss.3-5)
 1. Paul began with a series of facts about self.
 2. His aim was not personal justification, but the winning of others to Christ.
 3. He was born a Jew, reared as a Jew, and educated as a Jew.
 4. According to history, Gamaliel was known as the "glory of the law."
 - a. His grandfather was Hillel
 - b. In keeping with Jewish custom, Paul probably entered the Hillel School of Religion.
 5. Paul was by culture a Greek, by citizenship a free born Roman, and by religion a Hebrew of Hebrews.
 6. I had zeal similar to yours when I was persecuting the Christians.
 7. I persecuted the Way, even unto death (Acts 26:9-10). The way is a phrase which applies to Christianity.
 8. The high priest can confirm what I have said.
- II. His Conversion.
 - A. Recorded in three chapters (9, 22, 26).
 1. This is Luke's record of Paul using his conversion to teach.
 2. This account tells us what Paul was told to do and how he responded.
 3. Paul explains to the multitude how that he—once a persecutor of Christians—later became a Christian and an apostle, in particular an apostle to the Gentiles.
 4. Who art thou Lord? [The Jews by custom, addressed their superiors as "lord".]
 5. Heard not the voice would seem to mean that they "understood not." (Acts 9:7)
 6. What shall I do Lord?
 - a. "Arise and go into Damascus and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do."
 - b. If ever the Lord was going to directly tell a person what to do to be saved, or tell him that he is already saved, surely this would have been one of those occasions.
 - c. Again, an earthen vessel is used. Ananias.
 - B. Ananias (Acts 9:13,14)
 1. Paul mentions the character of Ananias for the benefit of his audience
 2. Sight was restored.
 3. Three important conditions stated:
 - a. Paul was to know God's will. He was to know, understand, and obey the gospel in order to be saved.
 - b. Paul was to see the Righteous one.
 - c. Paul was to hear a voice from the mouth of the Righteous one.

4. Paul would be a witness for God unto all men.
 5. Why tarriest thou?
 - a. Jesus appeared to Saul to qualify him as an apostle, but he must learn from a human being what to do to be saved and become a Christian.
 - b. He must believe in the Lord, which he did. (Rom. 10:17) [For he never believed in Jesus as the Christ until Jesus in plain language announced who he was].
 - c. He must repent of his sins, which he did, as his fasting and praying for three days shows.
 - d. He must arise and be baptized and wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
 - e. Paul's sins were not forgiven when he first saw that light, for he knew not then who addressed him.
 - f. They were not forgiven when he readily believed the statement that it was Jesus who spoke to him, for he went, blind, into Damascus, and there remained, fasting and praying, until Ananias reached him and told him what he "must do."
 - g. When Ananias told him to arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins, he at once did so, and was comforted and then "took food and was strengthened." (Acts 9:19).
 - h. Calling on his name is the same as being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38), and means that while one is baptized in obedience to God, he does so calling upon the Lord and looking to Jesus for pardon and salvation.
 - C. Paul began to preach.
 1. Spent several days in Damascus (9:19-22)
 2. Came to Jerusalem (some three years after conversion).
 3. Lord told him to leave Jerusalem.
 4. Lord, they know my past.
 5. I will send thee to the Gentiles. Implied that the Jews were more hardened than Gentiles.
 6. When he mentioned the word *Gentile*, the mob went ballistic.
 - D. Paul is brought into the castle (22:24-30).
 1. He had infuriated the mob again.
 2. Get him out of their sight.
 3. Paul's speech did not reveal to him why the Jews were so angry.
 4. He will find out be beating him.
 5. Chief captain evidently stayed outside in an effort to calm the crowd.
 6. They were in the process of stretching Paul out to begin the scourging. The victim was bent forward upon a reclining post, to which he was bound by straps.
 7. Paul asked the centurion a question. (V.25).
 - a. Captain asked Paul, "Tell me, art thou a Roman?"
 - b. Paul replied, "Yea."
 8. How?
 - a. The chief captain had purchased his freedom.
 - b. Paul was free born, i.e. born a Roman citizen.
 9. Chief captain still knew nothing more about the charges against Paul. He had asked the mob. . . He had listened to Paul's speech. . . He had attempted to scourge.
 10. One more effort (v.30).
- Con: Paul's defense before this crowd ended up being a sermon on how to become a New Testament Christian. Paul sought opportunities to preach God's word. Why tarriest thou...?