

CCLEB SERMON NOTES

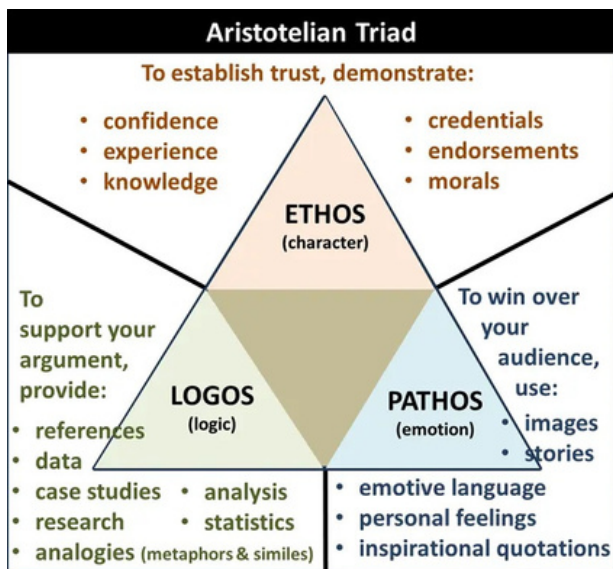


SUNDAY MAY 24, 2026
ACTS 22:1-30

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Now normally you would know the answer to this next question I have because you would have read and learned about **chapter 21** last week but let's test your bible knowledge this morning. Does anyone have any guesses how **chapter 21** ended? So to review it quickly for all of those who do not know. Paul is returning to Jerusalem ending his 3rd missionary journey despite repeated warnings that when he returns there would be trouble. Paul hears the warning not as a stop do not go but more as this is what is going to happen so be prepared. So Paul returns, meets with the church leaders and then goes to the temple for a purification ceremony to show respect to the Jewish customs. However some Jews who followed him all over his journeys were also at the temple and they falsely accused him of defiling the temple by bringing in a gentile and teaching against the law. A violent mob then forms and as they are beating Paul Roman soldiers intervene and arrest him and as they are taking him away from the crowd Paul asked and was given permission to address the angry crowd. This set the stage for today's chapter. Paul is going to address the crowd and share his testimony hoping to show them how he was one of them but was then saved by Jesus. Hoping that they too would become saved from sharing his testimony. Let us dive in! **Acts 22:1-5**



Let's stop here for a moment - In school I was taught about Aristotle's three modes of persuasion; they are Ethos (character), Logos (logic), and Pathos (emotion). I was taught that when writing a speech or any kind of paper, especially if you are trying to prove a point or win someone over you should apply these principles in this order. Ethos - Character - I list your credentials, your experience, etc. This is why there is always some intro to new speakers or doctors and they always start with their experience. It gives merit to what they are about to say next. Logos - Logic - this second part is where you lay out your argument, you prove point by point referencing data to prove your point. And Finally, Pathos - Emotion - This is the ending. This is where you will hope to win over your audience with stories and or images.

This is where my professors always told me to try to include kids or family, because those are things that mean the most for people generally speaking.

Ok, why am I diving into how to lay down an argument? Well Paul is trying to win over the Jews and he is demonstrating his persuasion skills in this speech. Paul begins his testimony with his background – who he used to be. Giving his credentials - in **verses 3-5**.

Paul is meet the crowd at their level, kinda like crouching down to speak to a child so they are not afraid of you. Paul is building his character by telling them about himself and showing how he was once just like them: “zealous to honor God.” He was “trained in Jewish laws and customs” and even “persecuted the followers of the Way” just as the crowd is doing to him at that very moment. Now Paul will begin his Logos (logic), where he provides support for his argument for why he believes in Jesus.

Acts 22:6-16

They believed that God is the one and only true God and that He would send a Messiah who would be a man who would not be divine. That line of David who would politically deliver them from oppression and establish an earthly kingdom, defeat Israel’s enemies, and restore Israel to glory. **Isaiah 9:6-7, Jeremiah 23:5**. So, you can see how under Roman oppression, many Jews longed for a political deliverer who would free them from their enemies and restore national power. Because of these expectations, Jesus was rejected. He came humbly instead of as a conquering warrior, taught people to love their enemies instead of overthrow them, and was crucified by Rome rather than defeating Rome. Not to mention the very point on which they condemned him was that the Messiah could be divine. They view God as having absolute oneness. “Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone” (**Deuteronomy 6:4**).

Yet Jesus truly was the Messiah just not the kind they expected. The Old Testament did not only speak of a conquering messiah; it also pointed to a suffering one. **Isaiah 53:5**. Showing that the Messiah would suffer for sin. **Micah 5:2** declares that the Messiah’s origins are “from days long ago, from ancient times”, hinting at His divine nature, while **Isaiah 9:6** even calls the coming Messiah “Mighty God”. Jesus himself explained that His kingdom was “not an earthly kingdom” **John 18:36** because His mission was greater than political liberation He came to defeat sin, Satan, and death itself. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus became the final sacrifice for sin once and for all: “But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time” **Hebrews 10:12, Acts 2:24**, proving He truly was the risen Lord and Messiah. This is what Paul realized on the road to Damascus when he encountered God and understood that he had been wrong that Jesus was that messiah he was waiting for. Paul's proof is that God spoke to him on the road to Damascus and opened his eyes to see these other bible passages that prove Jesus was the messiah. And if they are to doubt his story, he mentions in **verse 9** that "those who were with me saw the light" he was not alone when this happened. So what now? Does this all mean and how does this apply to the Jews? Well lets read on as Paul is finishes with his Pathos - how his life changed after encountering Jesus, how he was transformed completely.

Acts 22:17-23

Paul finishes with Pathos, the emotional appeal meant to win over his audience, but they reject him as soon as he mentions Jesus’ command to bring salvation to the gentiles. Why? Because the Jews viewed themselves as God’s chosen people. Uniquely set apart and entrusted with the Law in preparation for the Messiah’s coming. And because of this, many believed Gentiles could only come to God by first becoming like a Jew. So Paul giving a message that Jews and Gentiles were equally saved through faith in Jesus alone deeply offended them because it removed the spiritual superiority they believed they had. Ultimately Paul’s testimony shows us how completely transformed his life is because of Jesus. Once a violent persecutor of Christians who most likely approved of Stephen’s death at the beginning of the book, now openly confessing his past sins and now boldly preaching the very gospel he once tried to destroy. His encounter with Jesus changed not only his beliefs, but also his identity, purpose, and mission.

Instead of seeking status among the Jewish leaders, Paul became willing to suffer rejection and even death in obedience to Jesus' command to bring salvation to the Gentiles. The crowd listened and accepted everything he said, but as soon as he mentioned the Gentiles, they rejected him because they hated the idea of letting gentiles into their "holy" nation. Let's finish the chapter: **Acts 22:24-30**

This last bit of the chapter just sets the stage of what is to come. Paul, a Roman citizen, is going to go on to appeal and appeal all the way to Rome so that he can go on preaching to everyone. And next week he is going to speak to the Jewish high council whom he used to be a part of. And if you want to see Paul's flesh get the better of him you can go back two weeks ago and listen to the lesson Danny gave on **chapter 23** on Spotify.

Alright, what is the takeaway from this chapter? I have three points for us today.

1. Who are you apart from Christ? As Pastor Thom would always say, "Without Christ today, there would be body bags in the street." Paul knew exactly who he used to be a religious man, passionate for God, yet spiritually blind and separated from Christ. Paul, the Jews and my togoliese friends like I talked about in the beginning of this message, believed in God and were zealously passionate to serve Him, yet they were completely lost and there were in some cases literal deaths. Paul in **Romans 10:1-2** even states this fact. So what about you? Do you believe there is a God? If so, are you zealous to serve Him? And if you are, then I ask: are you zealous for building God's kingdom or building your own? **Matthew 7:21-23**. And if you do not believe there is a God, please come talk to us after the service. We would love to hear what you think.

2. Have you met Jesus? Everything changed when Paul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul offered sacrifices for sin, persecuted and killed in God's name, striving to be the best of the best among the Jews. You and I are like who Paul used to be... we strive to be good, we live for ourselves, but our sin separates us from God. The reality is that all of us will die and spend eternity separated from God because of sin (**Romans 3:23**). Sin creates a permanent wall between us and God. But the God who created everything also created you, knows you, and loves you more than you can imagine. In fact, He loved you so much that He became human, lived among us, and died on the cross to cover the sins of the world so that the wall between us and God could be removed and we could live eternally with Him after death. This is what Paul came to believe, and it completely transformed his life. **Romans 5:8**

3. Has Jesus changed your life? Accepting Jesus' death on the cross to save us from our sins should be life-altering, just as it was for Paul. We are no longer called to live for ourselves, but for God. God now invites us to love Him back and join Him in His work to restore the world, supernaturally empowering us through the Holy Spirit, who now dwells within believers. Paul did not keep this experience to himself; he boldly shared the gospel and his testimony even when people rejected him. That is the 3rd application for us today. The gospel is not merely information we believe privately – it is good news meant to be shared. Every believer has a testimony of who they were before Christ, how they encountered Him, and how He continues to transform their life. Like Paul, we are called to share that story with others, not out of pride or argument, but out of love and obedience to Jesus. Some people may reject the message, just as the crowd rejected Paul, but our responsibility is still to faithfully point people to Christ. The greatest evidence of the gospel is a life genuinely changed by Jesus. **2 Corinthians 5:17**