

# Acts 22 Handout

## Verse 1-2

What is the first thing Paul says after addressing the crowd as brothers and fathers?

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The Greek word for 'defense' is *apologia*. *Apologia* was a technical word used in the Greek law courts by an attorney who talked his client off from a charge that was issued against them. It refers to a speech given in defense.

How are we told Paul was addressing them? \_\_\_\_\_

Most take this to mean he was speaking in Aramaic. It is unlikely that the Roman commander (Claudius Lysias) would have been able to fully understand what Paul was saying.

What is the significance of the people becoming 'even more quiet' when Paul starts to speak in Hebrew?

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## His early conduct (3-5)

### Verse 3

Paul starts out by giving his Jewish credentials. This would counter any thought the crowd might have that he might be anti-Jewish. His accusers were trying to say that now that Paul was a Christian, he had become anti-Semitic, anti-Law, and anti-Temple.

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Who does Paul say he is zealous like? \_\_\_\_\_

### Verses 4-5

Paul then goes on to tell how he used to treat Christians.

**What does he say he did to Christians (this Way)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**He goes on to say he had received letters to do what?**

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Notice that Paul justifies their actions against him, because they were simply seeking to do the very thing to him that he had done to Christians before God saved him.

### **His wonderful conversion (6-16)**

#### **Verses 6-9**

**We see a contrast here. What is being contrasted?**

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Paul recounts his conversion experience, and stresses the supernatural revelation God had given to him. The account that Paul gives here harmonizes with the account he gave back in 9:3-19 and the one he will give in chapter 26. Just like he did in the retelling in chapter 9, Paul stresses that the encounter was initiated by God and was not something that Paul had sought out.

**In verse 8, who does Jesus say he is?** \_\_\_\_\_

Paul in his retelling affirms that Jesus of Nazareth was alive.

The official Jewish position was that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor who had been crucified and had his body stolen from the tomb by his disciples who then started a rumor that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Paul himself would have been one who believed this story when he was persecuting the church.

#### **Verses 10-11**

**What is Paul's attitude in verse 10?** \_\_\_\_\_

As a good Jew, Paul would want to obey divine revelation, so he asks "What shall I do?"

**How does he come into Damascus?** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Verses 12-13**

**How does Paul describe Ananias to them?**

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In today's society, we might call what Paul did name dropping. **Why might using Ananias' name and description help Paul's case?**

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**How does Ananias refer to Paul?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verses 14-16**

**Who does Ananias attribute Paul's great experience to?** \_\_\_\_\_

This is a distinctly Jewish title.

**What three things are we told God wanted from Paul in verse 14?**

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Paul goes on to tell them that he would be a witness for God to all people of everything he had seen and heard.

**What does Ananias tell Paul to do in verse 16?**

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Some people take this verse to mean that water baptism washes away sin. **Is that true?**

**What do we need to do to wash away our sins?** \_\_\_\_\_

Luke is just linking the phrase "wash away your sins" with the phrase "calling on His name". What does calling on the name of Jesus do for you? It washes away your sins. The phrase "calling on His name" is a clear description of the experience of one who has been saved.

### **His special calling: (17-21)**

Paul next related his mission from God and included some new things that Luke did not record in chapter 9. Evidently Ananias conveyed to Paul God's commission to go to the Gentiles (9:15-16).

**Where does Paul say he is in Jerusalem?** \_\_\_\_\_



Paul is retelling an event in his life that had happened 20 years ago when he had only been a Christian for 2-3 years. Paul tells them he was praying in the temple in Jerusalem, showing them he wasn't against all Jewish ceremonies and rituals.

**What does Paul tell them happened while he was in the temple praying ?**

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The word trance describes the unique apostolic experience of being transported beyond the normal senses to the supernatural realm to receive divine revelation. This word is also used twice when describing Peter's vision in Joppa.

**According to Paul, what does Jesus tell him to do?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why?** \_\_\_\_\_

Paul tries to explain how these men know what he had done. How he went from synagogue to synagogue imprisoning and beating those who believed in Jesus, and how he stood by and watched as Stephen was stoned.

Paul seemed to think that his changed life would lend weight to his testimony before the Jews. He thought that if they saw the radical transformation the Lord had done in his life, he would convince these unbelieving Jews of the truth of the gospel.

**Where does Jesus say he will send Paul?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verse 22**

**We are told that the crowd listened until when?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What statement would that be?** \_\_\_\_\_

They couldn't tolerate the thought that Gentiles could be saved without first becoming Jewish proselytes; that they could be spiritually equal to the Jewish people before God.

**How did they react to this statement?** \_\_\_\_\_

"Away with such a man from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!"

They couldn't stand the thought of sharing their heritage with other nations. They were seeking to keep God's blessings to themselves.

**Verse 23-24**

**What else were these men doing according to verse 23?**

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**What does the commander do in the midst of all of this?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is his plan?** \_\_\_\_\_

The commander can't seem to understand why the Jews reacted the way they did. If he didn't understand Aramaic, he would have been even more confused. Not about to tolerate a riot, he decides to get the truth out of Paul by flogging him.

Under the Roman legal system, it was customary to use physical torture to extract information or a confession from prisoners who were not Roman citizens and who were charged with various crimes. The lashing was done with a whip of leather thongs with pieces of metal or bone attached to the ends. This practice was extremely painful and sometimes caused death to the one being flogged.

#### **Verses 25-29**

**They are getting ready to flog Paul. What does he ask?** \_\_\_\_\_

By Roman law, no magistrate was allowed to punish a Roman citizen by capital punishment or by beating or binding them.

**When the commander finds out what Paul said, what does he ask?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How did the commander obtain his Roman citizenship?** \_\_\_\_\_

One could achieve Roman citizenship in several ways:

- Born to a Roman father
- A citizen of a Roman colony
- A retired auxiliary soldier
- Part of a municipal aristocracy or other group honored by Rome
- A slave freed by his or her owner

It is thought that the commander was either a former slave who acquired enough funds to buy his freedom or bought his citizenship by a bribe which was common under the previous emperor. He would have had to be a citizen before becoming a part of a legion. Being born a Roman citizen normally gave one higher status than being a freed person did.

**How did Paul obtain his?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What does everyone do at this point?** \_\_\_\_\_



**What are we told about the commander?** \_\_\_\_\_

It was rare to find someone like Paul. He was educated, intelligent, a devout Jew who was also a Roman citizen.

The commander would have been afraid for his position, his well-being and even his life. Roman law protected Roman citizens from being flogged before they went on trial even if they were found guilty.

The soldiers should not have bound Paul until he had been formally charged, as a Roman citizen, with a crime.

### **Verse 30**

**What are we told the commander does the next day?**

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- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

The commander released Paul from his chains, but kept him in custody. The commander is still confused as to accusations against Paul, so he calls an emergency session of the Sanhedrin. Paul will be given the opportunity to speak before the group that he was once a member of.

If his offenses proved to be insignificant, the commander would release him. If the Jews charged him with a religious crime, the Sanhedrin could try him. If they charged him with a civil crime, the Roman governor would try him.

Paul's message to the Sanhedrin sets the stage for his defense in the next chapter. We are going to see that from now until the end of Acts, Paul will be in Roman custody.

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### **Reflection:**

Like Paul, one of the most powerful things we have is our testimony. Not only how we came to Christ, but also how He has worked in our lives since then. We need to always be ready to share with others what God has done in and through us.

We need to trust God and recognize He is in control. We must never give up on following Him and allowing Him to use us. He has the power and resources to change even the darkest of circumstances.

In what ways do you need to be more like Paul in handling difficult situations as a result of your faith and difficult situations in general?