

ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

Study 52: From persecutor to defender of Christ

READ Acts 21:40-22:29 and Phil. 3:4-10 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

In a remarkable turn of events that can only be owing to the intervention of God, Paul is given the opportunity to make a defense to the charges made against him by his beloved Jewish people. Paul, being one of the most theologically astute and intellectually competent men ever to live, could have tied the thousands of enraged Jews with an intellectual defense of Christ. But he doesn't. Instead, he provides something more powerful. He tells them his conversion testimony of how he met Christ and was transformed forever by Him.

Big idea: Paul's defense shows us that a person's salvation experience is one of the most convincing evidences to the reality of Christ.

Questions:

1. Notice three aspects to Paul's testimony: before his conversion (vv. 3-4), at his conversion (vv. 6-16), and after his conversion (vv. 17-21). Briefly write out your testimony of conversion on the back of the question sheet using these three categories and be ready to share with your group.
2. A. Why do you think Paul used his testimony of conversion as his defense against accusations made towards him?

B. Why might the testimony of one's conversion be a powerful defense of the reality of Christ and the gospel message?
3. A. From Phil 3:4-6, before Paul came to Christ how did he view his life before God? What did he mean by saying he was "blameless" (v. 6)?

B. From Phil 3:7-10, after Paul came to Christ what view did he have of his former life and life moving forward? See also Gal 2:20.

C. How do you view your life before Christ and your life now that you are saved?

4. When Paul met the risen Jesus face-to-face, he was forever changed (vv. 6-11). From Ananias' comments, what about Jesus as the "the Righteous One" changed Paul? See v. 14; Acts 7:52; Isaiah 53:11.
5. How did the Jews respond to Paul and why? See v. 22.
6. How does God view those Jews in the crowd who may have secretly believed, but said nothing for fear? What do you learn? See John 12:42-43, 48; Matt 10:33
7. What has most impacted you in this week's study and what will you do about it?

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: *Jesus who conquered death and forever lives to make intercession for His own*

Thank: *the merciful God for drawing you to Himself despite your sin and rebellion*

Pray: *that you joyfully embrace your own conversion testimony and regularly share it*