

Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you. (Acts 22:1)

I. Testimonial Impact

- a. Why are some testimonies able to influence and some are not?
- b. They are credible, factual, and personal. (The Swiffer Couple)
- c. "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He." Before Me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after Me. (Isaiah 43:10)
- d. The Holy Spirit empowers our testimony to reach who God intends to hear it.
- e. **Testimony** – witness or evidence
 1. *Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.* (1 John 5:10)
 2. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony...* (Rev. 12:11)
- f. Your testimony is not for *everybody* but it is for *somebody*.

II. Paul Gives His Testimony Before Different Audiences

- a. Paul testified to the Jerusalem Jews (22:1-21), they did not want to hear the part about Gentiles.
- b. Paul testified to the Roman tribune (22:22-30), who feared Paul's Roman citizenship status.
- c. Paul testified to the Jewish Sanhedrin (23:1-11)

III. The Christian Testimony: I Was, I Changed, I Will

- a. **I Was** – (vv.1-5) Paul looked back to his negative past, but he did not glorify his past
 1. Looking back can either depress you or excite you. We cannot let past failures drag us down
 2. We cannot allow past successes keep us there. Do not rest on your laurels
 3. God frees us from our past...if it is in the past we are free to declare it. "Shake well before using"
 4. There is a road that each Christian finds Jesus on.
- b. **I Changed** – (vv.6-15) This is what I did. This is how I came to believe in Christ. This is how I surrendered to Christ and this is where I am right now. **Our testimony is inclusive.**
 1. The description of Paul's *breaking* addressed the fact that God's grace will find us.
 2. God sends help along the way (Ananias, v.12), to help us understand our changed.
 3. Ananias says to Paul, "Get up, be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name
 4. That was then, but this is now impact ("the used to's).
- c. **I Will** – (vv.16-20) Paul agreed to the will of God and ministered to the Gentiles.
 1. God's loving impact on your life should encourage to do His will.
 2. Know His will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from His mouth. (v.14)
 3. Live changed and be a personal witness.

IV. Actions and Considerations (Tell Your Story)

- a. Every testimony is a "before and after" account of the transformation of your life by Jesus Christ
- b. Paul story was based on verifiable fact...not just how he felt
- c. How you accepted Jesus and how He has changed you...is on the record as fact (you)
- d. What you were, what you are now becoming, and what you will be is on the record as fact. (others)
- e. What you are now doing in obedience to Christ...is on the record as fact (others and you)
- f. Don't be discouraged if you think your testimony is falling on deaf ears.
- g. Every Christian has been called to be a character witness
- h. Tell your story, there will always be someone in the audience who may be *dying* to hear it.