

Acts of Jesus 50 A Personal Testimony notes

Acts 21:27-29

Some years ago, an archaeologist doing a dig in Jerusalem dug up the copper plaque which had been affixed to the wall that divided the court of Gentiles from the court of Jews. Written on it in both Greek and Aramaic was warning stating that any Gentile that set foot in the court of Jews would do so on pain of death.

--They figured if Paul would walk down the street with a Gentile that he would take him into the Temple--or it was all the excuse they needed.

VV. 30-38

--Assassins = A group of rebels (original terrorists) who would wear concealed daggers who would mingle in a large crowd and then at a certain signal or time would all pull out their daggers and start killing people in hopes that this would cause such a stir that the Romans would chase them but they would only be chasing a mirage. Their point was to cause chaos for the Romans and make them tie up large forces to hunt down just a few people leaving themselves vulnerable in other places.

VV. 39-40 – This brings up a special incident in the life and ministry of Paul.

--Let me show you something: **Rom. 9:1-3**

--His deep desire was for them but his ministry had been almost exclusively to the Gentiles.

--He was raised in Tarsus of Cilicia, but his real hometown and hometown crowd was in Jerusalem.

This was his only time to ever give his testimony to them!

--Therefore, he speaks to them in Aramaic—(A language similar to Hebrew) to make sure he catches all ears.

--He had been their glory boy—the pride of Judaism and of the sect of the Pharisees.

--They had invested heavily in him and had high hopes, but he became a turncoat in their eyes and the worst enemy.

--This is Paul's one and only shot, and *he doesn't preach to them*, instead he uses one the most powerful tools in the Christian's arsenal to bear witness to Christ, **his testimony!**

Acts 22:1-21

--Other religions a philosophies have their doctrines and teachings, but there is one thing they do not have.

--Doctrines can be argued, but you can't argue with a changed life.

Charles Bradlaugh, and avowed atheist, once challenged the Rev. H. P. Hughes to a debate. The preacher accepted the challenge with the condition that he could bring with him 100 men and women who would tell what had happened in their lives since trusting Christ as their Savior. He also invited his opponent to bring a group of non-believers who could tell how they were helped by their lack of faith. The preacher showed up with his 100 ready to give their testimonies, and Bradlaugh never showed. The whole thing turned into a testimony time and many who had come to see the debate trusted Christ.

--The strongest argument for the Good News about Jesus is someone's life who has been changed by it.

--Have we forgotten that?

--That's why Paul doesn't argue theology with these Jews.

--People can argue theology, but you can't argue with a changed life.

Marketing and advertising know this: you rarely see a PhD. Explaining the value of some product but you will see regular people (housewives, workers, the guy next door kind of people) talking about how the products have helped them.

What do they say? “It worked for me”

- Your most powerful witnessing tool is the story of what Jesus has done for you.
- When was the last time you told someone that story?

Notice what Paul does here...classic example of a Christian testimony:

1. Starts where they are: Jewish and lost **22:1-5**
 - Paul has spent his entire ministry to people who were not like him (Gentile; had never seen the Old Testament in their lives)
 - Not that he didn't use his testimony, but it wouldn't have its full effect.

Your testimony has the most power with people you are most like and who you share their background.

- Who are they?
- Who is it that was lost the way you were and you can speak “Aramaic” to—saying, “I’m from where you’re from, I know what you know, I’ve experienced what you’ve experienced”??
- It is those people who need to hear your testimony.

2. Tells them of how he accepted Christ. **VV. 6-16**

3. Tell them about what having Jesus in your life has done for you.

All true testimony is testimony to Jesus Christ; Jesus is the one who stands on trial before the world.

Personal testimony eliminates some of the dreaded fears of speaking to someone about Christ:

- “I don't know what to say” -- but this is your personal experience—it’s as easy as falling off a log. **Acts 4:20**

- “I can't answer the deep theological questions”
John 9:25

- “I can't do it without a lot of training”
John 4:28-29