

# The Importance of Testimony

December 16, 2007

**Icebreaker:** *What is your favorite story?*

Last week Paul had been beaten by the Jews and arrested by the Romans because of confusion of Paul's stance on the law. In chapter 22 he finally gets to defend himself.

## Acts 21:37-22:2

*What language did Paul speak to the crowd in?*

- Aramaic

Aramaic was the language of the Jews in Palestine. You have to admire the brilliance of Paul as he was able to deliver his messages to various cultures in ways that best opened them up to really give Paul their ear. Paul is about to give his first of five speeches that he will deliver in Jerusalem and Caesarea to defend himself of false charges concerning his view of the law.

## Acts 22:1-16

Paul realizes that this story is not just his story. It is the story of how God has worked through him to advance the kingdom of God. All Christians have a story of how God has brought them from being lost to being saved, from point A to point B. That story is powerful because it reflects how God has been working in the life of the Christian to make a difference.

*What changes had Paul experienced?*

- From persecutor to witness.
- From independent to dependent
- From blind to sight

*What changes have you experienced since you became a Christian?*

*Why is it important to relate those stories to lost people and let them see the difference God has made?*

- We are trying to get the lost to see that God will make a difference in their lives as well.
- They are stories that remind us how powerful God is
- It lets us know God is faithful.

## Acts 22:17-22

*What did the Jews in the audience object to?*

- They didn't believe that Paul should have gone to the Gentiles to convert them.

The Jews should have known better. Even the Old Testament said that God would eventually reach out to the

Gentiles (Isa 42:6-7 & 49:6). They were even told to be hospitable to the Gentiles living in their midst (Deut 10:19 & Exodus 22:21). But they didn't listen to that. They viewed the Gentiles as being under a curse because they did not bear the distinctive marks of Judaism—circumcision, dietary laws, and holy days.

*Was Paul's testimony readily accepted by his audience?*

- No!

*Will our testimony always be readily accepted by those we tell it to?*

- No

*Why is it important to share our story even though some will reject God anyway?*

- We could be planting a seed that will one day grow even if they initially say “no.”
- We tell it because God has told us to (Matt 28:19ff).

When we talk to people about what God has done there is no such thing as failure. Even if they say “no” to Jesus at least a seed has been planted in their heart.

*What fears keep us from talking to others about God?*

*Why does just telling our story make it easier?*

- We know our story better than anyone else
- We know how we were converted.
- You may not know every Bible verse to point someone to but you can talk about how God has changed your life and the difference He has made.

### **Acts 22:23-30**

Imagine the confusion of the commander who has no idea what Paul just said or why the people are so angry with him. Remember, Paul was speaking in Aramaic that this commander probably had no comprehension of.

*What saved Paul from a cruel interrogation?*

- That he was a Roman citizen—he was not to be punished without a trial

*How does God provide for and protect us when we are willing to take a risk and talk to others about Christ?*

### **Application**

*Who is someone you need to talk to about Jesus?*

*How can this LIFE group support you in your goal to reach the lost people you know?*

It is important that we remember our story of conversion. It may have been many years ago and maybe we need to be reminded of what God did to us so that we will remember how important it is to go and tell others.