SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Acts

Chapter Twenty-Two, Verses 1–30

Far Away to the Gentiles — a prisoner on the stairs, the story of a light at noon, and one word that set a crowd on fire

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Standing in chains on the barracks stairs, Paul speaks Hebrew to the crowd that has just beaten him: a zealous persecutor, a light from heaven, "Who are You, Lord?", Ananias, baptism, and a command to go to the nations. They hear him out until that last word — then the shouting starts, the whips come out, and a Roman citizen asks one quiet question. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Acts 22:1–30

zeal · light · witness · Gentiles · Rome

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Five movements from the barracks stairs to the Roman scourging post

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"And He said to me, 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'" — Acts 22:21

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Acts 22:1–30

Far Away to the Gentiles — Paul tells his own conversion to the people who want him dead — and they listen until he says "Gentiles"

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Acts 22 in 5 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · ACTS 22:15

"For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard."

† Before the Passage

Acts 22 is one speech and its aftermath, and it picks up exactly where chapter 21 stopped. A mob has dragged Paul out of the temple and beaten him; Roman soldiers have chained him and carried him up the stairs of the Fortress Antonia; the commander has mistaken him for an Egyptian rebel. Paul asks permission to speak, motions with his chained hand, and "when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect" (21:40).

This is the second of three tellings of Paul's conversion in Acts. Luke narrates it in chapter 9; Paul tells it here to a Jewish crowd in Jerusalem; and he tells it again to King Agrippa in chapter 26. Each time the details are fitted to the audience. Here Paul leans hard on what he shares with his hearers — Jerusalem upbringing, Gamaliel, the Law, zeal for God, a devout Jew named Ananias, a vision in the temple. Henry: "Paul was as much a zealot as a rabbi."

Gamaliel was the most honored teacher of the Law in his generation, the same Pharisee who had counseled the Council to leave the apostles alone (5:34–39). Saul had studied under him, then become the church's chief persecutor: he stood guarding the coats when Stephen was stoned (7:58) and carried letters from the high priest to Damascus (9:1–2). The man on the stairs is telling the crowd, in effect, "I was one of you — worse than you."

The speech ends with a single word that undoes the hush: "Gentiles" (v. 21). The temple riot had begun with the rumor that Paul brought a Gentile into the holy place (21:28–29); now he says God Himself sent him to them. The commander, who probably could not follow the Aramaic, orders the usual Roman method of getting the truth — the scourge — and Paul answers with the one fact that stops it: he is a Roman citizen, born free.

FIGURE · THREE TELLINGS OF THE DAMASCUS ROAD

ONE CONVERSION, THREE TELLINGS IN ACTS

	ACTS 9	ACTS 22	ACTS 26
WHO TELLS IT TO WHOM	Luke narrates	Paul · the Jerusalem crowd	Paul · King Agrippa
THE LIGHT	"a light from heaven" (9:3)	"about noontime, a very bright light" (22:6)	"at midday … brighter than the sun" (26:13)
THE COMPANIONS	"hearing the voice but seeing no one" (9:7)	saw the light, did not understand the voice (22:9)	"we had all fallen to the ground" (26:14)
ANANIAS	a disciple, sent by a vision (9:10–17)	"devout by the standard of the Law" (22:12)	not named
THE COMMISSION	"a chosen instrument … before the Gentiles" (9:15)	"I will send you far away to the Gentiles" (22:21)	"to open their eyes" (26:18)

Same event, different audiences: Acts 22 stresses the Law, the temple and a devout Jew.

Read across each row: the event is the same, but in Acts 22 (middle column) Paul stresses what a Jerusalem crowd would honor.

I
MOVEMENT

ACTS 22:1–5

Brethren and Fathers, Hear My Defense

A Hebrew-speaking prisoner tells the crowd who he was

1 *"Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now offer to you."* 2 *And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became even more quiet; and he said,* 3 *"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.* 4 *"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting*

> *both men and women into prisons, [5] as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.*
>
> ACTS 22:1–5

> *"circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless."*
>
> PHILIPPIANS 3:5–6

ἀπολογία

APOLOGIA · "DEFENSE" · G627

A speech made in answer to a charge — the word behind our "apologetics." Paul uses it of his whole ministry ("the defense and confirmation of the gospel," Phil 1:7), and Peter tells every believer to be "ready to make a defense" (1 Pet 3:15). Notice what Paul's defense is: not an argument about the temple charge, but his story. A changed life is the first apology for the gospel.

ζηλωτής

ZĒLŌTĒS · "ZEALOUS" · G2207

"Being zealous for God just as you all are today" (v. 3) — the same noun used of the "thousands" of Jewish believers "all zealous for the Law" in 21:20. Paul does not mock his hearers' zeal; he claims it, and then shows where his own zeal led — to "the death" of followers of "this Way" (v. 4; *hodos*, G3598, the early name for the faith, 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the instant effect of language: "Once the wild crowd heard Paul address them in Hebrew (Aramaic), they became quiet and ready to listen." Paul builds common ground — though born abroad, "he was brought up in Jerusalem" under Gamaliel, and "To the smallest detail, Paul kept the law as understood by the spiritual elite of his day." He hides nothing: "Paul was so energetic as a persecutor that he, in some cases, was responsible for the death of some followers of Jesus," and "Paul did his work of persecution with the official approval of the religious leaders."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's exposition of the chapter begins with the crowd's hush at the Hebrew words: "Men like to be addressed in their own language." Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, does not despise his own people's tongue; he chooses the words that will open their ears — and the text shows the result: "they became even more quiet" (v. 2).

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry admires Paul's temper after a beating: "There appears no passion." He speaks to them as "brethren and fathers," and he shows them that his zeal was real: "Paul was as much a zealot as a rabbi." "He was zealous against every thing that the law prohibited, and for every thing that the law enjoined." Henry's point is that Paul's change could not be explained by ignorance of Judaism or by a cool heart toward God; something from outside had turned him.

II
MOVEMENT

ACTS 22:6–11

Who Are You, Lord?

Noon on the Damascus road — a light, a voice, and a blind man led by the hand

6 *"But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me,* 7 *and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'* 8 *"And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'* 9 *"And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.* 10 *"And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do.'* 11 *"But since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus.*

ACTS 22:6–11

"at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. "And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'"

ACTS 26:13–14

περιαστράπτω

PERIASTRAPTŌ · "FLASH AROUND" · G4015

From *peri*, around, and *astraptō*, to flash like lightning. Only twice in the New Testament, both of this light (9:3; 22:6). It happened "about noontime" — not a dream at night, but a blaze brighter than the noon sun (26:13). Henry: "Had it shone in upon him into some private room, there might have been a cheat in it."

διώκω

DIŌKŌ · "PERSECUTE" · G1377

To pursue, hunt down. Paul uses it of himself in verse 4 ("I persecuted this Way"), and the Lord uses it twice: "why are you persecuting Me?" and "whom you are persecuting" (vv. 7–8). Saul thought he was hunting heretics; he was hunting Jesus. Christ so joins Himself to His people that to strike them is to strike Him. On the companions: Acts 9:7 says they heard the voice; 22:9 that they did not understand it — the sound without the words (compare John 12:29).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik: "Paul was a determined persecutor of Christians and Jesus until this heavenly light shone on him." The question "why are you persecuting Me?" taught him that "he was persecuting Jesus Himself, the shining Lord of glory, brighter than the noonday sun." "He didn't really know who he was persecuting until this." And the blindness had a meaning: "The brightness of that light made Paul blind." "In persecuting Jesus he was spiritually blind, and then he was also physically blind."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul preached this speech as "Paul's Defense in Jerusalem" (Acts 22:1–21, 8 May 2005). Its transcript is not online, but the sermon page sums up his theme in two lines: "As Paul was on the road to Damascus to arrest Christians, he himself was arrested by the risen Lord Jesus." And: "This account of radical transformation is recorded for us three times in the book of Acts." The arrester arrested — that is the whole story of grace in a sentence.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's exposition takes up the companions of verse 9: "Paul's companions could not help sensing that extraordinary light," while the words were for Saul alone (v. 9). His exposition keeps the focus on the One who spoke: the Lord who was being persecuted is the Lord who now gives orders (v. 10).

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry stresses that the conversion was public and undeniable: "Had it shone in upon him into some private room, there might have been a cheat in it." The blindness humbled the man who had trusted his own insight: "Paul, being a Pharisee, was proud of his spiritual eyesight." And Henry turns Saul's question into every convert's prayer: "Lord, tell me what I shall do, and I will do it."

III
MOVEMENT

ACTS 22:12–16

Why Do You Delay?

A devout Jew calls him "Brother," and a commission is spoken over a blind man

12 *"A certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, and well spoken of by all the Jews who*
lived there, 13 *came to me, and standing near said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very*
time I looked up at him. 14 *"And he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to*
see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth. 15 *'For you will be a witness for Him to all*
men of what you have seen and heard. 16 *'Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away*
your sins, calling on His name.'

ACTS 22:12–16

"Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

1 CORINTHIANS 6:11

"for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.""

ROMANS 10:13

προχειρίζομαι

PROCHEIRIZOMAI · "APPOINT" · G4400

Literally "to put into the hand beforehand" — to choose and appoint in advance. Only three New Testament uses, all in Acts: of Christ "appointed for you" (3:20), and twice of Paul (22:14; 26:16). "The God of our fathers has appointed you" — Ananias names the old covenant God, not a new one. Paul was not a renegade from Israel's God; he had been appointed by Him.

ἀπολούω

APOLOUŌ · "WASH AWAY" · G628

To wash off, wash away; only here and 1 Corinthians 6:11 ("you were washed"). Here it is a middle imperative — "get yourself washed" — joined to "be baptized" and to "calling on His name." The teachers read it as the outward sign of a cleansing received by faith: Spurgeon, "This was not baptismal regeneration, for he was already regenerate." The calling on the Lord's name is what saves (Rom 10:13); baptism is its public seal.

δίκαιος

DIKAIOS · "RIGHTEOUS ONE" · G1342

"The Righteous One" is a title for Messiah in Acts: Peter used it (3:14), Stephen used it just before he died (7:52), and now Ananias uses it to Stephen's persecutor. Saul was appointed "to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth" — the risen Jesus, seen and heard, which made him an apostle (1 Cor 9:1; 15:8).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes why Paul tells this crowd about Ananias: "Paul noted that it was Ananias, a man with credentials as a good Jew who received him into the Christian family." The phrase "the God of our fathers" matters — "Paul wanted them to know that he still served the God of his fathers." It was not Paul who had left Israel's God: "Instead, many in Judaism had rejected God as revealed in Jesus Christ." Guzik calls verses 14–15 "a wonderful capsule of the duty of every one before God" — to know His will, to see the Righteous One, to hear His voice, and to be His witness.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's exposition notes that the details about Ananias are new here: "These particulars concerning the character of Ananias do not appear in the former part of the narrative." On verse 14: "Therefore it was that Saul did, at that time, "see that Just One," and did "hear the voice of his mouth."" On verse 16 he is plain: "This was not baptismal regeneration, for he was already regenerate." Two things were needed, he says, and the first was that "he was to be baptized on profession of his faith in Jesus."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry calls Ananias "the first Christian that Paul had any friendly communication with." He draws a contrast with the martyr: "Stephen saw him standing at the right hand of God, but Paul saw him standing at his right hand." And on "why do you delay?" he presses the urgency on every reader: "Why should not that be done at the present time that must be done some time, or we are undone?"

IV
MOVEMENT

ACTS 22:17–21

Go! Far Away to the Gentiles

A trance in the temple, a quarrel with the Lord, and a commission to the nations

17 *"It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance,* 18 *and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because ⚠ they will not accept your testimony about Me.'* 19 *"And I said, 'Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You.* 20 *'And when ⚠ the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the coats of those who were slaying him.'* 21 *"And He said to me, 'Go! For ☆ I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"*

ACTS 22:17–21

"He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.""

ISAIAH 49:6

FIGURE · THE SPEECH AND THE CROWD

THE SPEECH AND THE CROWD · ACTS 21:40–22:23

21:40	22:2	22:3–5	22:6–16	22:17–20	22:21
a great hush	even more quiet	a Jew, Gamaliel, zealous	the light, Ananias	a vision in the temple	"to the Gentiles"

THE CROWD

listening ("They listened to him up to this statement," v22) | **uproar**

ONE WORD

"Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!" (v22)

cloaks thrown off, dust tossed in the air (v23) — the same cry as 21:36 and Luke 23:18

The crowd stays quiet through Paul's whole story; watch what happens at the last box, when he says "Gentiles."

ἔκστασις

EKSTASIS · "TRANCE" · G1611

Literally "a standing outside" oneself. It can mean amazement (Mark 5:42; Luke 5:26; Acts 3:10) or, as here and in Peter's rooftop vision (10:10; 11:5), a God-given state in which a man sees and hears what God shows him. Paul stresses where it happened: "praying in the temple." He was not an enemy of the holy place; the Lord met him there and sent him out.

μάρτυς

MARTYS · "WITNESS" · G3144

Verse 15 makes Paul "a witness (*martys*) for Him to all men"; verse 20 calls Stephen "Your witness" — the form *martyros* occurs only here in the New Testament. Stephen was a witness whose testimony cost his blood, and in time the word itself came to mean "martyr." The man who held the coats now carries the dead man's title, and the Lord says the city "will not accept your testimony" (v. 18; *martyria*, G3141).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik places the vision "about 20 years before, when he had been a follower of Jesus for 2 or 3 years," and notes the setting is deliberate: "He wanted the crowd to know that even though he trusted in Jesus, he was not against all Jewish ceremonies and rituals." The command to leave "probably was a surprise to Paul," who argued back — "He tried to explain to Jesus why he should really stay in Jerusalem and work to tell the Jewish people about Jesus." But "Jesus didn't agree with Paul's response." The Gentile call was not new; he had heard it in Damascus (9:15).

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry reads the Lord's warning as foreknowledge: "As God knows before who will receive the gospel, so he knows who will reject it." Paul wanted Jerusalem — "Paul hankers after Jerusalem: to be a preacher there was the summit of his ambition" — and pleaded that his past would make his testimony powerful. God had other plans: "It is God that appoints his labourers both their day and their place." Our plans for our usefulness are not always His.

V

MOVEMENT

ACTS 22:22–30

A Roman and Uncondemned

"Away with such a fellow," the scourge, and a citizenship that stopped the whip

22 *They listened to him up to this statement, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!"* 23 *And as they were crying out and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air,* 24 *the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, stating that he should be examined by scourging so that he might find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way.* 25 *But when they stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?"* 26 *When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and told him, saying, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman."* 27 *The commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes."* 28 *The commander answered, "I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money." And Paul said, "But I was actually born a citizen."* 29 *Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him; and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.* 30 *But on the next day, wishing to know for certain why he had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Council to assemble, and brought Paul down and set him before them.*

ACTS 22:22–30

> *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;"*
>
> PHILIPPIANS 3:20

FIGURE · PAUL'S THREE CITIZENSHIPS

PAUL'S THREE CITIZENSHIPS

TARSUS	ROME	HEAVEN
Acts 21:39 "a citizen of no insignificant city"	**Acts 22:28** "But I was actually born a citizen."	**Philippians 3:20** "our citizenship is in heaven"

Paul used his earthly rights without shame — and lived for the citizenship that cannot be bought.

Tarsus, Rome and heaven: Paul claims the first two when they serve the gospel, and lives for the third.

μάστιξ

MASTIX · "SCOURGE" · G3148

A whip or scourge (and, by extension, a torment or plague — the same word is used of "afflictions" in Mark 5:29, 34). "Examined by scourging" (v. 24, with *anetazō*, G426, to examine by torture) meant the Roman flagellum, leather thongs weighted with bone or metal. Boice, quoted by Guzik: "This was not the normal Jewish flogging, which was bad enough, but the dreaded Roman flagellum." The verb form appears in verse 25: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man …?"

πολιτεία

POLITEIA · "CITIZENSHIP" · G4174

Citizenship, the rights of a citizen. Only twice in the New Testament: the commander's citizenship bought "with a large sum of money" (v. 28), and Gentiles once "excluded from the commonwealth (*politeia*) of Israel" (Eph 2:12). The neighbouring word *akatakritos* (G178), "uncondemned" (v. 25; also 16:37), names the right Paul claims: no Roman could be punished without a trial.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik: "The crowd that had tried to kill Paul, and had then listened intently to his whole sermon, erupted into rage," and "This outraged, violent response was over one word: Gentiles." The commander planned a Roman scourging — Boice: "This was not the normal Jewish flogging, which was bad enough, but the dreaded Roman flagellum." Paul's question stopped it, for "It was a serious violation of Roman rights to even bind a Roman citizen without due process." Guzik cites Longenecker — "The verbal claim to Roman citizenship was accepted at face value" — and Bruce: "How the citizenship was acquired by Paul's father or grandfather we have no means of knowing."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes how long the crowd had been patient — "Hitherto they had heard him with patience and some attention" — and why one word broke it: "Galled consciences kick at the least touch." The cloaks and the dust were the fury of people who could not bear to hear that God's mercy reached beyond them. Paul's appeal to his rights was no lack of courage: "It is indeed the privilege of every man not to have wrong done him, except it be proved he has done wrong." A Christian may use the protections of the law.

VI
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

From the Servant's light to the nations to the persecutor shown mercy

"When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul."

ACTS 7:58

"But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake.""

ACTS 9:15–16

"'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'"

ACTS 26:16–18

"even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all."

1 TIMOTHY 1:13–15

"remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

EPHESIANS 2:12–13

> *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;”*
>
> PHILIPPIANS 3:20

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik ties the Gentile commission back to the beginning: “When Paul was touched by God in Damascus, he was told then of his call to preach to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15).” The word that enraged the crowd was the word God had spoken from the start.

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one speech. Guzik follows Paul's strategy of common ground and the one word that broke it; Henry marks Paul's calm and turns each detail into counsel; Spurgeon's exposition notes what is new in this telling and guards verse 16 against baptismal regeneration; Sproul's sermon on the speech is not online in transcript, so his voice appears once, from its published summary. All four agree the speech is a testimony, not an argument — grace arresting a persecutor.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · I was one of you	Hebrew quieted them; Paul kept the law to the smallest detail.	— (sermon not online in transcript)	Men like to be addressed in their own language.	No passion; Paul as much a zealot as a rabbi.
II · The light at noon	Persecuting Jesus Himself; spiritually, then physically blind.	The arrester arrested by the risen Lord (sermon summary).	The companions sensed the light; the voice was for Saul.	A public light, no cheat; "Lord, tell me what I shall do."
III · Ananias and baptism	A good Jew received him; the same God of the fathers.	— (sermon not online in transcript)	Not baptismal regeneration — he was already regenerate.	Why not now what must be done sometime?
IV · The vision in the temple	Paul argued to stay; Jesus didn't agree.	— (sermon not online in transcript)	— (no Spurgeon material on these verses sourced here)	God appoints His labourers their day and their place.
V · The scourge and the citizen	One word — Gentiles; the dreaded Roman flagellum.	— (no Sproul material on these verses sourced here)	— (no Spurgeon material on these verses sourced here)	Galled consciences kick; no wrong without proof.

ACTS 22:1–30 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **The defense is a testimony.** Paul is charged with defiling the temple, and his *apologia* (v1) is simply his story. A changed life is the first defense of the gospel. THE GREEK
- **Common ground first.** Hebrew, Gamaliel, the Law, zeal "just as you all are today" (v3). Guzik: "To the smallest detail, Paul kept the law." He earns a hearing before he says the hard word. GUZIK
- **Zeal is not enough.** Henry: "Paul was as much a zealot as a rabbi." His zeal took him to "the death" of believers (v4). Sincerity without Christ is dangerous. HENRY
- **To strike His people is to strike Him.** "Why are you persecuting Me?" (v7). Guzik: Paul learned "he was persecuting Jesus Himself." Christ and His church are one. GUZIK
- **The arrester arrested.** Sproul's sermon summary: "As Paul was on the road to Damascus to arrest Christians, he himself was arrested by the risen Lord Jesus." SPROUL
- **"What shall I do, Lord?"** The first question of a new man (v10). Henry: "Lord, tell me what I shall do, and I will do it." HENRY
- **"Brother Saul."** A devout Jew calls the persecutor "brother" (v13). Henry: "the first Christian that Paul had any friendly communication with." THE TEXT
- **Washed — but not by water alone.** Spurgeon: "This was not baptismal regeneration, for he was already regenerate." He called on the Lord's name (Rom 10:13) and was baptized as its public sign. SPURGEON

- **God picks the place.** Paul wanted Jerusalem; Jesus said "Go!" Henry: "It is God that appoints his labourers both their day and their place." HENRY
- **One word.** Guzik: "This outraged, violent response was over one word: Gentiles." Grace to outsiders still offends religious pride. GUZIK

† Questions for the Table

1 **Paul answered a false charge by telling his story. If someone asked me to "make a defense" of my faith, what would my honest story be — before Christ, meeting Christ, since Christ?**

A changed life is the first apology for the gospel.

22:1–16; 1 Pet 3:15

2 **Paul was sincere and zealous — and dead wrong. Where have I been sincerely wrong, and what did it take for God to show me?**

Paul was as much a zealot as a rabbi (Henry).

22:3–5; Phil 3:5–6

3 **Jesus said, "why are you persecuting Me?" about Christians Saul had never met as Jesus. How does it change the way I treat other believers to know Jesus takes it personally?**

He was persecuting Jesus Himself (Guzik).

22:7–8; Matt 25:40

4 **"What shall I do, Lord?" When did I last ask that and mean it — and what is He telling me to do that I keep delaying?**

Why do you delay? (v16)

22:10, 16

5 **Paul argued with Jesus about where he would be most useful. Where am I arguing with God about my "Jerusalem" — the place or people I think I should reach?**

God appoints his labourers both their day and their place (Henry).

22:17–21

6 **The crowd listened until Paul said "Gentiles." Who are the people I quietly think God's grace should not reach?**

This outraged, violent response was over one word (Guzik).

22:21–22; Eph 2:12–13

Acts 22 is a man in chains telling the story of how Jesus stopped him on the road. He was zealous, sincere and wrong, and the risen Lord met him at noon, washed him and sent him to the very people his hearers despised. Tell your story the same way — honestly, gently, all the way to the end, even when the last word costs you.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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