




1. Review: How were the events of 21:27-36 a fulfillment of what Paul had been warned about by the Spirit in 20:22-23 and 21:10-11?
2. What statements in 21:27-38 show people were confused about the true facts? Can you share a time when you acted on something that turned out to be incorrect information? How do you see this kind of thing happening in our society today?
3. Why do you think the commander allowed Paul to speak to the people (21:39-40), when there was already a riot going on? Describe the drama of the scene when Paul motioned to the people with his hand and then there was a great hush.
4. Why do you think Paul spoke to the crowd in the Hebrew dialect (21:40), rather than in Greek like he had with the commander? What did this accomplish (22:2)?
5. What did we see Gamaliel doing previously in Acts (5:33-40), when Peter and the apostles were brought before the Jewish Council at that time? Why do you think Paul mentioned his name here (22:3)?
6. Compare Paul's testimony in chapter 22 with the earlier account in chapter 9. What similarities and differences do you see in these four sections?

- Saul before he was saved	22:3-5,19-20	7:58; 8:1-3; 9:1-2
- Saul meets Christ	22:6-11	9:3-9
- Saul meets with Ananias	22:12-16	9:10-18
- Saul returns to Jerusalem	22:17-21	9:26-30

What can we learn from Paul's testimonies about how we can improve our own testimonies?
7. Paul used this opportunity to try to reach this Jewish crowd for Christ. What did He tell them about the Lord Jesus (mostly indirectly), as he made his defense before them in 22:1-21? Whom could you tell something about the Lord Jesus this week?
8. This passage has the only place in the Bible that links baptism and the washing away of our sins (22:16). How does water baptism symbolize the washing away of someone's sins? How is "calling on His name" involved with this?
9. What is the last thing Paul said to this Jewish crowd, as he quotes what the Lord Jesus said to him (22:21)? How did Paul's listeners react to these words (22:22)? Do you think Paul should have said these words to this crowd, since it effectively concluded his testimony to them? Why or why not?
10. Apply it: How has one of the statements in 22:14-15 come true in your Christian life – know His will, see Him, hear from Him, witness for Him?



## How Religion Can Keep Us from God Leader Notes for Acts 21:27-22:22



While Paul was in the temple working to fulfill the terms of a Jewish vow, he was noticed by unbelieving Jews from Asia. A whole-scale riot began, bringing the Roman commander with many of his soldiers. They took Paul from the hands of the Jews and bound him with two chains. The Jews and Romans were confused about several points here - Paul's message, where he took his companions, what the crowd was shouting, and who Paul really was.

Amidst the chaos, Paul asked to speak to the crowd. And for some reason, the commander let him do so! You can feel the suspense as Paul motioned with his hand and a great hush came over the crowd. Paul then gave them his testimony, speaking in the Hebrew dialect rather than in Greek. That really got their attention!

The contents of Paul's testimony are very similar to the narrative we read in Acts 9, but we are given some additional background material here in Acts 22. We learn some things about his upbringing in Jerusalem under Gamaliel. We saw Gamaliel back in Acts 5 as part of the Jewish Council, but by this time he had died. Paul told the crowd what time of day he saw the light on the road to Damascus, and how bright it was. He told them that the men traveling with him could not understand what he heard. We learn a bit more about Ananias and what he said to Paul (then called Saul) in Damascus. And we learn about a personal conversation the Lord had with Saul in the temple at Jerusalem when he traveled there after leaving Damascus.

Paul used this opportunity to not only share his own testimony, but to tell the crowd of Jews about the Lord Jesus. He mostly referred to Christ indirectly, using phrases like "this Way", "the Lord", "the Righteous One", and "His name". Only once did he directly call Him "Jesus the Nazarene," when he quoted what the Lord Jesus said on the road to Damascus.

Ananias told Paul to "be baptized and wash away your sins." That doesn't mean that water baptism can take away a person's sins. Rather, it is the faith that leads a person to receive Jesus Christ that washes away our sins. A new Christian then gets baptized to show others that he has taken this step of faith. That's what Paul did back in Damascus, when he called on the Lord's name for salvation.

Once Paul told the crowd that the Lord had sent him away to reach Gentiles with this new message of salvation in Jesus Christ, the crowd's hushed tone disappeared. Next week we will see what happened after that!