The Book of Acts Lesson 39

Acts 22:1-22

“The Testimony of Transforming Truth”

Paul’s ministry threatened the livelihood of some powerful men who incited the whole city to riot. The only thing that kept them back from killing Paul was the Roman captain who came to see what this was all about. Chapter 22 leaves Paul to defend himself before those who so desperately wanted to kill him. From his defense we can learn much about the power of our personal testimony.

# Paul described his past life to the Jewish crowd.

1. He spoke to them with respect.
	1. He acknowledged his roots by speaking in Hebrew to them.
	2. He identified with them through his upbringing.
		1. Gamaliel was respected as a great teacher among Jews.
		2. He had been on their side, even killing Christians.
	3. He appealed to their authorities, telling that he worked for the high priest.
2. He did not belittle their beliefs.
	1. When we share our testimony, we must remember where we came from.
	2. As Christians we are to be different than the world, but this does not make us better or superior.
	3. We are sinners saved by grace.
	4. Identifying with people is a powerful way to make the transforming nature evident.

# An encounter with Christ is a supernatural event.

1. Although Paul was content going about his life defending the tenets of Judaism, this encounter on the road to Damascus changed him forever.
	1. Christ shone about him and made Himself known.
	2. His question demanded a change in Paul’s life. V. 7
	3. He did not just have a rebuke for Paul, He was calling him to a life of action.
2. You may not have what you consider to be a supernatural experience, but the same elements are there in your conversion.
	1. God worked in your life to bring the truth of the gospel to your ears.
	2. When you heard, the Holy Spirit convicted you that these things were true.
		1. This conviction is a powerful force in people’s lives.
		2. Some people cannot sleep because they wrestle with this feeling that comes after hearing the gospel.
	3. It really is a miraculous thing to recognize the many people that God had to move to reach every one of us with the message of forgiveness in Christ.
	4. When God called you to action you responded.
		1. You obeyed and surrendered to His call.
		2. Or you resisted and rejected his call.
		3. To choose inaction is to reject His call.
	5. God helped you through Christian resources and probably local congregation. V. 12
3. Paul embraced God’s plan for his life and went on to do great things for God. V. 15
	1. He followed His guiding hand and trusted His leadership.
	2. Much of the New Testament was written by Paul.
	3. Many churches were started as a result of his ministry on earth.
	4. He serves as one of the great examples for our faith today.
4. Although our testimonies may vary greatly, the purpose is the same.
	1. God wants all of us to be witnesses of the supernatural power of the gospel.
	2. A changed life speaks volumes about what someone believes.
	3. God has a plan for your life, but you must obey in faith.

# The power for transformation is in embracing the truth.

1. The reason that Paul identified with the Jews is because they knew the true God.
	1. Judaism was not a false religion.
	2. Paul did not discredit the Old Testament because Jesus did not discredit the Old Testament.
		1. He did not come to do away with what God did in the past.
		2. He came to fulfill what the Old Testament foreshadowed.
2. It took supernatural intervention to change Paul’s course of life.
	1. This course correction kept him following the God of the universe.
	2. The truth is what Paul was trying to communicate with those who had rejected Christ.
	3. There is great confidence for us that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, but the truth from God Himself.

Although the crowd rejected Paul’s plea to convert to Christ’s goal in life (v.22), the crowd must answer in eternity for having been confronted with the truth. So it is with those we come in contact with. We have a very effective tool at our disposal, the transforming power of our personal testimony. This takes our faith in Christ and makes it real. In a world filled with fakes and counterfeits fidelity to the truth of God’s Word will be evidenced in the lives of individuals every day. If we really believe what the Bible says, this should make a difference in the way that we live our lives. When others see this in us it will do more to make a difference in their lives than we really know. Be confident in the truth that God has made evident in your life and it will change the world.