ACTS 22

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

> *"'For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard."*
> ACTS 22:15

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where Luke has brought us

1. Acts 22 is one speech and its aftermath, and it picks up exactly where chapter 21 stopped.

2. This is the second of three tellings of Paul's conversion in Acts.

3. 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).

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.

Brethren and Fathers, Hear My Defense

A Hebrew-speaking prisoner tells the crowd who he was

ACTS 22:3

"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.

DAVID GUZIK

Hebrew quieted them; Paul kept the law to the smallest detail.

C.H. SPURGEON

Men like to be addressed in their own language.

MATTHEW HENRY

No passion; Paul as much a zealot as a rabbi.

ἀπολογία
APOLOGIA · "DEFENSE"

A speech made in answer to a charge — the word behind our "apologetics."

Who Are You, Lord?

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

ACTS 22:7

and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'

DAVID GUZIK

Persecuting Jesus Himself; spiritually, then physically blind.

R.C. SPROUL

The arrester arrested by the risen Lord (sermon summary).

C.H. SPURGEON

The companions sensed the light; the voice was for Saul.

MATTHEW HENRY

A public light, no cheat; "Lord, tell me what I shall do."

περιαστράπτω

PERIASTRAPTŌ · "FLASH AROUND"

From peri, around, and astraptō, to flash like lightning.

Why Do You Delay?

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

ACTS 22:14

"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.

DAVID GUZIK

A good Jew received him; the same God of the fathers.

C.H. SPURGEON

Not baptismal regeneration — he was already regenerate.

MATTHEW HENRY

Why not now what must be done sometime?

προχειρίζομαι
PROCHEIRIZOMAI · "APPOINT"

Literally "to put into the hand beforehand" — to choose and appoint in advance.

Go! Far Away to the Gentiles

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

ACTS 22:18

and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.'

DAVID GUZIK

Paul argued to stay; Jesus didn't agree.

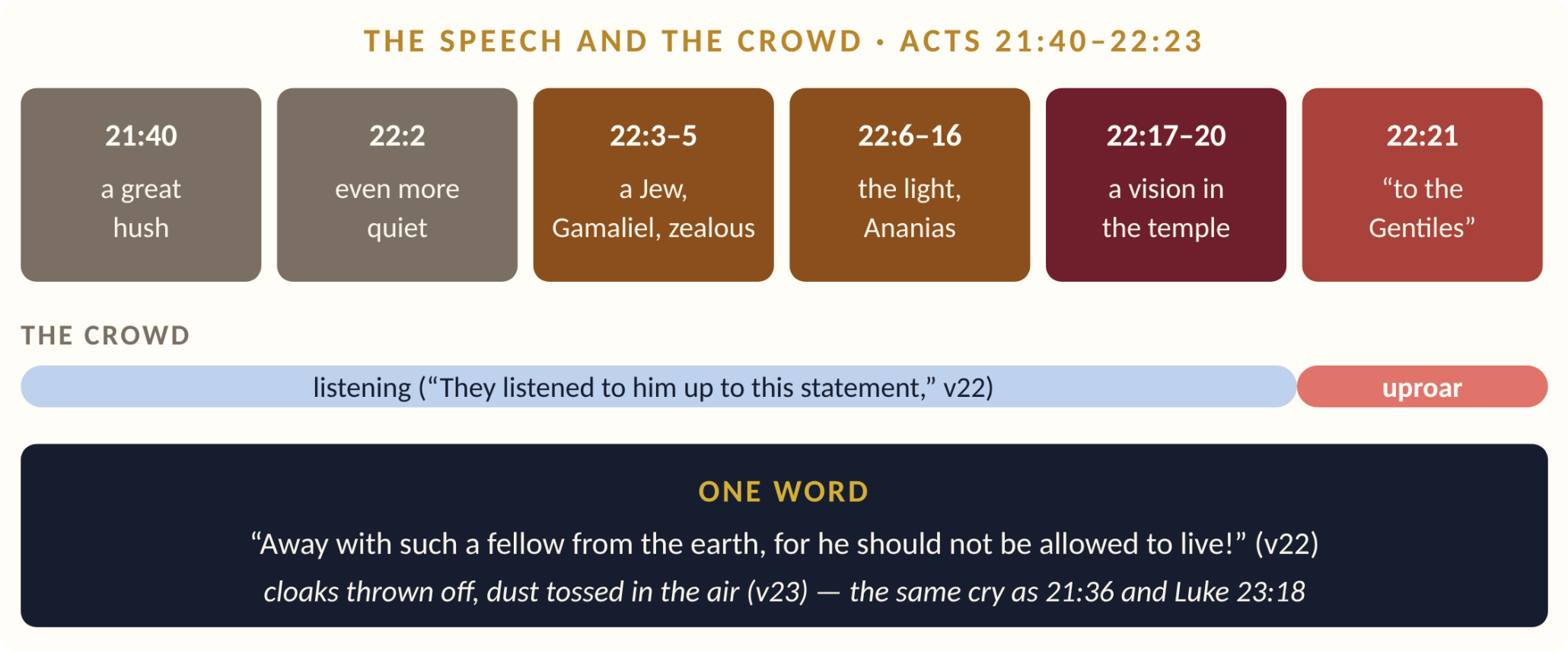
MATTHEW HENRY

God appoints His labourers their day and their place.

ἔκστασις
EKSTASIS · "TRANCE"

Literally "a standing outside" oneself.

The speech and the crowd



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

A Roman and Uncondemned

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

ACTS 22:25

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?”

DAVID GUZIK

One word — Gentiles; the dreaded Roman flagellum.

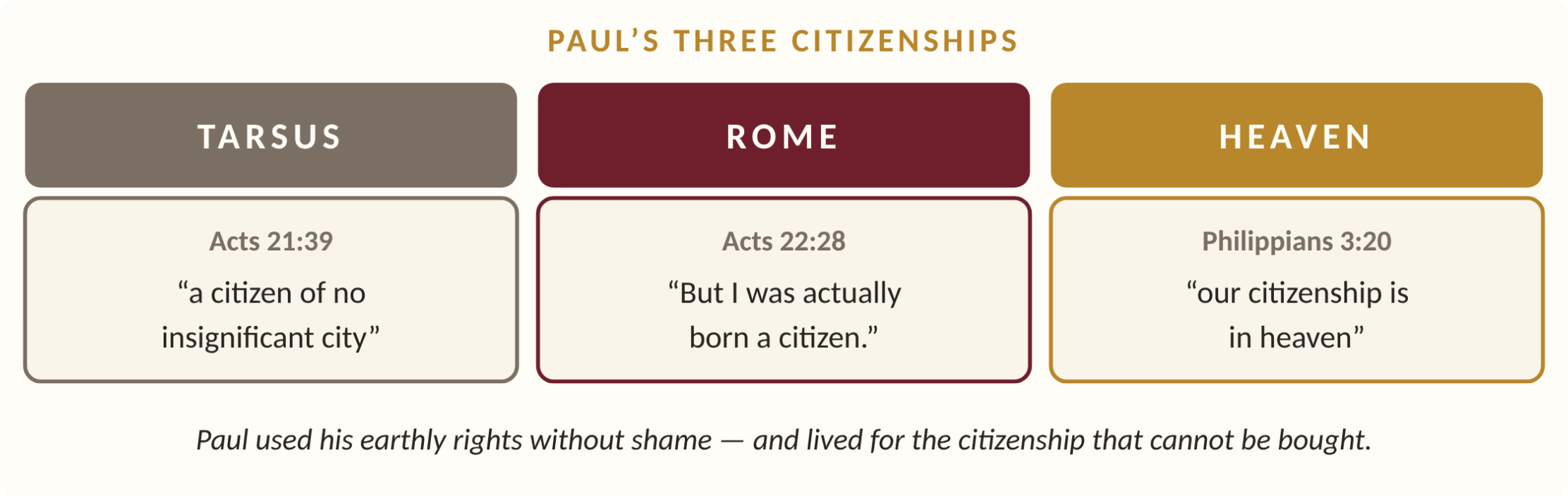
MATTHEW HENRY

Galled consciences kick; no wrong without proof.

μάστιξ
MASTIX · “SCOURGE”

A whip or scourge (and, by extension, a torment or plague — the same word is used of “afflictions” in Mark 5:29, 34).

Paul's three citizenships



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

What to carry from this chapter

1

The defense is a testimony.

Paul is charged with defiling the temple, and his apologia (v1) is simply his story.

2

Common ground first.

Hebrew, Gamaliel, the Law, zeal “just as you all are today” (v3).

3

Zeal is not enough.

Henry: “Paul was as much a zealot as a rabbi.”

4

To strike His people is to strike Him.

“Why are you persecuting Me?”

More to carry

5

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."

6

"What shall I do, Lord?"

The first question of a new man (v10).

7

"Brother Saul."

A devout Jew calls the persecutor "brother" (v13).

8

Washed — but not by water alone.

Spurgeon: "This was not baptismal regeneration, for he was already regenerate."

Talk it through

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?

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?

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?

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?

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?

CLOSING

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

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the Acts study page.