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AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PAULINE SPEECHES

A Thesis
presented to
the faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
Jerry Lee Mercer
December 1963
Approved by

Approved by (Second Reader)
"To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His own blood, and has made us into royalty, into priests of God, even His Father, to Him be the majesty and the dominion forever and ever. Amen"

Revelation 1:6
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Speech is one of the most significant methods of communication known to man. It is a tool that helps to build a stable society and good inter-relationships between human beings. "Try to imagine man deprived of language and it will be evident how he would sink below barbarity to mere animalism."\(^1\) Indeed, Quintilian observed that "reason by itself would help us but little and would be far less evident in us, had we not the power to express our thoughts in speech".\(^2\) Therefore, speech is actually the "heart of all human experience".\(^3\)

Speeches that are preserved for future generations often give insights into the social, moral, political, and sometimes, religious culture of the speaker and the age to which he spoke. Many books are currently being printed presenting various types of speeches in such fashion that they will be of interest to societies of the future; just as printed speeches of yesteryear are of interest to students of speech today.


The Bible contains ancient speeches which may be analysed. Within its pages, various speeches are found that cover a span of time totaling approximately 1500 years. Among the speakers are men and women representing many cultures, governments, and social conditions. In their printed form these speeches provide research with source material for a study of different personalities, cultural problems, and religious frictions that prevailed at any given period.

This study is concerned with speeches that were delivered some 1900 years ago. The individual chosen as speaker to be analysed is the Apostle Paul. The speeches selected for this investigation are found in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. They are Paul's speech to the synagogue in Antioch, his speech on Mars' Hill, and his speech of defense before King Agrippa. These three speeches were chosen for these respective reasons: (1) his first recorded speech; (2) his most popular speech; and (3) his longest speech in the New Testament.

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this thesis is (1) to analyse the three speeches along specific lines of speech style, (2) to attempt some synthesis of the findings of these speeches, and (3) from these findings to attempt to deduce what kind of speaker Paul was and what his general speech habits were.

II. JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM
First, a study of this nature is important because it should furnish more evidence regarding the general temper of Paul. The character of any speaker figures significantly in his speech style. Although it will be impossible to determine bodily action such as gestures used and facial expressions from a printed copy of his speeches, yet it is conceivable that items of Paul's personality such as general mannerisms and personal appeal can be studied with some profit. Therefore, it is hoped that this thesis will also better acquaint the reader with Paul as a man.

A second reason for this study is connected with the task of the Christian ministry. The basic goal of the Christian message is persuasion. Since most of the ministry's thrust is made orally, the problem of oral communication is basic. A thesis of this nature should be of interest to professional Christian workers who must deliver speeches on Christian themes to various audiences. It would be of a practical interest to such to consider how one of Christianity's early voices proclaimed the message of Christ. Thus, a sermonic comparison between the speeches of Paul and speeches of modern preachers would be of interest to the homilist.

The third and most important reason for this present study is based on the academic nature of the work. In a time when so much has been written on or about different interests of a Pauline character, the purpose of this study opens a relatively new area of academic challenge. The speaking ability of Paul, his speech mechanics, is an area virtually untouched by New Testament scholars. Thus, a new field with undiscovered
possibilities that also touches Biblical history, theology, and interpretation lies within the grasp of scholarship. A field of inquiry with such seeming potential deserves an investigation. Thus, this thesis is designed to make a small beginning in the analysis and evaluation of Paul's speech characteristics.

It cannot possibly be assumed, however, that these pages of investigation have exhausted the possibilities of discovering new aspects of Paul's ability as a speaker, even within the context of these particular speeches. For an adequate study of this subject an investigation of all Paul's recorded speeches would be necessary. Then, after such a study was completed, to compare the findings with his written works. A study of such magnitude was not the objective of this present work.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The principle involved in the organization of this thesis is one of investigation, analysis, and reporting the findings. Immediately following this chapter of introduction are three chapters (II, III, and IV) analyzing Pauline speeches found in the book of Acts, one speech per chapter. Each of these speeches follows a rather detailed outline involving many aspects of the speech triangle: the speaker, the audience, and the speech. Chapter V is entitled "A Comparison of Paul's Speeches", and attempts to set forth the major contributions of each speech analysis chapter in comparison and, when profitable, in contrast with each other. The final chapter, Chapter VI, is a setting forth of the basic speech characteristics of Paul as revealed in these three speeches. It is,
therefore, properly speaking a "Conclusion".

IV. PROBLEMS OF INVESTIGATION

The first problem of investigation was that there were few, if any, works that dealt significantly with this subject. There were no volumes available in the research that made valuable contributions concerning Paul's speech style; that is, aside from general observations. Therefore, the conclusions reached are formed on the basis of individual research and analysis of the problem with little recourse to other works.

Second, in many places the Greek text brings out emphases that are not translatable easily into English. Although the English text is the text on which this thesis is based, significant contributions found in the Greek text are added in the form of footnotes. There will also be a more accurate rendering of certain significant words that bear directly on the problem. The books that helped determine the English use of some Greek words and constructions were A Concise Exegetical Grammar of New Testament Greek by Greenlee and A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek by Nunn.

Third, the record of the speeches themselves poses another problem, one of completeness. It is not unlikely that the texts of the speeches are but summaries or outlines of what was actually said. If that is true, as it seems to be, then much of what the apostle said is lost to research. However, if the speeches are in outline form, then it is also probable that the most important parts were conserved for
future reading. In that case, certainly all is not lost and a valid
appraisal still can be made.

V. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The technique of investigation in this thesis is to take a par-
ticular speech, analyze it for certain data pertaining to speech, and
report the findings. It is hoped that the findings will form the basis
for some workable conclusions concerning the speaking style of Paul.
Therefore, the inductive method was used in the analysis and the deduc-
tive method used in the evaluation.

All of the selected speeches will be studied as they are recorded
in the Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible. The major basis
upon which the King James text was used is simply that it is the most
popular edition. Because of its age, from 1611 A.D., some more recent
edition might seem to have a better language appeal. However, regard-
less of its relatively few faults in translation and its occasional
archaic language, the King James text has a ring of majesty and beauty
not often found in other versions. There were some places where it did
seem necessary to deviate from this particular text, but they are indi-
cated as such.

It is also assumed that the speeches in question are the actual
words of Paul as they were recorded by Luke. Although the writer is
aware of the approach of higher criticism as regards the accuracy and
reliability of certain sections of the Acts of the Apostles, it is not
the task of this paper to enter the stream of argument. Rather, this is
a speech analysis of certain recorded speeches that are found in the
acts of the Apostles, ascribed to Paul the apostle.

Finally, it should be noted that several books on speech and
persuasive speaking were used as resource material in determining char-
acteristics of a good speech. They are *Persuasion: A Means of Social
Control* by Bremsbeck and Howell, *Public Speaking for College Students
by Crocker, Essentials of Communicative Speech* by Oliver, Dickey, and
Zeiko, and *The Art of Argument* by St. Aubyn. These books helped prepare
the framework for the details of this study. They were silent, but
necessary, companions during both the research and writing of this report.
CHAPTER II

PAUL'S SPEECH TO THE SYNAGOGUE IN ANTIOCH

The first speech in this study is found in Acts, chapter thirteen, verses sixteen through forty-one. It is the first recorded address of the Apostle Paul, probably given about eight years after his conversion to Christianity. It is also the second longest speech by Paul to be found in the Book of Acts. The object of studying this speech is to determine what speech mechanics Paul used in his witness of Christ in the synagogue.\(^1\) The analysis will later be compared with other such studies in an attempt to determine Paul's general speech style.

I. THE OCCasion

The occasion of this speech was the result of a visit to the local synagogue in Antioch by Paul and his company. They had come to the meeting to be a part of the worshipping congregation and were given the opportunity to address the people, probably since they were not local brethren. The spokesman for the group was Paul and his basic message was an apologetic presentation of the Gospel. A summary statement of the events preceding this speech is important for a proper appreciation

\(^1\)Macartney's observation strengthens a study of this particular speech. "The sermon which Paul preached that Sabbath in Antioch, his first recorded sermon, was characteristic of his manner and style of preaching on all occasions." Clarance Edward Macartney, Paul the Man (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1961), p. 53.
of its contents.

**The Conversion of Saul (9:1-20).**

Saul, the Roman citizen, later to be Paul the Apostle of Christ, was a fierce opposer of the Christian religion. He was famed for his zeal in persecuting the early Christian believers. As a result, he was feared by the church and, even after his conversion, the Christians hesitated to accept the fact that he was now one of them (9:21). While on one of his missions to Damascus, for the purpose of capturing more of the hated Christians, Saul was confronted with the living Christ in a vision. Blinded by such a sight, he was led to a certain house on a street called "Straight", where he was baptized by one Ananias and filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately following this encounter with Christ, Saul "preached Christ in the synagogue, that he is the Son of God".

**Paul's Early Ministry (9:22-31; 10:29-30; 13:2-13).**

The early years of Paul's ministry were bound up with the disciples of the Lord. It was during these years that Paul probably gained much first-hand knowledge about the life and teachings of Jesus. Not until chapter thirteen does the ministry of Paul begin to be of noticeable significance. Prior to this time, the predominant figure was Peter, the fisherman. Now Paul comes to the front and is the center of attention through the remainder of the account in Acts.

The Holy Spirit separated Barnabas and Saul for a special missionary journey through many cities where they were to witness for Christ (13:4-13). Paul and his company left Antioch, located in the upper coast
of Syria, and traveled a short distance to Seleucia, a town bordering the sea. From Seleucia, the apostles sailed to the island of Cyprus where they visited the towns of Salamis and Paphos. Soon they set sail again and landed on the shores of Asia Minor, where they went directly to the city of Perga in Pamphylia. Perga was the chief city of ancient Pamphylia and the site still shows traces of its past civilization in its well-preserved ruins.²

The Synagogue in Antioch (13:14-42).

From Perga, the disciples traveled north until they reached the city of Antioch located in the Roman province of Galatia. Here they attended the local worship service in the synagogue on the Sabbath day and were given an opportunity to speak before the people. The institution of the synagogue probably arose sometime during the exile of the Jews in Babylon. It was essentially a lay organization with a simple worship service. It afforded the disciples with a natural place for witnessing.

According to the Book of Acts, Paul's regular procedure in beginning his work in a new city was to enter a synagogue on the Sabbath. There he would take advantage of the privilege, enjoyed by any faithful adult male Jew, of participating in the service. Inevitably, his Gospel would raise dissension and he would be forced to continue his preaching elsewhere.³

This brings us up to the situation at hand, Paul's presentation


of the Christian message in the synagogue at Antioch.

II. THE SPEAKER

Although it can not be established beyond question, it does seem possible that Paul's reputation as a persecutor of the Christians may have reached the attention of the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia. If so, then he was already known to his congregation. As interesting as this may be, it is but conjecture. As stated above, the leader may simply have been offering him the usual privilege of speech that was extended to all visiting Jews. Regardless of the reasons behind this invitation, Paul, probably the main speaker for the Christian group, rose and addressed the waiting congregation.

Character.

Paul's ability, whether natural or studied, to present his character in a pleasing light was an important part of the speech. Of course, his Jewish nationality eased any strong opposition to him personally, especially at the start. However, if he was to make the most of his opportunity, the audience must be able to sense the social and religious stability of his character. How did Paul present himself in a favorable light?

First, his good character was demonstrated in his quick response to the invitation to speak. He rose without hesitation and at once assumed the role of an authority. This authoritative mood was not established in an abrupt manner, but was built into the message as a
whole. He asked for a listening audience (vs. 16), indicating that what he had to say was significant for all present. From the general tenor of the speech, it seems that Paul had control of the situation, not vice versa.

Second, his ability to present religious issues plainly and with conviction added to his speech stature. Paul was full of self confidence as he spoke on past and present religious matters. His speech rings with religious zeal (26,38). He was careful to exalt the person of God (vs. 17, "an high arm"). Paul was also forthright in approaching the subject of Christ's redeeming work. The apostle did not evade the issue or approach it lightly. But, with conviction evident, he connected the message of redemption through Christ with the promise of God as revealed in the Old Testament.

A third aspect of Paul's character was demonstrated by his concern for the welfare of his audience. He was no mere speculator in the field of ethical inquiry, nor was he simply trying to stir up an argument over religious beliefs. Paul was trying to show his audience that what he had to say was of the utmost spiritual importance to them, as Jews. The apostle was sincere in his speech.

Finally, the speech was delivered in a sympathetic, but stern, manner. Paul did not hesitate to speak well of their common Jewish ancestry, nor did he balk over the religious indifference and sin of those Jews that helped crucify Christ (vs. 11). All of these various aspects helped Paul establish the reliability of his character before
the Jews. This is not to imply that they received his message positively, actually most did not (vv. 42, 45). It does mean that, regardless of their attitude, Paul’s speech displayed his honest and sincere character.

**Goodwill:**

Because of the nature of his message, it was necessary for Paul to promote goodwill and acceptance throughout the speech. While the message of Christ was compatible with, and a fulfillment of, the Old Testament writings, yet the religiously instructed Jew of Paul’s day had so misinterpreted the Messianic thrust of those writings that the actual Christ was not recognized as the expected Christ. In building goodwill, Paul’s Jewish heritage was a great asset. This was the first big element in promoting acceptance of his speech. A gentile believer would never have had the excellent chance of speaking to a synagogue audience. Paul spoke as one zealous Jew to other zealous Jews. Between them was a common nationalistic bond that permitted a sense of freedom. Therefore, as a Jew, he interpreted to them the teachings of their own religious faith. Only a converted Jew could deal with such a delicate subject in such a place as a synagogue.

A second thing that helped promote goodwill was the fact that Paul went, with his friends, to the synagogue to worship. There is no indication that the apostles deviated from or denounced the existing forms of ritual in religious worship. Rather, they went to the synagogue to testify to their faith in the very place where such testimony
should be meaningful. Thus, by being one with his audience in worship, Paul's message was received in a more congenial frame of mind.

Third, Paul addressed his audience with respect. Since there were both Jewish and Gentile worshippers present, it behooved Paul to treat them in a gentlemanly manner. He addressed the Jews as "Men of Israel" and "brethren". To those observers outside the nationalistic framework of Israel he called "Men" and "ye that fear God". These titles or expressions of recognition helped establish goodwill between the audience and speaker.

Finally, Paul increased the feeling of compatibility by identifying himself with the audience during the development of the speech. He identified the total group, including himself, with the "fathers" in verse seventeen (see also vs. 33). He called the Israelites by the kinship title of "brethren". Paul spoke to them as his equals, equals in faith and equals in need of Christ.

Intelligence.

Paul's general approach to the audience was both emotional and intellectual. He was interpreting an already well-known past as well as informing about a little-known present. Therefore, his approach had to display mental competence as well as emotional fervor. The supernaturalness of his message would not be a stumbling-block to his Jewish hearers, but his understanding of Jewish history in light of the person of Jesus Christ would. So, for Paul's message to be entertained, much less believed by the Jews, it had to be presented with a great deal of
First, it is noticeable that Paul did not use the term "Jew" in his speech. He referred to his listeners as "Men of Israel", "Israel", and "people of Israel". By doing this, Paul kept before them their religious heritage. As far as the term "Jew" is concerned, there is no immediate indication that it was not accepted favorably by the populace. But here Paul was playing on their sense of nationalism and love for God. They were "Israel", the people of promise and destiny. There must have been a sense of pride in them when the apostle called them "children of the stock of Abraham". In all this, the intelligence of Paul comes to the foreground because of his chosen method of addressing his hearers.

Second, Paul displayed vividly his personal grasp of the facts of Jewish history. Coupled with this knowledge of Israel's past was his use of the Old Testament Scriptures. There are at least twenty-seven Old Testament references in this one speech. In all, Paul alluded to fourteen different Old Testament books in his speech. The apostle addressed his hearers in the frame of reference that they would naturally accept. He treated them as interested Jews and filled his speech with constant references to the Old Testament. He approached them on their level of

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5See Table I, page 16, for the Old Testament references.

6See vss. 22, 33, 34, 35, and 41 for actual quotes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>REFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Exodus 6:6; Deuteronomy 7:6,7; Psalm 105:23-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Numbers 14:33,34; Psalm 95:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Deuteronomy 7:1; Joshua 14:1,2; Psalm 78:55</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Judges 2:16; I Samuel 3:20</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I Samuel 8:5; 10:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Psalm 132:; Isaiah 11:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Genesis 12:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Psalm 2:7</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Isaiah 55:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Psalm 16:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>I Kings 2:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Daniel 9:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Isaiah 53:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Isaiah 29:14; Habakkuk 1:5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Acts 13:16-41*
thinking and made his major thrust of the validity of the Gospel message through the Old Testament.

Third, Paul produced a logical, historical presentation of God's promise to Israel and its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Building on the foundation of history and prophecy, Paul attempted to prove that Christ was God's Messiah for all men. The summary of Jewish history helped the audience to see that this message had some actual merit. If the Messiah had actually come, it would be the most important news that the Jews could hear. In all likelihood, this documented review of Christianity's origin and outreach was attended with interest by all present. It is interesting that it was not the message itself, directly, that prompted the Jews to reject it, but their envy at seeing so many of the city's people respond to it (vss. 44-45).

Thus, through the medium of Paul's expressed and implied good character, his general attitude of goodwill, and his well-ordered declaration of religious truths, the message of Christ was proclaimed. It appears from the text that Paul was able to speak freely and without interruption. The speech was clear to Jewish ears. From his conduct, the audience knew that he was no mere opportunist or fanatic. He was, rather, a converted and convinced proclaimer of the Gospel of Jesus. The speech characteristics noted above indicate that Paul was listened to until he finished because, in part, of the favorable impression that he had made on the audience.

III. THE AUDIENCE
There were at least three different groups present for Paul's synagogue address. The text makes it clear that Paul's company (vs. 13), a congregation of worshipping Jews (vs. 16), and several Gentiles (vs. 16) made up the listening audience. Each of these groups had a common interest that bound them together, their desire to worship God. Therefore, what Paul had to say would be of natural interest to all three.

**Groups Involved.**

The visiting group of Christians was rather small. It is possible, but not probable, that only Paul and Barnabas attended the service as Christians. John left the band in Perga, returning to Jerusalem. However, it was likely that Luke was present with a few more of the early disciples. Yet, only Paul and Barnabas are mentioned, by name, as being present for the worship service. Actually, the number of Christians present is not too significant for this study. The important thing is that they represent the informing group and furnish the main speaker, the Apostle Paul.

The Jewish worshippers constituted the largest group, though they too are not numbered. The synagogue was an important institution in Asia Minor because of the number of Jews that resided in its towns and cities. Its basic purpose was worship and education. Here the law and the prophets were read and expounded. Here prayers were uttered

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as well as recitation of the great Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). There were several "rulers of the synagogue" whose duty it was to select a speaker for the service. On this particular day, the ruler asked Paul and Barnabas if they had anything to say. This was a perfect opportunity for a Biblical approach to the message of the Gospel.

Paul addressed the Gentile worshippers as "ye that fear God". They constituted a sympathetic listening audience that followed the religious worship of the Jews without taking part in the rite of circumcision.

As important as these people were to the spread of Christianity, too much has often been made of their position in the synagogues. Terms applied to them such as God-fearers or proselytes of the gate ... cannot be taken in any technical sense. Any pious person whether Jew, proselyte, or faithful gentile could be called a God-fearer. That this phrase was used of such gentiles is apparent, but it did not indicate any status or official recognition.8

The actual relation between these individuals and the "proselytes" of verse forty-three has been a debatable point.9 Although their background was different from the Jews' background, they responded wonderfully to Paul's message (vss. 42,48).

The three groups present to hear the message of the day represented three views of the religion of Israel. The Christians saw the crux of Israel's worship in the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Jews, still expecting the coming of the Messiah, were bound up with Old Tests-

8Selby, op. cit., pp. 56-7.
9Tenney, op. cit., pp. 690-1.
ment ritualism. The Gentiles wanted the faith of Israel without physical identification in the form of circumcision. All in all, this audience provided the perfect atmosphere for the preaching of the Gospel.

**Arousing Attention and Interest.**

Paul had no difficulty in arousing audience attention and maintaining interest. The audience would have been interested to hear him in the first place since he was not a native of Antioch. A religious exhortation from a fellow Jew of another land would have encouraged them to pay full attention. Add to this Paul's positive message on Christ as the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel and it is easy to see how their interest would naturally have been maintained. The subject of the Messiah was of prime importance to the Jews.

However, there are several things within the speech that did help establish a sense of attention and interest. First, Paul related the subject of his speech directly to the interests of the audience. This aspect has been treated earlier in this study. Suffice it to say that this was the key factor in his audience's responsiveness to the speech.

Second, Paul interpreted his thoughts in concrete terms to his audience. He spoke of Israel's past, of Jesus and His crucifixion, and of the preaching of the Gospel. Yet, in speaking of these things, he pointedly made an application of his speech to his audience and their situation. For example, Paul mentioned specific personalities as concrete points of reference. He mentioned God, Abraham, Moses, Israel, Samuel, Saul, Cis, Benjamin, David, Jesse, Jesus, Pilate, and John. Paul also spoke of certain countries and a well-known city. He spoke of
Egypt, Canaan, Galilee, and Jerusalem. By using these concrete examples and personalities, he made the speech appealing to the audience.

A third factor here is that Paul created curiosity by means of narration. Paul did not use questions to accomplish this as there is only one question in the speech (v. 25) and it is used in an indirect sense. He spent about one-fourth of his speech bringing his audience up to the point where he could introduce Christ. This long introduction was a hurried summary of Israel's spiritual past. It was during this build-up that the people's attention must have been aroused as they wondered what he was leading up to in his discourse. This was a clever way of introducing what later proved to be a controversial subject.

Fourth on the list of Paul's methods of obtaining interest is his use of history. In this speech, his entire application of Christ's work was built on the history of the Jews. In fact, historical incidents that would have been familiar to most of the worshippers constitute the bulk of the speech. Of the twenty-six verses in this speech, nineteen are connected with past events. Only seven verses deal with present events, none with the future. This means that approximately seventy-three per cent of the text of this speech is but calling to the mind of the audience events of their national history or events that would concern the spiritual ideas of the Jews in the historical progression.

Finally, Paul maintained interest by speaking in a narrative style and moving from the general to the specific. He began his account in a general way by telling selected portions of Israel's history.
moved rapidly from the Egyptian bondage to David, Israel's greatest
king. Paul then related God's statement about David and how He was pleased
with him. Immediately Paul moved to the center of his speech, "Of this
man's seed both God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour,
Jesus". He proceeded to hammer away at Israel's rejection, but God's
acceptance of the ministry of Christ. His last recorded statement was
a warning to the audience not to fail God by rejecting the true Messiah.

Reference to Audience Experience.

If it were not for a few sentences that directly tied up Paul's
speech with his immediate audience, the impression would be that the
audience was a group of individuals that played an objective role in
the whole affair. Although Paul unmistakably drove their own personal
responsibility for his message deep in their hearts, he made few refer-
ences to their own personal experience. 10 Strictly speaking, there are
only two references to actual audience experience in the entire dis-
course, one implied and one expressed.

Throughout the speech, Paul strongly implied that the audience
had been made aware of the events about which he was speaking. The facts
of Israel's past as well as the events surrounding the trial and death
of Jesus are assumed to be known to the congregation. Paul implied that

10This speech is filled with references to Israel's national
experience. In many ways, this would be a definite part of the average
Jew's life and experience since their orientation for living was heavily
influenced by the past. This section of investigation is concerned with
this audience's personal experience, however, and this type of specific
reference, in this speech, is rare.
the audience had participated in conversations or in some other way gained its knowledge of Jesus and His claims. With this assumption in hand, the apostle proceeded to interpret their knowledge of Christ in the light of the Old Testament.

Paul expressly stated that the audience had much experience in religious worship (vs. 39). It seems obvious that Paul were referred to their own religious zeal and their personal desire for a full release from their sins. The message of Paul struck with force as he claimed that Christ could accomplish something in their hearts that even the law could not do. In saying this, Paul also implied that such a forgiveness was experiential and that all of those present could have such an experience by believing on Christ as the promised Messiah.

Motives Appealed to in Hearsers.

There were four basic motives that Paul appealed to in his audience. The predominant motive evident in the speech is patriotism. This patriotism was of a religious nature, Israel's spiritual past. The apostle appealed for action on the basis that his audience was a part of that historically believing community of Israel. He held out to them what their fathers longed to see, the fulfillment of God's promise in Jesus Christ. The opportunity was now theirs. If they were to continue in the faith of the fathers, they must accept Jesus Christ as the true

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Paul constructed the speech so that if his audience failed to respond in a positive manner it would appear that they were being unpatriotic to the faith of the patriarchs of Israel. This would be a tragedy for any faithful Jew, i.e., to fail to follow religious tradition.

The second motive Paul appealed to was what might be designated as the "fitness of things". He urged his audience to accept Christ on the basis that it was the logical thing to do. This speech is a masterpiece of relations. Paul interwove Christ and the Old Testament so completely that they became complementary concepts, each one being absolutely necessary for a proper understanding of what he meant. This motive is seen in every application of some Old Testament concept, personality, or quotation in relation to Christ. Indeed, Paul laid down such a logical approach that to go against it would seem to contradict good sense.

A third motive concerned the audience's spiritual well-being. In verses twenty-six and thirty-eight, Paul directly stated that their spiritual security rested on what they did with Jesus Christ. The idea would immediately be framed in their minds that they must accept Paul's message if they were to continue in saving faith. The strong implication is that if they should fail at this point, they would fail altogether. Since the spiritual side of life was the major emphasis of Jew-

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ish existence, this appeal would cause some serious evaluation by the audience. Actually, Paul tied up the first two general motives in this one of spiritual stability.

The fourth basic motive Paul appealed to was fear. This motive was the capstone to all he had said in his speech. The last two verses of the speech (vss. 40-1) are a direct appeal to fear. It is highly negative in its thrust.

Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

Here was the fear of failure, the fear of spiritual loss, and the fear of falling under the condemnation of the prophets. This was strong motivation for that particular audience.

The motives Paul appealed to in this speech were all legitimate and, in a sense, natural. Every motive was designed for the religious Jew and earnest Gentile. This was no message for the unbeliever, but a declaration of what God had done for His people.

IV. THE SPEECH

This speech was primarily an apologetic declaration of God's deed in Jesus Christ. It was an apology in the sense of being an attempt to justify what others may have thought to be wrong. Paul mentioned the failure of the other Jews to receive Christ as the Messiah (vss. 27-28). Yet, he used even that as a point in his positive approach in showing that Christ was really the Messiah, i.e., it was an act in fulfillment
of Scripture (vs. 29). In this sense, the speech was apologetic. The message was also a declaration. It was informative and evangelistic. It was Paul's witness for Christ before the people.

Elements of Style.

There are three basic elements of style that will be used in this study: clearness, energy or force, and ease. Each of these elements will be treated in the light of the text. Other speeches of Paul will not be used here to either amplify or illustrate the findings.

Clearness. This address of Paul's is clear in its meaning and application mainly because it was clear to Paul himself. This speech was no on-the-spot concoction, but a well-planned, carefully thought-out presentation. The issues were clear to Paul; Christ was the Messiah and the Jews were failing to realize this. It was necessary, therefore, to get them to understand Christ's real identity by seeing Him as the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises. This was what Paul was attempting to do when he spoke before the synagogue at Antioch.

A factor that helped produce clarity was Paul's word selection. One of the most noticeable characteristics of this speech is the number of words Paul used containing only one syllable.\(^{13}\) Approximately seventy-seven per cent of the total number of words used in the speech have only one syllable. Only thirty-eight words have as many as three syllables or more. The observation here is that Paul clothed

\(^{13}\) See Table II, page 27, for word distribution.
# Table II

**Word Distribution in Speech I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Monosyllables</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 601 453

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his ideas in terms that were easily expressed and easily comprehended. He did not involve his audience in a lot of needless jargon.

Paul never referred to himself in the speech in the first person. He only injected himself into the message three times (vs. 17, 32, 33) and then indirectly ("our", "we", "us"). The pronoun "I" is used only seven times and is always a quotation from another source. Paul referred to ancient Israel nine times with pronouns like "they", "them", and "their". The real force of pronouns came when Paul used them for maintaining directness with the audience. However, this will be discussed below under the subject of ease.

The sentence structure of the speech is rather long and involved. Interestingly enough, this did not seem to hamper Paul's ability to speak persuasively. The speech would have been difficult to understand if the thought content had been weighty. However, the general expression, as we have it, builds on simple, easily stated thoughts. The commonly known history involved in the speech aided its mental digestion.

There are a total of twenty-two sentences in the entire speech.14 This makes an average of slightly more than twenty-seven words per sentence. The longest sentence has fifty-three words and takes in two verses, thirty-two and thirty-three. The shortest sentence is found in

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14 The number of sentences vary in different translations. The Berkeley text has nineteen; the Revised Standard Version, twenty-three; the New English Bible, twenty-two; J. B. Phillips, twenty-eight. This would significantly change the words-per-sentence, depending on the version used. The Greek text contains only fifteen sentences.
verse twenty-five and contains only four words. The language of the speech, word usage, is clear and free from flowery expressions.

The speech itself is also free of illustrations. Perhaps in the original speech, assuming this to be but an outline, there were many examples and illustrations used by Paul. Yet, in another sense, the bulk of the message is one large illustration; that is, that the history of Israel's religious growth adequately pointed to the coming work of Christ. Of course, all of this history comes from the Old Testament writings, which were Paul's major sources of illustrative material.

Paul did use some figures from nature to emphasize spiritual truths. He stated that God delivered Israel out of Egyptian bondage with "an high arm" (vs. 17). This indicated to Paul's audience that the deliverance came by God's power alone. Another illustration used in this speech, quoting John the Baptist, is along this same line. In verse twenty-five John signified his lowly position, in comparison with Christ, by saying, "But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose". In verse twenty-nine, Paul referred to the cross of Christ as the "tree". Death is also portrayed in verse thirty-six as "sleep".

There are no illustrations in the speech from Paul's life. He did speak of events surrounding John the Baptist and Christ. Those

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15 See also Deuteronomy 4:34.

16 Paul may have been referring to the curse of crucifixion here. See also Deuteronomy 21:23; Acts 5:30; Galatians 3:13; I Peter 1:18.
current events, although past in action, were used to complete the Old Testament plan of progressive revelation and were therefore complimentary illustrations. Aside from these few illustrations, the speech is basically a presentation of Scriptural interpretation. The speech, though, did not depend on illustrations to hold the attention of the audience, its subject matter was sufficient.

Paul's sequence of thought also helped clarify what he was trying to say.\(^{17}\) He began with a general history of the Jewish people until King David. Then he immediately connected Christ with David and the promise of God concerning a Saviour for Israel (vs. 23). He then started again, before Christ, with the ministry of John the Baptist and lead up to Christ's trial, death, and resurrection. A third time Paul regressed and picked up Old Testament statements and connected them with Christ. Paul then closed his speech with an exhortation and a warning.\(^{18}\) As mentioned above, seventy-three per cent of this speech deals with events that are past. Only twenty-seven per cent of the speech is in the present tense, with no reference to future events (from Paul's standpoint).

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\(^{17}\) The following is an outline of this speech as given by Carter and Earle, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-5.

1. An address of recognition and courtesy (vs. 16).
3. Certain scriptural, historical, and logical deductions from the foregoing (vss. 26-37).
4. Practical application of these truths to his audience (vss. 38, 39).
5. Solemn warning and impassioned appeal to his hearers (vss. 40-41).

\(^{18}\) See Table III, page 31, for the divisions of the speech.
TABLE III

DIVISIONS OF SPEECH I*

KEY: A. General Speech Divisions
1. Introduction
2. Body
3. Climax
4. Conclusion

B. General Topical Divisions

Acts 13:16-41
The speech composition that Paul used in this situation was one of fact-application. All through the first part of the speech Paul would give a few facts and then apply it to Christ. However, in the middle of the body (vs. 33f.) Paul began with Christ as his fact and then applied the Old Testament to Him. The result was that Paul spoke in a circular manner. He both started and ended with the Old Testament. In this speech, there are five separate facts and five applications of these facts. This was a remarkable practical method of presentation as the movement was logical and precise.

Basically, Paul's transitions are clear and neat. He moved smoothly from his introduction to the body of his material by the use of a summary statement (vs. 23) that closed the first division and opened the second. The movement from the body to the climax is more abrupt, the transition being made on the adverb "therefore". In the movement from the climax to the conclusion, the word "therefore" is used again. Thus, Paul moved swiftly from point to point, but not in a fashion that made the speech seem choppy in presentation.

Paul moved from point to point, but not in a fashion that made the speech seem choppy in presentation.

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19 See Table IV, page 33, for the thought composition in outline.


21 Although the King James text has "therefore" further on in the sentence (vs. 38), the Greek text justifies its being placed first in word order. English would make the same allowance.
TABLE IV

THOUGHT COMPOSITION OF SPEECH I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>FACT</th>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>APPLICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17-22</td>
<td>The Old Testament promised a Saviour.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Jesus is the Saviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>John was not the promised Saviour.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Jesus is the Saviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Referring back to vs. 23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-29</td>
<td>The Jews Killed Jesus.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Jesus is not dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-33</td>
<td>Jesus is not dead.</td>
<td>34-37</td>
<td>The Old Testament states that Jesus is alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-39</td>
<td>Jesus is the Saviour.</td>
<td>40-41</td>
<td>The Old Testament states that Jesus is the Saviour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Acts 13:16-41
that would appeal strongly to his audience. In the speech, there are many words that would have quickened interest, words that were peculiarly interesting and meaningful to a Jewish audience, for example, words like "Israel", "fathers", "David", "promise", "Saviour", "Abraham", "corruption", "forgiveness", "law", and "prophets".

Perhaps the most outstanding method of giving force to the speech that Paul used was that of authority. All of Paul's sources of authority in his speech would be accepted by his audience. Paul carefully avoided any approach to the subject of Christ that was not based on the writings of the Old Testament. Only once does Paul count himself as an authority (vs. 32), and even then it is in connection with the Scriptures.

Therefore, the greatest single authority is the Old Testament. Of the twenty-six verses in the speech, eighteen, or sixty-nine per cent, have some direct connection with the Old Testament. The Book of Psalms is quoted three times (vss. 33, 34, 35) and King David is mentioned by name four times (vss. 22, 34, 36). The prophets are used as authorities twice (vss. 27, 40). Habakkuk 1:5 is also quoted (vs. 41). Other prominent Old Testament characters that were used for force or energy are Abraham (vs. 26) and Moses (vs. 39). The same principle would apply to John the Baptist (vss. 24, 25) and Pilate (vs. 28). In a sense, this type of authority would tend to be personal, from the audience's standpoint. As would be expected, the principal authority is God. He is mentioned by title nine times (vss. 16, 17, 21, 23, 26, 30, 33, 36, 37), by the pronoun "he" eleven times (vss. 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 34, 35), and is quoted as speaking four times (vss. 22, 33, 34, 35).
The factor of suspense is not as important in this speech as the factor of curiosity. The main stream of Paul's speech was that God had fulfilled His promise in Jesus Christ. The audience would be naturally curious as to the way God fulfilled His promise (vs. 23, 32). If the Jews had believed Paul, the result of his speech would have changed and magnified their existing religious system. Therefore, a speech with such consequences and seeming authority would create an intense atmosphere of curiosity. Suspense was built up from verse seventeen through twenty-two, but in verse twenty-three the suspense was broken by the declaration that Christ was the fulfillment of the promise. Actually, curiosity was the main stimulating factor involved here.

The emotional tone of the speech is strictly a matter of opinion. It cannot be conceived that Paul would deliver such an address in a monotone voice or with little enthusiasm. The very fact that he had a message of deliverance for his people would lead one to expect a delivery full of vigor. The urgency and stability of Paul's ideas plead a good case for a stimulating speech. The word selection and progression of ideas indicate an emotionally charged address. In the speech are found such emotional factors as national loyalty (vs. 17f.), brotherhood and kinship (vs. 26), denunciation (vs. 27), joy (vs. 30, 32), family ties (vs. 33), hope (vs. 39), and warning (vs. 41). These factors surely form a basis for stating that Paul's speech was one of movement and variation in emotional quality.
Paul demonstrated his personal ease in the speech situation by his grasp of the situation itself, his pointed introduction, and his smooth persuasive speaking style. But the ease of the speech in its clarity and suggestiveness is indicated in other areas. The nature of the message, its religious appeal, added to the factor of ease. Also, the selection of suggestive words or ideas and the use of imagery helped increase the necessary aspect of ease.

Another important factor in ease was Paul's use of contrasts. By using contrasting ideas, Paul brought Biblical truths to bear on the audience in a vivid manner. There are six basic contrasts in the

First, in verse twenty-three there is the promise given and the promise fulfilled. Second, in verse twenty-five we see that John is not the Saviour, but Jesus is the Saviour. Third, in verses twenty-seven and twenty-eight the fact is declared that the message of Christ is true, but it was received as untrue (see also vs. 41 which is a second instance of this contrast). Fourth, in verses twenty-nine and thirty it is stated that Jesus was slain, but Jesus was raised. Fifth, in verses thirty-six and thirty-seven David is dead, but Jesus is alive. Sixth, in verse thirty-nine there is the contrast between law and grace.

One of Paul's strongest factors of ease was his use of repetition. He continually repeated that God had brought all the events surrounding the Messiah to pass. He repeated that Christ was the fulfillment of the

22 See Table V, page 37, for Paul's use of imagery.
## Table V

**Imagery in Speech**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Verse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;give audience&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>&quot;voices of the prophets&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>&quot;we declare&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>&quot;he said&quot; (also vs. 35)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&quot;is preached&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&quot;spoken of&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;declare it&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tactual</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;they took him&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;(they) laid him&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>&quot;was seen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Muscle</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effort</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot;high arm&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;raised up&quot; (also vss. 33, 34, 37)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>&quot;raised unto&quot;</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>&quot;shoes to unloose&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;raised him&quot;</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>&quot;begotten thee&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>&quot;was laid&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;I work a work&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organ</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;fear God&quot; (also vs. 26)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stimulation</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;suffered he&quot; (endured)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;destroyed&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;they despised&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>&quot;condemning him&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>&quot;alas&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>&quot;corruption&quot; (also vss. 35, 36, 37)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&quot;beware&quot;</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;ye despisers&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;perish&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Acts 13:16-41*
expecting faith of the Old Testament. He made repeated statements to
the fact that Christ was not dead, but alive. He hammered away at the
audience that Jesus was the Saviour that had been promised. The great-
ness of Christ was continually emphasized throughout the speech. Paul
spoke of Christ, the promised one (vs. 23); Christ, the esteemed one
(vs. 25); Christ, the innocent one (vs. 26); Christ, the resurrected
one (vs. 30); Christ, the saving one (vs. 39). This constant repetition
of important points helped the audience to grasp the key ideas of his
speech. The particular contrasts that Paul used also tended to invoke
a yes-response from the people.

Throughout the speech, Paul never let his audience slip away from
him. He used several methods of maintaining directness with his audi-
ence before him. First, at three timely places in the speech, Paul
addressed his audience directly. He began his speech with a direct ad-
dress, used to get attention. After introducing Jesus and John, he made
another direct approach concerning the message of salvation (vs. 26).
Near the end of his speech, Paul again addressed the audience directly
with an exhortation for belief (vss. 38-39). Secondly, Paul maintained
directness with the pronoun "you" (vss. 26, 32, 38, 39, 40, and implied
in 41). Thirdly, Paul identified himself with the audience and drew
them both into the speech (vss. 17 "our fathers", 33 "us"). In this
manner, Paul constantly maintained the personal quality of his speech.

Amplification of the Theme.

The theme of Paul's speech is easily identified. Actually his
theme has two parts. First, he tried to get across the fact that Christ
was the Messiah. Second, he attempted to demonstrate that Christ was actually alive, not dead and buried. Therefore, the main emphasis of this speech is Jesus Christ, God's Messiah.

Paul's main purpose in speaking was to convince the audience of the truthfulness of his message. In his attempt to persuade them, he also had to instruct them and motivate them. By convincing the Jews of the truthfulness of his message, he hoped to get them to embrace the fact that Christ was their Messiah. Thus, his entire speech is geared toward convincing the mind and activating the emotions. It was well planned to meet these desired ends. That he succeeded to some degree is indicated in verses forty-two and forty-three.

The arrangement of Paul's speech has been outlined in Tables III and IV. Just how the arrangement of the speech amplified the theme is clearly shown in Table IV. The theme of Christ is treated directly in every set of facts and continuously repeated in various ways throughout the speech. Thus, anywhere one turns in the speech he meets up with Christ. Not only does the arrangement amplify the theme, but it also intensifies it. As the thought progression passes to the climax of the speech, the theme looms larger and larger until the whole speech is compressed into the individual's responsibility to accept Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The warning in the conclusion is but an added support to the already towering structure of thought.

Paul did not use any of his own experiences as occasions for proving what he said. Strictly speaking, there is little personal proof in the whole speech. In verses thirty-two and thirty-three, Paul did
refer to his status as a "witness" in order to add weight to his interpretation of the Old Testament. However, the majority of Paul's proof is logical proof. Using the inductive method, he came to the conclusion that Christ was the Messiah of God. The proof of this is found for Paul in the history of the Old Testament. Involved with this logical approach to history was a hidden emotional proof that came to the audience by virtue of the highly personalized nature of that history. This is also seen in Paul's treatment of the promise in relation to King David.

The proof that Jesus was actually alive because He had been raised from the dead stemmed from the many who saw Him after His crucifixion (vs. 31). Paul again added a bit more logical proof from the Book of Psalms as to God's raising up Jesus (vss. 33, 34, 35). Therefore, after all of this was put together in a logical presentation, then emotional proof took over and attempted to draw the hearers to a decision (vss. 38-41). Thus, Paul used a great deal of logical and emotional proof in his attempt to justify his claims about Christ.

Paul amplified his speech by the use of concrete terms. By using people, places, and concepts that were familiar to his audience, Paul helped them to comprehend the theme of the speech and build a concrete approach to understanding its relevance. Paul used familiar words like "Israel", "fathers", "judges", "king", "Jesus", "rulers", "David", "Jerusalem", and many others that brought specific situations to mind. Abstract concepts are relatively few. The speech is definitely more concrete than abstract, although abstract principles like "salvation", "forgiveness", etc. are a definite part of the foundation upon which the
speech is based.

Therefore, the elements of style that have been reviewed, as well as ways Paul amplified the theme, point to the fact that this speech is of an oral style, not a written style. Its energy, movement, contrasts, rhythm, and forms of repetition all suggest an oral style. The manner in which Paul stated his thoughts was that of a speaker.

V. CONCLUSION

Paul's first recorded speech was an apologetic presentation of the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament faith. Its central theme is the risen Christ as the promised Messiah and the whole speech is arranged to persuade the audience of the truthfulness of that theme. Although the sentence structure seems a bit involved for a persuasive speech, yet the style of the message is oral, not written. This speech is nationalistic as well as personal. Paul used appeals that urged the Jews to follow the historic faith of their forefathers. To accomplish this, Paul utilized the Old Testament to a great extent. In fact, his main source of authority and proof stems from the pages of the Old Testament.

This speech is well-ordered in structure and relatively simple in word selection.23 This was an evangelistic appeal, not a theological

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23 "Down to its minor parts the discourse is arranged with exactness in a perfect progression, logically and psychologically." Lenski, op. cit., p. 534.
The speech is clear in its meaning, being helped by illustrative material, clear transitions, and a logical sequence of thought. It has force and drive. This is sensed by the urgency of the speaker and the significance of the theme. Paul appealed to the religious curiosity of the audience and climaxed his speech with an invitation to the individual. Ease was promoted by a few basic contrasts and a generous use of the factor of repetition. One of Paul's greatest assets in this speech was his ability to maintain directness.

In the amplification of the theme, again Paul's major thrust was in speech construction. Couple his careful outline with his clear-cut purposes in presenting this speech and you have a logical, concise, and convincing argument. The theme of the speech was the theme of Paul's life. The burden of the speech was to adequately portray Christ as God's answer to the spiritual needs of men.

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24 "Some doctrines that emerge from this sermon are divine providence, divine omnipotence, divine judgment, repentance, divine revelation, the death of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the appearances of Christ, the divine Sonship of Christ, and the forgiveness of sins." Carter and Earle, op. cit., pp. 188-89. The main one of the above listed doctrines in this speech was the resurrection of Christ.
CHAPTER III

PAUL'S SPEECH ON MARS' HILL

The second address chosen for this study is Paul's only recorded speech to a pagan audience. It is perhaps the best known speech of Paul and is found in the seventeenth chapter of Acts, verses twenty-two through thirty-one. The Mars' Hill address is important because it is probably the most scholarly speech that Paul delivered. In it can be seen the distinctively courteous style of the intellectual orator. This speech is the shortest recorded speech of the missionary apostle. Although it was ended abruptly by an interruption, it affords us with new insights into Paul's speaking ability while in a unique situation.

I. THE OCCASION

The occasion of this speech was due to a temporary layover in Athens by Paul. While there he witnessed in the synagogue and in the market-place about Christ. As a result, he was later invited to speak about his faith to the philosophers on Mars' Hill. It appears that Paul was ready for such an encounter. He had been heavily burdened over the


city because of the influence that idolatry exerted over the people.

In this speech, Paul attempted to lay a solid foundation for his faith in Christ and his missionary work. It was also a justification of his recent speaking activity in Athens.

**Opposition to the Gospel (17:1-15).**

Paul had undergone a series of uprisings among the Jews prior to his coming to Athens. His company had stopped in Thessalonica with the result that the local Jews rebelled at the message of Christ. Some believed the Gospel, but so much trouble was stirred up that Paul and Silas had to slip away at night to Berea. While at Berea the apostles enjoyed some good response to their teaching. However, the Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea and again Paul had to leave, this time for Athens. Alone at Athens, Paul sent word for Timothy and Silas, who were still at Berea, to join him. While waiting for them, Paul spoke of Christ whenever and wherever he had the opportunity. Because of his fervency in speaking about Jesus and the resurrection, some Athenians escorted him, in a friendly manner, to Mars' Hill where he was given the chance to speak.

**The City of Athens (17:16, 17).**

Although Athens had been conquered by the Romans before Paul's day, it remained the cultural hub of the ancient world. Athens had an estimated population of at least a quarter of a million people. It was the seat of Greek art, literature, and science. Athens was the most important university city of the times and the home of various types of
philosophical thought. The city, as the apostle observed, was "wholly
given to idolatry". Within the limits of the city were such religious
shrines and places of worship as the Temple of Apollo Patroos, the
Sanctuary of the Mother of the Gods, the Temple of Ares, and the Temple
of Hephaistas, the god of fire and metal. Indeed, so complete was
their worship that they had an altar inscribed, "To the Unknown God".
The very atmosphere of Athens was charged with learning, speculation in
philosophical questions, and a general curiosity over any "new thing".
The Areopagus (17:18-21).

The word "Areopagus" is translated in verse twenty-two as "Mars' Hill", so-called in honor of the god Ares, or . On this hill,
which overlooked the Acropolis at Athens, men gathered daily to discuss
religion and philosophy. The two leading philosophies of the day were
the Epicureans and the Stoics (see vs. 18). Originally the Epicureans
believed that pleasure of the mind was the ideal for life. Eventually
that concept degenerated to the level of the flesh and their motto became
"eat, drink, and be merry". Although not denying the existence of a God

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2 Charles W. Carter and Ralph Earle (eds.), The Acts of the Apo-
tles (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1959), pp. 252-53. See
also Olaf Moe, The Apostle Paul: His Life and His Work (Minneapolis:

3 Merrill C. Tenney (ed.), The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary

4 For a more detailed discussion of these two philosophical con-
cepts, see Donald Joseph Selby, Toward the Understanding of St. Paul
or gods, the Epicureans relegated such a Being to a distant part of the universe, teaching that He was completely unconcerned with the affairs of this world.

The stoics, on the other hand, constituted a different type of materialism. They believed that God could be identified with the force that moved and determined nature. They taught that life was predetermined and man may as well reconcile himself to it and face existence with an attitude of self-surrender. Actually, these philosophical approaches to life were but two of the many and varied ideas prevalent in Paul's time. Eventually, each would make his way to Mars' Hill and defend his beliefs. Thus it was with Paul.

II. THE SPEAKER

When Paul stood up to speak that day on Mars' Hill, he was proving himself as well as his speech topic. At least some of the philosophers and other men present had heard Paul speak of Jesus and the resurrection at other times (vs. 18). They had already dubbed him a "babbler", indicating that he was some kind of "seed-picker" that lived off of the intellectual scraps that he could pick up. The people thought that Paul was just another itinerant philosopher that roamed from place to place. Thus, it was necessary for Paul to present a good view of himself as well as his message.

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Carter and Earle, op. cit., p. 256.
Character.

If this speech reveals anything of Paul's character, it certainly shows his Christian courtesy. The whole speech, and his reported mannerisms, demonstrate the attitude of a Christian gentleman. This was shown in particular by his refusal to use his opportunity as one to publicly denounce his audience. Although there is a mild rebuke in his opening words, still he was courteous to his hearers.

Paul's character was also demonstrated by his desire to help the Athenians by offering information pertaining to the unknown God. Such information would have been welcomed by such a group of religiously-minded individuals and so they were probably interested in Paul's speech from the start. Suffice it to say that Paul's personal character exceeded that of his audience in the realm of courtliness. They interrupted his speech and mocked his teachings before he had an opportunity to finish (vs. 32). Perhaps Paul's mild manner implanted his message in the minds of those who seriously considered the import of his words.

Goodwill.

Nowhere does the speech suggest that Paul had some axe to grind with that particular group of philosophically minded individuals. From the first, Paul expressed goodwill toward the audience and sympathy for


the goals in life that they were seemingly trying to discover. He readily went along with those who urged him to speak. He addressed his audience with respect, calling them by a local, but impressive, title, "ye men of Athens." Thus, as mentioned under the subject of character, Paul also expressed goodwill by not denouncing the audience as idolators or sinners. Actually, he did just the opposite by commenting favorably on their zeal for religion (vs. 23). The speech is silent as to any form of address used by Paul to deliberately oppose the Athenians. There is no reason, from the speech angle, for them to consider him as anything less than their friend.

Intelligence.

This speech seems to be the most scholarly address given by Paul in the Book of Acts. It is quite evident from the arrangement of the speech that Paul was no stranger to the philosophies that he was combating. He logically attempted to displace the major tenents of their philosophical foundations and replace them with the truths of the Gospel. It must have occurred to the audience that this man was one well-trained in religion and philosophy.

Paul did not use the Old Testament as a frame of reference in dealing with the Athenians. Although the revealed truths of the Scripture were certainly a hidden support to the message, they were not externally

visible in the form of actual documentation. Rather, Paul started with his audience where they were so as not to unduly antagonize them. His argument was based on their own philosophical principles.

Paul agreed, as far as possible, with the philosophers who heard him; and he reasoned from their own admitted principles. In fact what he stated in this discourse is little more than what they would readily see must be fair conclusions from the doctrines they themselves held. Thus, for authority the apostle quoted from their own poets (v. 26), not one of the prophets.

Finally, Paul displayed intelligence by the manner in which he approached the subject of Christ. He did not plunge immediately into the necessity of a personal experience with Christ. Paul started with God as the Creator and Sustainer of the world. Gradually he worked his way to Christ and the resurrection. He did not force an unwanted Gospel on them, but he led them to the place where the subject could be properly introduced.

III. THE AUDIENCE

Paul's audience on Mars' Hill was different than what he was used

10"He begins by an oratorical expedient, thinking with the men before him, in order to get them to think with him. Like a true orator he never starts with antagonism but always on a common plane with his audience." S.S. Curry, Vocal and Literary Interpretation of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907), p. 74.

11Albert Barnes, Scenes and Incidents in the Life of the Apostle Paul (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950), p. 188.
to. That is, those who spent their time there were people who were interested mainly in philosophical matters. They were interested in the intellectual side of life and were so familiar with local arguments, pro and con, that they were pleased to hear anything new in the field of religious ... play. Their provincialism was only exceeded by their individualism and they were seeking not so much to be convinced as to be intrigued.

Groups Involved.

The two leading philosophical groups present, the Epicureans and the Stoics, have already been ... . They were the strongest ideologies in all of Athens, perhaps Greece itself. It is interesting that these two groups, plus the view of Paul, each represent a different approach to the understanding of the "Absolute". The Epicureans displaced the affections of any supernatural Being and denied that such a Being could be known personally by man. They were actually Agnostics. The Stoics identified God with the material universe, using themselves existentialists. Paul, however, presented the Theistic view that God's revelation was made through a human being who was both, essentially, God and man. Under such conditions it is easy to see why the Athenians were eager to hear Paul's "new" doctrines.

Doubtless there were other philosophical opinions present that day. The scripture text states that there were visiting foreigners there.

at the Areopagus (Acts 17:21). Most of them were probably tourists or visiting dignitaries. Some of these "strangers" were probably free-lance philosophers that drifted into Athens in hope of a little argument. At any rate, the Athenians concluded that Paul was one of these fellows and probably wanted to hear him as much out of sport, at first, as interest.

There is no possible way of calculating the number of people present that day. The safer side of conjecture would be to say that there was probably a good sized audience involved since this pastime was fairly universal in Athens.

Arousing Attention and Interest

Aside from the general interest in matters of religion, the message of Paul as he witnessed to the faith in various parts of Athens had already caused some concern. Actually, it was because of an existing interest in him that he was invited to speak. Nevertheless, Paul did not depend on that initial interest to sustain either his speech or his audience, but he quickened curiosity into suspense and interest.

Immediately Paul related the subject of his speech to the interests of his . . . . The leading theme of this speech is the nature of God and the main interests of the audience were concentrated along religious--philosophical lines. Paul's opening sentences combine both of these aspects in a very effective manner.

Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too super-

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13See More, op. cit., 4.
stitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.¹⁴

Naturally such an introduction created a great deal of interest. Paul then proceeded to explain what he meant by using language that was familiar to his Greek audience. He spoke much in abstract terms, but contrary to the speculative mind before him, he established his thoughts in events and persons. Thus, God created the world and now sustains it by His power. God has made all men of one blood, i.e., a common origin. God is not like the stone images that their artisans fashioned. God now commands men to repent. God raised up "that man whom he hath ordained" from the dead. Such concepts kept the attention of the audience centered on the speech.

In order to sustain interest, and to inform his audience of his familiarity with Greek thought, Paul referred to their own poets (vs. 26). He used writers of their own culture to strengthen his claims about God. Calvin says that Paul quoted half a verse from the poet, Aratus.¹⁵

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¹⁴Verses twenty-two and twenty-three. The word "superstitious" fails to catch the larger meaning of the Greek text. The best translation is "very religious". Yet, even this translation does not imply a compliment. Bruce says, "We should not lay too much stress on the likelihood of Paul's commencing his talk with a compliment; according to Lucian...complimentary exordia to secure the goodwill of the Areopagus were forbidden". F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (London: The Tyndale Press, 1951), p. 335.

Paul also referred, indirectly, to the philosophical understanding of the nature of God as held by his audience and contrasted that with the Christian view.

There are no questions in this speech. Perhaps Paul would have made use of the question if he had been permitted to continue. Such elements as body action, variety in tone, and rate of utterance must remain unknown. But Paul's speech is filled with suggestions that there was energy expended and that the various elements of his speech were vividly portrayed.

The reaction of the audience in verse thirty-two to Paul's mentioning the resurrection was not due to a lack of interest, but to a misunderstanding.

An Athenian audience would have listened with curiosity if not conviction to any argument about immortality, which it would have regarded as an interesting possibility; but the majority thought that a 'resurrection of corpses' was absurd.16

The speech indicates that Paul gripped his audience and held them because the subject was interesting and relevant.

Reference to Audience Experience.

Paul made one great reference to his audience's experience which, in turn, colored the whole discourse. This reference was to their worship practices, their devotions (vs. 23). The reference Paul made to

the poets brought into view their participation in culture and the arts, in an indirect way. The direct appeal to experience that Paul made, however, was the very thing Athens was noted for, religiosity.

**Motives Appealed to in Hearers.**

What motives would Paul appeal to in an audience like this? He did not appeal to their sense of personal guilt or the consciousness of sin. Perhaps he would have worked his way into these subjects as the speech enlarged. There is a hint of personal blame in verse thirty, but the point is not at all clear. Neither did Paul appeal strongly to the motive of safety, even though the fact of judgment is mentioned in verse thirty-one.

Paul's appeals were based on motives that would naturally attract the attention of such an audience as the one he was speaking to. The strongest appeal the apostle made was to the idea of the "fitness of things". He took their concept of the natural approach to God and added to it the Hebrew concept of God as supernaturally revealed. He began to emphasize how God was revealed in a Person, when he was stopped. He did elaborate on the fact that God is a personal being with real concerns that touch man. By using their poets, he tried to show how realistic his approach actually was. He appealed to them on the basis that the logical outcome of their own philosophy was in favor of a personal God. If they missed this, they missed the end or goal they desired to

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A second motive Paul appealed to was their own adequacy to understand and appreciate his information concerning the unknown God. They were "men of Athens" and as such were capable in grasping such knowledge. This was an appeal to their ego. Thirdly, Paul appealed to their sense of dedication to religion. Finally, he appealed to the fact of challenge concerning new truths. Here was a mental and emotional test that they were invited to grapple with.

The obvious factor in motivation is due to the aptness of the Hebrew-Christian concept of God. Paul based his whole argument on this factor. The secondary motives mentioned gain their significance in the light of this main motive. They were but added incentives for action. The main thrust that would carry the speech would be the Athenian's ability to view the idea of God from the totality of His person, not on just a few prejudiced philosophical principles.

IV. THE SPEECH

This speech affords us with another look at Paul as an apologist. It also reveals the oratorical ability of Paul as well as the sweep of his thoughts.¹⁹ His opponents, apologetically speaking, were the Athenians with their various and sundry ideas about God, man, and the world. Paul's main thrust in his Mars' Hill address was not to evangelize the

¹⁹"Paul's address is a masterpiece in every way: in its introduction, in its line of thought, in its aptness for the audience, in its climax." Lenski, op. cit., p. 720.
Athenians, but to defend his right to speak about Christ and the resurrection. Indeed, their ideas of God, sin, and judgment had to be corrected first. For his topic, Paul chose the doctrine of God.

**Elements of Speech.**

*Clearness.* The issues involved in this speech situation were evidently clear in the apostle’s mind. He carefully decided to channel his efforts in persuasion through the subject of the doctrine of God. Paul attempted to sum up in the unknown God the ideas and appreciations that were not being expressed in the current system of deities recognized by the Athenians. Therefore, Paul drew several conclusions from their own doctrines and injected others that were peculiarly Christian. Before he stood in their midst that day, the Apostle Paul knew exactly what he would say.

Paul defined his role clearly by the use of pronouns. The pronoun "I" was used by Paul only four times (vs. 22, 23), but they sharply indicate his attitude toward the whole affair. That is, he passed by their devotional places, saw their altars, and now would declare unto them with certainty what they searched for in obscurity. Paul likewise pointed up the plight of the Athenians when he declared them to be very religious (vs. 22) and yet ignorant in worship (vs. 23). However, in the body Paul assumed a mediating position by using the impersonal "we", not "I" or

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20Paul's use of δ θεος does not signify merely one God among many, but the one, true God Himself. *Ibid.*, p. 726

21See Table VI, page 57, for the doctrines in this speech. Material derived from Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-96.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASED ON ATHENIAN PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>PECULIAR TO CHRISTIANITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. The &quot;unknown God&quot; was the world’s Creator.</td>
<td>2. God will judge the world.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The immensity of God.</td>
<td>3. The resurrection of the dead.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The independence of God.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The unity of the human race.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The purpose for arrangements that concern the race (vs. 26)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The spirituality of God and of religion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Acts 17:22-31*
The general tone of the speech tends to clarify the issues involved. Most of the ideas are abstract because they have their base in theology and philosophy. They would have been clear to the audience since they apparently thought most of the time in abstractions. Paul, however, took their abstract thoughts and drew practical teachings from them.

In the King James text this speech has only six sentences, yet 266 words. This means that each sentence has an average of a little more than forty-four words. There are three sentences in the first two verses of the speech. The shortest sentence is in verse twenty-three and has only ten words. The remaining eight verses contain only three sentences, the longest sentence encompassing five verses (vss. 24-28).

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22It is possible that Paul's use of "we" referred to the collective beliefs of the common people in his audience. If this is correct, then the "we" sections would be a form of direct address. W. Robertson Nicoll (ed.), The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), v. II, p. 377.

23Again, comparing the King James text with other versions, one finds a variation in the total number of sentences. The Berkeley text has seven; Revised Standard Version, eight; The New English Bible, ten; J. B. Phillips, twelve. The Greek text has seven sentences.

24The words-per-verse breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>WORDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 266
and having 133 words. This long sentence results unfortunately in an
anacoluthon.\textsuperscript{25} Thus, the general sentence structure is too long for a
good speaking style. The thought pattern quickly becomes too involved
when the sentence structure is so complicated.\textsuperscript{26}

The speech, as it stands, has only two actual illustrations.
First, Paul introduced his subject with the illustration of the altar
to the unknown God. Second, Paul referred to the popular idols of Athens
with the terms "gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's
device". This reference may have been called to Paul's mind as he spoke
from the hill that overlooked the city and its numerous statues. It is
probable that he pointed to them as proof of what he said. The first
illustration was used to get attention and the second for clarification
or definition.\textsuperscript{27}

Careful reading of the speech indicates that Paul drew his material
from several different sources. First, he made several references to
some phase of the natural world. He talked of the world, heaven, hands,
life, and breath. Second, Paul used the religious life of the Athenians

\textsuperscript{25}Apparently this fault is fairly common in Paul's writings also.
See Charles Allen Dinsmore, The English Bible as Literature (Boston:

\textsuperscript{26}The Greek text has a period at the end of verse twenty-seven.
Even with this reduction in length, the sentence would still have 103
words according to the King James text. This, of course, is still much
too long for practical use.

\textsuperscript{27}The word "winked" in verse thirty does not have any reference
to facial expression. It is a plain mistranslation, the proper word
being "overlooked". Therefore, it can not be classified as an illus-
tration.
as source material. He mentioned their altars, devotional objects, and temples. A third source was his reference to the Greek poets, a cultural and social source for material. Fourth, his own personal experience in what he had seen in Athens served as a source of information. Fifth, in an indirect manner, Paul drew materials from the philosophies of his opponents. Finally, Divine revelation served as a unique source for such concepts as judgment and resurrection.

It is indeed unfortunate that Paul's speech was cut short as it leaves us with less than half of a regular speech. Only the introduction (vss. 22, 23) and part of the body (vss. 24-31) remain for inspection. The transition from the introduction to the body is abrupt, choppy. The transitions within the body are somewhat smoother. Throughout the whole there is an evident logical sequence. Again, Paul began with general concepts and moved to the specific.

The speech is clear in its purpose, to reveal information pertaining to an unknown God. In developing the doctrine of God, Paul mentioned three great aspects of His Being. First, Paul declared that God was the Creator of the world. Second, the Apostle stated that God was also the world's Ruler and Sustainer. Third, Paul brought vividly before his hearers that God was going to be man's Judge. Each of these declarations cut away at specific philosophical beliefs that were dominant in the mind of the... 26

26 See further, Mercer, op. cit., pp. 111-14.
Energy. The primary force of the speech is to be found in its ideas. Yet, even though the thoughts certainly transcend their carriers, there are several forceful words used by ... For example, "superstitious" (r. 11101), "ignorantly", "graven", "repent", "judge", and "God raised him". The Athenians would have also been influenced by terms like "worship", "poets", and "Godhead". These words were forceful because they helped make Paul's speech relevant to the needs of the audience.

If this speech had been finished, doubtless the factor of suspense would have been much greater than it seems to have ... It seems as though Paul was setting a pattern of delivery involving the factor of suspense and mystery. The two passages that indicate such an approach are verses twenty-three and thirty-one. In verse twenty-three, Paul aroused suspense by reference to the unknown God. He then proceeded to explain carefully the nature of this God. Then in verse thirty-one, he again aroused suspense by mentioning "that man" whom God had raised from the dead. Paul also spoke of the judgment in that same verse.

If Paul had followed the pattern used earlier in the speech, he would have proceeded carefully to explain what he meant by judgment, resurrection, and "that man". It is conceivable that he then might again establish a suspenseful situation and proceed to explain it in the same detail.

The emotional tone of the speech must be inferred from its contents and its audience. It is safe to assume that Paul approached his

subject with a well-disciplined zeal, carefully avoiding any extreme mannerisms, as his audience would have been watching for any emotional display. It is probable that some of them expected a ranting, illogical approach. However, the speech is well-ordered, logical, and persuasive.

Ease. Perhaps the greatest factor of ease in the speech was the apostle's ability to express deep truths in simple terms. He treated some weighty matters concerning the nature of God with an earnest simplicity. Paul's method of presentation was to take heavily shadowed areas of Athenian thought and cast some light on them from the Christian viewpoint. Yet, he was able to do this without the use of high-flown, meaningless language. Actually, there are only fifteen words in the recorded speech that have as many as three syllables. This was important for .

Paul's address on Mars' Hill revolved around contrasts. Most of these contrasts are implied from the text of the speech. Paul's presentation of the Christian view of God was based on opposite views as held by the Epicureans and the Stoics. Understanding the basic views of these two groups, Paul contrasted their views with the Christian views of the early church.

Because the speech is so intimately connected with the life and thought of the audience, a sense of directness was constantly

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31See Table VII, page 63, for the contrasts in this speech.

32Selby, op. cit., pp. 92-93.
**TABLE VII**

**CONTRASTS IN SPEECH II**

**SIMPLE CONTRASTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>IDEAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Unknown God and known God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>God unconfined versus confined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Distance, yet nearness of God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>God like man, not idols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Once overlooked, now repentance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Dead, yet alive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LARGER CONTRASTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>IDEAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implied 27, 26</td>
<td>God completely transcendent (Epicurean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 24</td>
<td>God immanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 24</td>
<td>God part of nature (Stoic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 24</td>
<td>God created nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 30</td>
<td>All men basically divine (Stoic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 30</td>
<td>All men must repent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 26, 31</td>
<td>Fate determines events (Stoic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 31</td>
<td>God determines events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 31</td>
<td>Happiness the end of life (Epicurean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 31</td>
<td>Righteousness the end of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 26</td>
<td>Men of different blood (Greek)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implied 26</td>
<td>All men of one blood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Acts 17:22-31*
Paul used the pronoun "you" only four times in the speech. Three of these times were in the introduction (vss. 22, 23). Paul began his speech in a direct manner, "Ye men of Athens". He then paid tribute to their religious zeal, "I observe that in all things you are very religious". He then declared his aim in a direct manner. "Whom therefore you worship without knowing, him declare I unto you." The fourth time the pronoun is used is in the body of the speech in a passive sense, Paul spoke of "your own poets" in verse twenty-eight. In this case though, directness did not depend on the use of pronouns alone. Directness was maintained, rather, by words expressing aspects of the audience's personal interest.

**Amplification of the Theme.**

The theme of Paul's speech revolved around the Christian conception of God. It would have been impossible to speak to the Athenians about the person and work of Christ without first touching the subject of God. Therefore, Paul's major thrust concerned God, His attributes and nature.

Paul seemed to have had two basic purposes in mind while delivering this speech. First, he wanted to instruct his audience in the principles of the Christian view of God. This was probably the basic purpose in his speaking since it does not appear that he was evangelizing, in a soul-winning sense. It is true that some believed (vs. 34), but the main thrust of the speech is defensive, apologetic. Second, Paul was trying to persuade his audience that the Christian view was the correct view. If he would have been successful at this point, it would auto-
matically have justified his position.

Paul's method of delivery, as mentioned above, was basically by definition. He first stated a proposition and then defined it, usually in some detail. In this manner he amplified his theme by clarifying it through explanation. Of course, this is inextricably bound up with Paul's speech arrangement, at least in this particular speech. The apostle's logical, definitive approach proved to be a capable way of expanding his thoughts. The speech is filled with various theological possibilities and offered to the audience much food for thought.

In studying the text of the speech, there are three kinds of proof evident to the reader. First, Paul appealed to a type of logical proof. This is expressed clearly in the causal relationships that Paul set up between God, man, and the world. God is the basic cause while man and the natural world are the effects (vv. 24, 25, 26). Paul also utilized deductive reasoning as a means of proof as he argued from the standpoint of the Greek poets that man is the offspring of God (vv. 28, 29). Second, Paul used emotional proof in verse twenty-nine. He appealed to the Athenians automatic yes-response in deducing the nature of God. The key words are "we ought not to think". Third, in verse twenty-two and twenty-three Paul used personal proof from his own experience. Embedded in the aspect of personal proof would be proof from revelation. This would naturally be placed in that category as the Athenians rejected revelation as it was understood in the Christian sense.

This speech seems to be of a definite oral style. The language used makes this apparent. For instance, the speech has a particular
audience. Its content is social as well as individual. It is vivid, moving, with suspense and climax. It is filled with comparison and contrast. If the speech had continued there would have doubtless been more illustrations and allusions. Although the thoughts presented by this speech certainly would require a written version for proper comprehension, yet the nature of it, considered as a whole, is oral.

V. CONCLUSION

Paul's address to the Athenians on Mars' Hill was apologetic and persuasive. The content of the speech is local, regardless of the universal truths recorded in it. While it was addressed primarily to a group, yet it had indirect appeals to the individual. The speech revealed the character of the apostle in a favorable light, much more than that of the audience. The audience was taken into account by Paul as he spoke to their needs. He attempted, in some measure, to provide certainties for their speculations.

The speech itself is clear, logical, and concise. Its main positive feature is its logical structure. The thoughts are clear and well stated. The element of force pervades the theological concepts of Paul and was maintained by forms of direct address. The element of suspense was woven into the very framework of the speech. The speech was designed to catch the ears of thinking men. Yet, in all this, there is an apparent ease throughout the speech, an artlessness that indicates great ability.
Paul's strong point in amplifying the theme of his speech was his use of definition. The appeals to logical, emotional, and personal proof were effective. The obvious oral style was strengthened by terminology that was familiar to the audience. This speech, one of Paul's greatest, is an able defense of the Christian interpretation of the nature and attributes of God. Naturally, it does not cover every area of this great theme, but its purpose was maintained by staying on the subject at hand and exploring it as carefully as possible. This speech reveals Paul's intellectual capabilities as well as his Christian courteousness.33 It well deserves its long-standing fame.

33 For a contrasting opinion concerning the intellectual capabilities of Paul revealed in this speech, see Morton Scott Enslin, The Ethics of Paul (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 34.
CHAPTER IV

PAUL'S SPEECH BEFORE KING AGRIPPA

This speech, the third in this series, is found in the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts, verses one through twenty-nine. It is the longest recorded speech of the apostle Paul and was spoken a few months before his imprisonment in Rome. The value of this speech for this study stems not only from its length, but also from the circumstances surrounding it. The present task, following the pattern of the previous two speeches, is to systematically uncover the speech characteristics in what may well be Paul's crowning message.

I. THE OCCASION

The occasion of this speech was the climax of two years of petty hearings and imprisonments. During those years, Paul made several appearances before local Roman rulers who were placed in charge of the Judean province of the empire. Thus, although Paul himself was a Roman citizen, he did not deal with his cultural peers, but with the ruling aristocracy of the land.


The setting of this speech began in 58 A.D., four years after Nero became the ruler of Rome. In that year, Paul was brought before Felix, the procurator of Judea, and charges were laid against him. Tertullus, the gifted lawyer of the Jews, carefully charged Paul with
sedition against the Roman empire, heresy against traditional Pharisaic interpretations of the law, and the defilement of the temple at Jerusalem. After hearing such an array of charges, Paul was given an opportunity for a statement of explanation. As a result of Paul's defense, Felix fell under deep conviction of sin and postponed any further discussion of the situation. Paul, himself, was retained in prison until Felix was replaced by Festus in 60 A.D.


Although a specific history of this man is lacking, Festus was apparently "a far better and more efficient man than his predecessor". After assuming his position in Caesarea, Festus learned of Paul and permitted his to speak. During a hearing where "many and grievous complaints" were laid against the apostle, Festus offered to send Paul back to Jerusalem to be tried on the charges presented. Knowing that he would receive little justice at the hands of the Jews and being tired of the mock trials that he was being submitted to, Paul appealed to Caesar. Therefore, the matter was sealed. "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? Unto Caesar shalt thou go." 3


The practical verdict of both Felix and Festus about Paul's case


was "not guilty". However, because of local pressures, Paul was incarcer- ated, although without charge. Now that the apostle had appealed to the emperor, it became the duty of Festus to write an explanation of the case for Augustus. Because he had nothing to write about, specifically, Festus appealed to Agrippa, the visiting king of the former tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, to render his judgment on Paul's condition. Therefore, this hearing was in no sense a trial, Paul would have to be sent to Rome for that. His appearance before Agrippa had no legal bearing whatsoever. In some respects it was the curiosity of Agrippa that prompted the meeting. Not only would he be doing Festus a favor, but he would get to hear this popular religious fanatic first-hand.

II. THE SPEAKER

Due to the nature of the hearing, Paul's ability to demonstrate his character, goodwill, and intelligence was of the utmost in importance. Observing the scene from a distance, it seems that everything was against the possibility of Paul receiving a favorable . At this time, as previously mentioned, Paul had been in prison for more than two years. The accusations laid against him were both religious and political. Agrippa actually did not listen as a sympathetic seeker of


5For a good description of the proceedings, see Clarence Edward Macartney, Paul the Man: His Life, His Message, and His Ministry (West- wood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1961), pp. 186-87.
Finally, due to his long imprisonment, Paul's physical appearance must have been anything but winsome. However, in spite of these handicaps, it seems that the ethical quality of Paul's speech adequately overshadowed the negative factors involved.

Character.

The basic components of Paul's character, as revealed in this speech, are his openness in discussing the situation, complete honesty in reporting the facts, his dominating religious zeal, and calm control over the whole affair. Paul did not hesitate to openly discuss the facts involved in his case. In verse two he considered himself fortunate for the opportunity to publicly display "all the things" that he was accused of by the Jews. Paul was not in the least afraid of such a hearing. In fact, it was the mark of a clear conscience to desire such a full investigation.

Throughout the speech, Paul reported events, ideas, and convictions with complete honesty. His honesty was not once contested by his hearers, but seems to be recognized as the product of a strict religious faith. Paul established the fact that regardless of the nature of his convictions, he lived up to them to the letter. This is seen in verses five and nine through eleven where his zeal stemmed from his association with and membership in the religious fellowship of the Pharisees. Also, in verses nineteen through twenty and twenty-two, where his new faith afforded him a different outlet for his enthusiasm, that of evangelizing his former enemies. Yet, in both instances it was his honest opinion that
he was doing what was right at the time.

Paul's religious zeal was complemented by his ability to maintain himself at this hearing. His zeal was not self-centered, but purely in the interests of others. Thus, Festus' charge of insanity (v. 24) lacked the support of a raving, self-centered, self-styled prophet. Paul's clear control and apprehension of his conversion experience, as well as his sense of divine call, were God-centered, not man-centered (vss. 16-19, 22). It was Festus, not Paul, who was emotionally excited beyond restraint. Paul's character was further strengthened by his calm reply to Festus and his addressing him as "most noble Festus".6

In this speech, Paul used one great negative thrust to shed positive light on his character. He stated, "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (v. 19). The force of the negative here shows Paul's strong moral character in that he was "not disobedient". The possibility of disobedience was real, but the fact of obedience was demonstrated by his then present circumstances. This is an important emphasis that cannot be as dramatically stated with a simple positive statement.

The character of the apostle was further strengthened, not only by what he said and did, but by what he did not do or say. For example, he did not bring up the sordid background of his listeners. He did not

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slander the religious leaders or charge injustice against the Romans.

In fact, Paul did not even deny the validity of the charges pressed against him. He only asked for a hearing of his side of the question.

Without elaborating further on this point, it is a mark of good character to know what to say as well as when to say it. Paul deleted any negative reference to his immediate audience in order to maintain rapport.

**Goodwill.**

Paul strengthened any possibility of receiving a fair hearing by exerting an attitude of goodwill toward his regal audience. Nowhere does an embittered spirit intrude into the occasion. The only negative attitudes in the speech were uttered by members of the audience. Paul did not antagonize his hearers with emotional outbursts accusing his captors of indecent treatment, trumped-up charges, or improper actions toward a Roman citizen. Instead, and probably quite the contrast of most prisoners who were given a chance to speak for themselves, Paul began by praising the king's abilities.

In verse two, Paul considered himself happy because he was permitted to speak to such royalty. The apostle was careful to recognize the earthly title of his provincial master and addressed Agrippa as "King" (vss. 2, 7, 13, 19, 26, 27). He carefully reminded Agrippa, at the conclusion of his speech, that he had spoken freely before him (vss. 26), implying confidence in the ability of the king to judge in a right spirit. Paul also followed proper court etiquette in addressing Agrippa directly, as thought he was the only person present.

Paul's goodwill was seen in his reaction to Festus' outburst (vss.
Festus had just interrupted the well ordered speech of Paul saying, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad". 7  

Although, in this brief statement, Festus recognized the scholarly background of his famous prisoner, he declared that such rigid training had caused man's mind to tilt off balance. To Festus, the message of a crucified man being resurrected bodily to life was tantamount to mental derangement. But, Paul's answer was a masterpiece of sympathy and goodwill. "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." The key words here are "most noble Festus". Festus had certainly foregone his nobility by a wild, frantic injection in a courtroom hearing. By any standard he was out of order, yet Paul answered him in a calm, decent manner. Again Paul recognized the power and authority of Festus by referring to him as "most noble". The psychological effect must have been irresistible.

Finally, Paul's goodwill was also demonstrated by his expressed desire that Agrippa would be a Christian. Agrippa charged Paul with attempting to make him a Christian. Paul replied (vs. 29), "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds". This was a noble answer by Paul and one filled with emotional content. 8  This was

7 For a good, brief study on the sanity of Paul, see Charles Edward Jeffer: Character of Paul (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), pp. 75-.

8 Concerning the dramatic thrust of these words, see Le Roy J. Halsey, The Dramatic Intractions of the Bible (New York: Charles Scribner, 1958), pp. 104-09.
one of the objectives of Paul's speech, to convince Agrippa of the truthfulness of the message of Christ. These words constitute a masterful answer and compare favorable with the general tenor of the entire speech in the area of goodwill.

The area of goodwill was also treated indirectly under some aspects of character. The ethical qualities of this speech are on an exceptional plane. Paul was calm, deliberate, and factual in his approach. The fanciful, fanatic, and explosive emotional excesses that Agrippa may have expected simply were not there.

Intelligence.

The intelligence of Paul was certainly demonstrated in his treatment of Agrippa. Paul's speech before him was reasoned out and presented in a dignified manner; that is, as much as the occasion allowed. He did not appeal to Agrippa for favor or influence concerning his forthcoming appearance in Rome. Rather, Paul addressed Agrippa as an interested, but uninformed, individual in the matters at hand. Paul marked well the person of Agrippa and paid tribute to his abilities. In verse three, Paul alluded to Agrippa's proficiency in matters pertaining to Jewish law. In verse eight, Paul directed his statement to the religious faith of Agrippa. It is interesting that with all of the other dignitaries present that Paul addressed himself, primarily, to Agrippa himself. As mentioned above, however, this was the proper action to take in Roman courts. Thus, Paul's stature before the visiting king was becoming to

a man of Agrippa's position. Nowhere in the proceedings can derogative statements be found that were made about the king.

Paul made it quite clear that his message of salvation through Christ was not foreign to the Old Testament. This was a good case in point concerning Paul's intelligence in the whole speech and the validating of his missionary ministry. He identified his message with the hope of the fathers (vs. 6, also including the twelve tribes in vs. 7) and with Moses and the prophets (vs. 22). The obvious meaning is that Paul was not part of a "new" movement, as such, but he was continuing in the faith of the fathers of Israel, bringing evidence that their announced faith found its culmination in the person of Christ. Since his hearers were somewhat prejudiced against the message of salvation through Christ, Paul laid a good foundation for his present ministry. He made it seem as though the real surprise was not the preaching of the resurrection of Christ, but the Jews refusal to accept the faith of their fathers as revealed in Christ.

In verse twenty-six, Paul used three forms of emphasis to show the king that the Christian movement was not a secret society or another mystery religion, but that it was a public proclamation of saving truth. By doing this, Paul aligned himself with a venture open for all to see. First, Paul said that the king knew the things whereof he had been speaking, i.e., the hope of the fathers, Paul's zeal for religion, and Paul's

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10 Throughout the message, Paul was careful to identify his own faith with that of the orthodox Jew. Ibid., p. 382.
change in religious conviction. Second, he said he was persuaded that none of these things were hidden from the king, certainly not intentionally. Third, that the events he had been speaking of were not "done in a corner", that is, they were not done in secret, away from the public eye.

Finally, the intelligence of Paul is seen in his treatment of the Jews. They were responsible for Paul's present plight in that they brought charges against him, thereby putting him in prison. Although, again, Paul did not slander the Jews for their actions, yet he implied that the reason for the way they treated him was due to their rejection of Christ as the Messiah. Paul's introductory remarks (vv. 2-4) automatically stirred up Agrippa's interest in his case and, if anything, he would tend to listen more sympathetically. Although Agrippa was of Jewish parentage, he was Roman enough to be somewhat objective in his analysis of Paul's statements concerning Jewish faith and practice.

III. THE AUDIENCE

This third speech had a unique audience. The hearers were neither religious Jews inquiring after a fuller knowledge of the will of God, as

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11In the Greek text the article is not found in connection with the noun "Jews". "The omission of the article...is noted by Blass-Debrunner...who observes that these passages (previously mentioned) are all in speeches of Paul in defence, and that the Attic forensic speeches likewise omit the article with the name of the opponent." Foakes-Jackson, F. J. and Kirsopp Lake (eds.), The Acts of the Apostles (Vol. VI of The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I. 5 vols.; London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1920-42), p. 314.
in our first speech, nor were they of the leisurely crowd of philosophical pagans that were always dabbling in systems and schemes of metaphysical thought, as were some of the crowd in speech number two. They were, rather, city officials, soldiers, and foreign political rulers. Each had some interest in the case at hand and, in the context of the speech, Paul had something to say to each group.

**Characters Involved.**

Little is known about Porcius Festus except from the Scripture record. He followed Felix as the Roman governor over the province of Judea approximately 60 A.D. Serving only two years, Festus died at his post and was followed by Albinus.\(^\text{12}\) Practically all that is known of Festus is recorded in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth chapters of Acts. Obviously he felt that Paul was being held in prison for little or no reason, so he was anxious for Agrippa to aid him in writing the emperor.

Agrippa is the principal character in the audience. He and Bernice, his wife, came to Caesarea to "salute" or pay respect to Festus in lieu of his new office (25:13). While there he was asked by Festus to bear the story of Paul and to give some sort of judgment on the case (25:14f.). As a person, Agrippa had a very unsavory reputation. He was a Jew that had been educated among the Romans.\(^\text{13}\) By virtue of his family, as well as his personal status, he eventually became the king over the province

\(^{12}\) Tenney, **Walter**, *cit.*, p. 263.

on the northeast border of Palestine.

Agrippa was Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I who 16 years before had killed James, 12:2, grandson of Herod Antipas who had killed John the Baptist and mocked Christ, great grandson of Herod the Great who had murdered the children of Bethlehem at the time of Christ's birth.14

Bernice (25:23), Agrippa's wife, led a very sordid life. Before living with Agrippa, her brother, as his wife, she was married to Marcus and Herod of Chalcis, respectively.15 Later she became the mistress of Vespasian and Titus, who finally cast her aside.

There were five cohorts of soldiers stationed at Caesarea. The leaders or captains of these troops were also present at the hearing (25:23). Each of these "chiliarchae" was the leader of 1,000 men, thereby setting the number of these captains at five.16

Finally, the last named group present were the principal men of the city (25:24). Just who these officials were is not clear in the text.17 They may have been the Jewish and gentile rulers of the city or maybe visiting dignitaries from various parts of the surrounding province. Regardless of who they were, it is evident that Paul had quite an assembly before him that day. It is likely that there were more people present

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15Tennyson, op. cit., p. 106.


17"It must be remembered that only Jerusalem and the immediate neighborhood was wholly Jewish; the rest of Judea was Greek and Syrian." Foakes-Jackson and Lake, op. cit., pp. 312-13.
than is indicated in the text. But while the number must remain unknown, the character of those present is beyond dispute. They were of the ruling class, the recognized leaders of Paul's world.

**Arousing Attention and Interest.**

There were several attention getting devices that Paul used to arouse audience interest. First, as mentioned, Paul's addressing the king directly stimulated interest. Paul also related his speech to the special interests of his audience. For example, in verse two Paul came immediately to the point of controversy between himself and the Jews. This certainly was of special interest to Agrippa (25:22). Although educated among the Romans, the Jewish heritage of Agrippa would have aroused his interest in the theological history of Israel. Paul alluded to this history in verse seven.

To arouse attention and guarantee a close hearing, Paul created curiosity early in his defense. In verse six, he presented a paradox. Paul argued that he was being placed on trial by the Jews for preaching and teaching the very doctrines of the Old Testament. Now, if this was true it would cause Agrippa to wonder at either the justice of the Jewish religious leaders or the nature of Paul's message, or both. This would have strengthened Agrippa's natural curiosity in the case.

Again, Paul appealed to Agrippa by asking a question early in the discourse.\(^\text{18}\) This was a good attention getting device, especially since

\(^{18}\) The Greek construction here is \(\varepsilon\) with the indicative, indicating that the expected answer will be positive. Nicoll, *op. cit.*, pp. 502-3.
it drew Agrippa into Paul's line of thought in a personal way. In verse eight Paul asked, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Here Paul played on Agrippa's Jewish background. A dual tie existed between Agrippa and Paul, both were Jews and both were Roman citizens. Paul used these aspects of similar interests to his advantage throughout the speech.

In order to sustain interest, Paul moved from the general to the specific in bringing to light the necessary facts of his life. He laid a careful foundation of historical facts built around his personal action. Then, quickly, he moved into specific relations between himself and his captors. For example, he moved from his personal background of religious zeal and national loyalty (vss. 4, 5, 9, 11) to his confession of Christ and call (vss. 13, 16-18). This movement culminated in his present situation (vss. 19-20). Also, he moved from the general charges laid against him by the Jews (vss. 2, 7) to specific instances of their disagreement with him (vss. 20-23).

Paul's use of a narrative style heightened interest. It was a historical presentation involving many contemporary figures. Its presentation was forceful, colorful, and vivid. In his narration, Paul made repeated statements about history and religious literature that was of interest to everyone present. Paul's account of the Christian message was of importance to Romans since they were highly suspicious of political and social power rising from the rebellious Palestinians. If Christianity was to be a kingdom of an earthly nature, this would pose a definite threat to Roman rule. Also, Paul's documentation of his actions by
reference to Moses and the prophets sustained the interest of the religiously inclined hearers (See vss. 6,7,22).

Interest was certainly maintained by Paul's interpretation of the Old Testament revelation and of his personal experiences on the road to Damascus. While pursuing the Christians in order to persecute them, Paul was blinded on the Damascus road and held conversation with one who the Jews and the Roman officials thought was dead. This type of suspense filled narration must have gripped his hearers with amazement. Then, Paul openly declared that this risen Christ was the central person about whom Moses and the prophets wrote. Such outspoken convictions could not go by unheared that day. The air of drama pervades the whole narration until emotions flared in an uncontrollable impulse (vs. 24).

Reference to Audience Experience.

Since the speech was addressed to one person, primarily, any experience that Paul would relate to would necessarily be Agrippa's. The only experience that Paul referred to was Agrippa's expert knowledge on the religious matters of the Jews (vs. 3) and his personal knowledge of Paul's activities (vs. 26). The message is based on Paul's experiences with little reference to the audience's experiences, in a direct

Motives Appealed to in Hearer.

There were four basic motives that Paul appealed to in his hearers. First, he appealed to Agrippa's feeling of self-importance by emphasizing his adequacy in religious matters. This was not mere flattery on Paul's part as Agrippa was a man of some social and political prominence. He
was also quite an authority on matters pertaining to the Jewish faith. That in itself may have been one factor involved in his being placed in such a high government position by the Romans.

Second, Paul appealed to Agrippa's sense of fair play. It was Paul's contention that the charges laid against him by the Jews were unfounded, either in fact or theory, because he was only preaching what Moses and the prophets actually said. Paul wanted the case aired in public because the Jews were the mistaken party. Actually, Paul already had spent two years in prison without charge and now was to appear before Caesar with charge. But Paul was pleading for was a just judgment on the false accusations that had been laid against him.

Third, the apostle appealed, in a logical manner, to the audience's sense of the fitness of things. He sought to substantiate his seal for his new religious devotion on the basis of history, experience, and logic. He depended here on their sense of the aptness of the revelation of Jesus Christ to the Jewish faith. Paul attempted to portray the fact in a way that it would seem that it would be the natural thing for a Jew to follow Jesus Christ.

Finally, Paul appealed to Agrippa's religious insight. By involving Agrippa personally, he sought to appeal to any remaining national or religious loyalty that the king might have (vss. 3, 6, 8, 27). It is difficult to determine the exact amount of impact that this appeal actually

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19See also 24:13-14, 25, 27; 25:7-8, 25-27. Festus appealed to Agrippa because he did not consider himself to be a proper judge on Jewish religious matters (25:18-19, 26).
had on Agrippa.

IV. THE SPEECH

All of the speeches in this series have been apologetic and persuasive. This speech is akin to Paul's address on Mars' Hill in that both are defensive speeches. The main thrust of this speech before Agrippa was to inform or give information pertaining to Paul's missionary

20 The meaning of Agrippa's statement in verse twenty-eight has proved difficult to understand. Robertson says, "The tone of Agrippa is ironical, but not unpleasant. He pushes it aside with a shrug of the shoulders". Robertson also rejects the King James translation of this verse. Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1930), v. III, p. 454. Alford says, "I would therefore render the words thus: Lightly (with small trouble) art thou persuading thyself that thou canst make me a Christian: and understand them, in connexion with Paul's having attempted to make Agrippa a witness on his side,—"I am not so easily to be made a Christian of, as thou supposest." Henry Alford, The Greek Testament: with a critically revised text, a digest of various readings, marginal references to verbal and idiomatic usage, prolegomena, and a critical and exegetical commentary (Chicago: The Moody Press, 1958), v. II, p. 263. Calvin translates this verse: "And Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou briefly persuaded me to become a Christian." John Calvin, Commentary Upon the Acts of the Apostles (Vol. II of Calvin's Commentaries, 4 5 vols.; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948-50), p. 387. Therefore, the sources cited, plus other notable works, indicate that Agrippa was a bit cynical at Paul's attempts to get him to confess that Jesus Christ was the risen Lord. It is as though Agrippa felt that his pride was injured by having someone of Paul's class approach him so directly with such a personal probing of his conscience.

However, other sources advance the idea that Agrippa was moved somewhat to be a Christian. They indicate, with a wide scope of variation that Agrippa was actually moved to the point of conversion although falling short. The better sources contend, however, that Agrippa, while probably being emotionally moved, actually resisted Paul's efforts and spoke rather sharply to him in his reply, "You are with a little effort convincing enough to make me a Christian". (Berkeley Text)

Regardless of Agrippa's personal conflict with Paul's speech, the facts were such that Paul would have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar (see 26:30-32).
activities, especially his message. In the same vein, it was a protest against his accusers, the Jews. Therefore, this speech affords us the most exhaustive look into Paul's defensive apologetics.

Elements of Style.

Clarity. The issues are clearly presented in this speech because they were clear in the mind of the apostle. In the delivery of the speech Paul was not bogged down with cumbersome ideas or foggy statements. His grasp of ideas was based on his personal experiences, his intimate knowledge of Jewish history, and his appreciation of his unfortunate circumstances. To utilize his opportunity to the fullest possible extent, Paul used his personal experience to help clarify the muddled controversy over his conduct. The Jews had been thoroughly confused in their apprehension of the facts. Consequently, their charges against Paul were contradictory and groundless. Therefore, clarity was of the utmost importance to Paul in his total defense. In a very real sense, the problem of making the issue clear was his job alone.

Paul used pronouns to make his message clear to his audience.\textsuperscript{21} Since the speech is largely autobiographical, Paul used the pronoun "I" many times.\textsuperscript{22} However, the words that really bear the weight of the message are "our" and "you". The word "our" occurs three times in the speech (vss. 5, 6, 7). In the use of this word, Paul identified both himself and Agrippa with the message of the prophets. Paul spoke about

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\textsuperscript{21}See Table VIII, page 96, for the pronouns in this speech.

\textsuperscript{22}Twenty-seven times in the total speech.
TABLE VIII

PROMOINS IN SPEECH III*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PROMOINS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 129

In the speech there are:

1. Sixty-five personal pronouns.
2. Nine possessive pronouns.
3. One intensive pronoun.
4. Two reflexive pronouns.
5. Fifteen relative pronouns.
6. Thirty demonstrative pronouns.**
7. Three interrogative pronouns.
8. Four indefinite pronouns.

*Acts 26:1-29

**Of this number, thirteen are used as demonstrative adjectives.
"our religion", "our fathers", and "our twelve tribes". This would help clarify the issue to Agrippa as Paul recalled to his mind his Jewish heritage and those religious principles that he would be familiar with.

The word "you" simply brings out the directness of the speech. Paul used the pronoun "you" a total of six times in his conversations with Festus and Agrippa. In Paul's account of his conversion and call, the pronoun is used eight times by Jesus.

The general sentence structure is one of long sentences with occasional short sentences to ease the grasp of the subject. In the recorded speech there are only twenty-two sentences. The average words-per-sentence are a little more than twenty-nine (29.7). The longest sentence takes in three verses (vss. 16-18) and has a total number of ninety-nine words. The shortest sentence has only five words and is found in verse twenty-seven. Thus, the style of sentence structure is rather long for a spoken discourse.

Paul helped to clarify his message by the use of common-knowledge source material and apt illustrations. The apostle used the Old Testament as a source for his argumentation. In fact, the message of the Old Testament, the fathers, and, in particular, Moses underlies the whole speech. There are direct references to the Scriptures in verses six and seven ("promise"), and again in verse twenty-two. References are also

\[\text{23} \text{See Table IX, page 88, for the total number of words.}\]

\[\text{24} \text{The number of sentences varies in different translations. The Berkeley text has twenty-six; Revised Standard Version, twenty-four; New English Bible, twenty-nine; J. B. Phillips, thirty-one. Counting the}\]
# TABLE IX

**TOTAL WORDS IN SPEECH III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>WORDS</th>
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<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL 654**

*Acts 26:1-29*
made to the Jewish religion in six verses (5,6,7,22,27).

An important source, acting also as an illustration, is the historical emphasis in the narrative. The history of Paul's early life is briefly mentioned (vss. 4,5) as is his zeal in persecuting the Christians (vss. 10,11). Also his conversion was a historical reality to him (vs. 15). The immediate results of Paul's conversion are related with some detail as to the message involved. In all this is found the evidence of personal testimony (an autobiographical approach) which, because of its concise, logical presentation, helped to clarify the reason for Paul's action.

Paul also used nature and common life as illustrations in the body of the message. In verse thirteen, he used the natural brightness of the sun in contrast with the power and brilliance of the light that he saw on the Damascus Road. A reference is made in verse fourteen to the "prick" or "goad". The figure Paul had in mind was an instrument used by farmers that was sharp on one end and spade-like on the other. With the spade, mud was removed from the plow, while with the sharp end, lazy animals were prompted to work. The oxen kicking against the goad illustrates useless resistance to a greater power. This particular illustration was common knowledge to the Roman and Greek mind; the figure is not Jewish. This illustration is the only real simile in the entire address. The use of this cultural illustration would vividly

questions, there are eighteen sentences in the Greek text.
portray Paul's feelings to Agrippa’s mind. By the use of this farm tool, Paul spoke clearly to his Roman audience concerning his conversion.\textsuperscript{25}

In verse eighteen, Paul used the natural contrasts between darkness (night) and light (day) to illustrate a spiritual truth, the power of the God. The dramatic change involved in accepting Christ as the Messiah, or in the case of the Romans as Lord and God, is portrayed in this illustration.

There is one other metaphor that Paul used and it is found in verse twenty-six. In this verse, Paul is assured that Agrippa is familiar with the things that he has been speaking about because "this thing (all of his previous points in one) was not done in a corner". That is, it was not hidden away from the gaze of the multitudes. The preaching of the Gospel by Paul was openly done before all men. Thus, Paul used his resource material and illustrations for clarity (See vss. 4f., 13, 18, 26). However, he also used them for proving his case (See vss. 6, 7, 22, 23, 26). In what may be called a personal illustration of his past life (vss. 4, 5), Paul provided necessary background material for his hearers.

What about Paul’s sequence of thought, his outline and progression?\textsuperscript{26}

First of all, regarding the time elements of the speech, Paul put the


\textsuperscript{26}Bruce’s outline of this speech is as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item a. Exordium Vss. 2-3.
  \item b. His Pharisaic position Vss. 4-8
  \item c. His persecuting zeal Vss. 9-11
\end{itemize}
greater emphasis on past action (approximately 60%). He seemed to depend on the past to lay a strong foundation for the present (approximately 40%). He allowed no provision for the future and, from his viewpoint, made no reference to it whatever. Basically, then, the speech is oriented to the past with an application for the present.\textsuperscript{27}

Transitions within the total context, from one main division to another, are not clearly stated due to the interruptions in the latter part of the speech. After Paul's introduction (Vss. 2,3), he began his second general division of thought with a brief history of his life (Vss. 4,5). The transition is clear, but abrupt. However, the transition from the "body" to the "climax" was made because of Festus' interruption in verse twenty-four. Had not Festus stopped Paul at that point, with the question regarding his sanity, it is conceivable that Paul would have continued further before beginning the climax of his message. Likewise, the "conclusion" came after Agrippa's statement in verse twenty-eight, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian".

The transitions in the body of the speech are more noticeable. After speaking about his own misguided zeal, he moved to his conversion experience with the adverb "whereupon" (See vss. 11,12). In other words,

d. The heavenly vision Vss. 12-13.
e. His preaching activity in obedience to the vision Vss. 19-20.
f. His arrest Vss. 21.
g. The substance of his preaching Vss. 22,23.
(Interchange between Festus, Agrippa, and Paul) Vss. 24-29
\textsuperscript{27}See Table X, page 92, for the divisions of Paul's speech.
TABLE X

DIVISIONS OF SPEECH III*

A. General Speech Divisions
   1. Introduction
   2. Body
   3. Climax
   4. Conclusion

B. General Topical Divisions
   23. Paul's Obedience
   24. Do You Believe?
   25. Freedom of the Spirit

*Acts 26:1-29
Paul now added another level upon the ground floor which he had already laid in verses four through eleven. The next transition, from his conversion to his commission, occurs in verse sixteen with the word "for". Jesus said, "But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose." The third and last transition in the body occurs at verse nineteen where Paul used "whereupon" again. It is evident that Paul was building his thoughts upon those he previously stated.28 In general, the transitions from phase to phase are clear and concise. While they tend to be a bit abrupt, they are not inadequate. Rather, they are moving, logical, and orderly.

Paul's entire speech is basically logical in its presentation. Paul used the background-consequence approach with himself as the key personality. There is some question regarding verses six through eight, however.29 It is contended that Paul's placing of these ideas is out of harmony with the rest of his speech and breaks temporarily the continuity of his thoughts. Perhaps these verses ought to be placed within the context of verses two and three since it is with that material that they are concerned, i.e., the charges that the Jews made against Paul. These are important verses though and form a valuable part of Paul's basis for his defense. So, to say that they could be left out is not to say they ought

28 Crocker states that Paul used the "ladder technique" of presentation. That is, Paul began with a premise that all accepted and built upon it. See Lionel Crocker, Public Speaking for College Students (New York: American Book Company, 1956), p. 275.

to be, and to question the arrangement is not to question its inspiration. Aside from this one instance, the speech is logical, each premise building on the one that preceded it. The logicalness naturally promoted clarity of the message. It is also significant that what Paul omitted in this speech was, in many ways, as important as what he included.

Energy. Paul's word selection definitely shaped the force of his defense. He used a number of forceful words, i.e., words that suggested intense movement or words that were pregnant with ideas and concepts. For example, words like "expert", "nation", "instantly", 30 "saints", "mad", "commission", "witness", "Gentiles", "Satan", "heavenly", "repentance", "Christ", "truth", etc.

This same aspect of force is carried in the principle verbs used by Paul. Some of these verbs of action are "I beseech" (vs. 3), "I lived" (vs. 5), "I punished" (vs. 11), "I persecuted" (vs. 11), "I went" (vs. 12), "I heard" (vs. 14), "I continue" (vs. 22), and "I know" (vs. 27). Verbs that suggest intense action are found all through the speech. They indicate that Paul urgently carried his listeners along with him. 31

There are several rhetorical factors of suspense in the speech. Paul's action against the Christians, beginning at verse ten, builds into a suspenseful drama. The zeal of Paul created suspense as he related

30 The word ἐκτενῶ, translated "instantly" is used only here in the New Testament and means literally "in intensity". Vincent, op. cit., p. 587.

31 In verse four, the definite article is used for force of meaning. "The manner of life; that which was from my youth; that which was from the beginning." Ibid., p. 186.
that he persecuted the Christians "even unto strange cities" (vs. 11). In verse thirteen, he spoke of the heavenly light that shone above the "brightness of the sun". The fact of Paul's response to the call of the risen Christ certainly created suspense. Again, suspense was a vital factor in Paul's reaction to Agrippa's charge of madness. In fact, to unbelieving ears, the whole speech must have been extremely interesting because the message is charged with the supernatural.

Therefore, the emotional tone of the speech must have been moving. Paul began his speech quietly, gradually moving to a higher plane of tension.\(^{32}\) Actually, the tenor of the speech is such that by the time Paul began to answer King Agrippa in verse twenty-seven, he was speaking with urgency and movement.\(^{33}\) The untimely interruption of Festus (vs. 24) certainly indicates the emotionally charged character of the speech.\(^{34}\) The personality of Paul must figure in on this idea of \(\ldots\). Paul certainly was a man of action and it would naturally be displayed in his speeches. His style must have been driving, exciting.

Ease. Ease, on Paul's part, is indicated in the speech in several ways. First, in verse one, Paul began his defense by stretching out his

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\(^{32}\) S. Curry, Vocal and Literary Interpretation of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1907), p. 73.

\(^{33}\) Nicoll, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 512.

\(^{34}\) The emotional tone of the speech changed dramatically at this point. Prior to Festus' interruption, Paul was delivering a statement of defense, but, with this opening, he began a definite evangelistic appeal to the audience. See Olaf Moe, \textit{The Apostle Paul: His Life and Work} (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1950), p. 439.
hand for silence. Second, his introduction was well thought out and comfortably presented. Third, his obvious confidence in his message indicates ease. Fourth, his ease is direct reference, in spite of personal involvement, demonstrates ease. Fifth, ease is seen in the way he conducted himself in verse twenty-five, i.e., his reaction to Festus.

In itself, the interestingness and uniqueness of the speech aided its ease in being comprehended and understood by the audience. However, Paul did use several ways of maintaining ease in listening as well as methods to foster remembrance. One of these very obvious methods was his use of contrasts. The use of contrasts helped his audience to understand the ideas involved and also enabled them to distinguish between important issues.

Ease was also promoted by Paul by the use of repetition of words. By repeating himself in the speech, he impressed his audience with those ideas that he wanted them to remember. Of course, he would repeat himself

35Wesley, op. cit., p. 345.

36The Greek text demonstrates the factor of ease in the speech by Paul's use of select words. For example, the English translation fails to catch the change in the persons addressed in verse eight. Prior to verse eight, Paul had been addressing Agrippa only, but when he said, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?", he was speaking to a real or imaginary audience of Jews. Of course, this would have included Agrippa. See Poakes-Jackson and Lake, op. cit., p. 316.


38See Table XI, page 97, for the contrasts in this speech.
### TABLE XI

**CONTRASTS IN SPEECH III***

**SIMPLE CONTRASTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSE</th>
<th>IDEAS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Paul and Agrippa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Paul and the Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Paul and Jesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Open shut eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Satan versus God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Saved versus being lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Small versus great</td>
</tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Madness versus sanity</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Hidden versus revealed</td>
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**LARGER CONTRASTS**

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<tr>
<td>4-12</td>
<td>The unconverted to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The converted Paul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Paul as persecutor against Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Paul as witness for Christ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Paul put Christians in bonds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Paul himself in bonds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9, 22, 23</td>
<td>Paul's former understanding of religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Paul's new understanding of religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Paul persecuted Christians everywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Paul preached the Gospel everywhere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Freedom in the Spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Bound in the flesh.</td>
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</table>

*Acts 26:1-29*
in different ways so as to avoid monotony. There were several significant ideas that Paul repeated for the benefit of his audience. First, he repeated that he was accused by the Jews (vss. 2, 7, 21). Second, he repeated his Divine commission to preach the Gospel as an apostle (vss. 16-18, 22). Third, Paul made repeated references to Christ (vss. 9, directly; 26, "this thing"; also 23). Fourth, there are repeated references to the Old Testament (vss. 6, 7, 22). Fifth, there are repeated references to the resurrection of the dead (vss. 8, 23). Sixth, Paul also made repeated references to Agrippa (vss. 2, 7, 13, 19, 27). Seventh, there may be a repetition of the thought of happiness in verses two and twenty-nine (implied).

The last significant method Paul used to promote ease in the speech was directness. The instances of directness are found in verses 2, 3, 7, 8, 13, 19, 25, 26, 27, and 29. By the use of such repeated forms of directness as the use of the pronoun "you" and direct address, Paul maintained audience involvement in what he said. Also, directness helped make his purpose, as well as his manner of presentation, clear.

Amplification of the Theme.

What was the real theme of Paul's speech before Agrippa? Actually, Paul had a dual theme in mind.40 "The two things which Paul emphasized

39 See Table XII, page 99, for the imagery used in speech III. Paul used some interesting images in the speech to get his ideas across to his audience and they do figure in the subject of ease.

40 "There are two ways in which the defense may be considered; it was a defense of "the Way" to a logical mind; and it was a declaration of "the Way" to a seeking spirit." C. Campbell Morgan, The Acts of the Apostles (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1924), p. 521.
## TABLE XII

**IMAGERY IN SPEECH III**

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<td>&quot;darkness to light&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>&quot;heavenly vision&quot;</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&quot;raise the dead&quot; (also vs. 23)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;fallen to the earth&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;kick against the pricks&quot;</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;but rise&quot;</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;stand on thy feet&quot;</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;do works&quot;</td>
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*Acts 26:1-29*
in his speech were the fact of his miraculous conversion and his preach-
ing of the doctrines of the resurrection, and especially the doctrine of
the resurrection of Christ."41 Around these two themes Paul built his
defense as he tried to convince Agrippa of the truths of the Christian
faith.

Thus, it is evident that Paul had several purposes in mind when
he delivered his address. He sought to instruct his listeners concern-
ing the nature of the charges that the Jews brought against him. He
likewise hoped to persuade his audience of the truthfulness of his
speech and, in doing so, to activate them to do something about it. The
speech was not intended to be a chaos of congealed ideas, but to be a
careful consideration of logically presented and convincingly arranged
truths. Behind it all was purpose.

It is not difficult to detect that Paul attempted to amplify the
themes of his speech by defining his ideas. This was not done in a for-
mal manner, but as a life situation definition. A good definition of
his ideas was significant because of the character of his audience.
There are two obvious definitions in the speech. First, there is a defini-
tion of Paul's conversion or change of motivation. Second, there is a
definition of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul described his change of motivation, i.e., from a persecutor
of the Gospel to a preacher of the Gospel, from two standpoints, that of

41 Macartney, op. cit., p. 189.
his conversion and call. Most of the address was concerned about Paul's conversion and call to the ministry. In making the fact of his conversion valid, he contrasted his former life with his then present life. This made it quite clear that the turning point for Paul was his experience on the Damascus Road. The second aspect of this general definition is his call. It was a direct and personal call to be a minister of the good news of Jesus Christ to both the Jews and Gentiles. He was informed (vs. 17) that the greater part of his ministry would be concentrated on the Gentile element of society. 42

Briefly, Paul's definition of the Gospel was this: the Gospel was founded on the teachings of the Old Testament (particularly Moses and the prophets, vs. 22). It was more than a mere theory of religion and should be experienced personally. In verse eighteen, Paul gave a good summary of the fundamentals of the Gospel message. He related that Jesus spoke these words to him concerning the task of his ministry.

To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

It is significant that the arrangement of Paul's defense can be neatly placed within the framework of a salesman's approach. The arrangement would be as follows: (1) Attention, vss. 2, 3; (2) Interest, vss. 4—

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25; (3) Conviction, vss. 26, 27; (4) Need, vss. 27, 28; (5) Closing, vs. 29. Paul certainly had the major qualities of a good salesman: belief in his product, enthusiasm in presentation, and ability to interest his listeners.

Paul used three kinds of proof in his attempt to convince his audience. First, he attempted to present logical proof. In verses 5, 10, 11 and 20, he used facts to buttress his approach. In verses 19 and 20, he gave reasons for his actions and in verses 9 and 26, he gave his own opinion concerning his treatment of the Gospel message. Second, Paul's optimistic faith in Agrippa's personal faith in the message of the prophets was a kind of emotional proof. Paul had the inner conviction of Agrippa's basic faith and attempted to prove his point with the words, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Third, Paul used proof from personal experience. This type of proof from personal testimony pervades the speech, naturally, but it is well illustrated in verses 9, 13, 20, and 25.

Paul helped amplify his themes by the use of suggestive abstract terminology. Such terms as "happy", "religion", "light", "voice", "vision", "dead", and "mad" (insane) added color and suspense to the speech. These and other such expansive terms created and sustained interest. They were likewise suggestive of unexplored areas of thought.

\[43^{\text{The heavenly voice that spoke to Paul in Hebrew (Aramaic)--vs. 14--was a "proof" that the message was from the God of the fathers. Moe, op. cit., p. 438.}}\]
Other, more concrete, terms used by Paul include "Jews", "twelve tribes", "Jesus of Nazareth", "midday", "Hebrew tongue", "prickes" (goods), "Damascus", "Jerusalem", and "bonds". These words or terms suggested actual situations, persons, or places familiar to the audience. In themselves, they would bring forth positive affirmations of recognition. Thus, in amplifying the themes, a careful collection of meaningful terms was important. Such terms would naturally evoke some sort of response from the audience.

Finally, in the study of this speech, the style of Paul should be especially mentioned. Contrary to our previous two speeches, "the style and language of this speech are mostly of a high literary quality". Whether the apostle composed this speech before its delivery or not can be debated, the fact of its literary elegance can not. Wesley has correctly observed,

Nothing can be imagined more suitable or more graceful than this whole discourse of Paul before Agrippa; in which the seriousness of the Christian, the boldness of the apostle, and the politeness of the gentleman and the scholar appear in a most beautiful contrast, or rather a most happy union.

V. CONCLUSION

This speech of Paul before Agrippa is a clear, concise, and forceful presentation of Christian truth, done in an apologetic style. In

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44 Bruce, op. cit., p. 440.
45 Wesley, op. cit., p. 499.
the speech, the fact of clarity was emphasized by Paul's discriminating use of pronouns. Although the sentence structure is long, the number of understandable illustrations used by Paul aided the audience in its comprehension of the facts. The speech is basically logical in its outline, with rough transitions due to several interruption. The force of the message can be determined by Paul's use of verbs and other select words. Paul used a number of suspense factors to hold the audience and drive his thoughts home. Actually, the very emotional tone of the speech, one of intense feeling and drama, served as one definite element of force. Complementing the dynamic factor or energy in the speech was Paul's style of ease. Ease was continually maintained by directness. Paul used contrasts and repetition to ease his audience's grasp of his dual theme. Paul also used many forms of imagery to ease his audience's interpretation of the speech and to stimulate some sort of reaction.

Paul amplified his two themes, i.e., his conversion and the reality of Christ's resurrection, by appealing, basically, to the audience's sense of fair play and the fitness of things (the Gospel plan). Paul also used appeals to logical, emotional, and personal proof in order to strengthen his speech. The apostle always stayed with the familiar in his selection of both abstract and concrete themes. In reality, the speech has a better literary quality than that of an extemporaneous delivery. It was well thought out and systematically presented. All in all, it is a speech of extraordinary caliber.
CHAPTER V

A COMPARISON OF PAUL'S SPEECHES

The object of this chapter is to glean material, through comparative research, from the speeches analysed in this study in order that the major characteristics of Paul's speech style may be set forth. This will involve noting similarities of speech style as well as stating the significant contrasting elements. The same basic outline will be followed in this chapter that was used in analysing the selected speeches, namely the occasion, the speaker, the audience, and the speech.

I. THE OCCASION

The circumstances under which each of the speeches were made were all somewhat different. The first speech was made before a group of worshipping Jews and religiously sympathetic Gentiles. The second speech was delivered to a mixed group of studied philosophers and interested townspeople. Speech number three was addressed principally to a king, secondarily to his party and officers of the town.

In the first situation, Paul was invited to speak as one member of a religious group to other members of the same group. Paul was considered to be an equal with the rest of the people. However, although invited to speak on Mars' Hill, Paul was not considered to be an equal, but a "babbleur" or a "seed-picker". His speech, though voluntary, was somewhat forced by the curiosity of a metaphysically minded community.
The third situation was one in which Paul was a prisoner speaking before a king, a distinct contrast of position. This last occasion was involuntary, from the standpoint of personal choice.

Therefore, the occasion of each speech was different. Each, however, was characterized by an attentive audience, interested and curious. As might be expected in an age when Christianity was looked upon with an unfriendly eye, each of the three occasions was permeated with a great deal of tension, particularly from the apostle's viewpoint.

II. THE SPEAKER

Throughout the speeches, it seems as though Paul was constantly attempting to establish two things. First, that he, himself, was a reliable speaker and that he felt himself involved in the message with his audience. Even if it should be allowed that his reputation and remarkable conversion preceded him in every situation, still it will have to be recognized that he was virtually a stranger to his audience. It was imperative that he establish solidly his personal worthiness as a speaker on the subject at hand. Second, Paul desired to establish the validity of his message. As a bearer of the good news of Jesus Christ, he was naturally concerned that his audience would grasp a proper appreciation of the Gospel. It certainly would not have been easy to convince an audience of the redemptive message in a world that was culturally successful, politically jealous, morally degraded, and religiously bankrupt.
Character.

These speeches reveal distinctly the elevated character of the Apostle Paul. His Israelitish faith is seen in his speech before the synagogue at Antioch. There he displayed a vast knowledge of Old Testament history and faith. His Greek cultural training is seen in the speech on Mars' Hill. There he demonstrated his knowledge of current philosophy as well as his familiarity with the Greek poets. His Roman education and military training are somewhat evident in his speech before Agrippa. There he displayed his ability in proper forms of address and his zeal for a religious faith that was pragmatic as well as spiritual.

There are certain general aspects of good character that are revealed by each of the speeches.\(^1\) First, Paul was always courteous and gentlemanly. Never did he berate his audiences, but he approached them with consideration and kindness. This was particularly striking in the Mars' Hill address. Second, his introduction was always made in a manner of ease. Paul seemed always to have the situation under control. There is no hint in any of the speeches that he was ever overcome by any phase of the speech situation. A third feature of his character is revealed by the fact that he honestly stated his case. He did not skirt

\(^1\)Allen gives four universal characteristics of Paul as a speaker. A. The apostle had a conciliatory and sympathetic spirit toward his audience. B. He had courage to face difficulties that could not be avoided. C. He had a genuine respect for his audience as individuals. D. He had an unhesitating confidence in the truthfulness of his message.

controversial issues, nor did he hide his objectives. He was persistent, positive, and practical.

**Goodwill.**

Paul promoted goodwill by treating his audience with the proper respect. This, of course, also demonstrated his gentlemanly character, as was noted above. In speech one, he called the Jews, "Israelites". This was a reminder of their historic faith. The second speech lacks any form of improper address. His audience was rather, "ye men of Athens". The third speech abounds with expressed goodwill. Paul commended Agrippa on his ability to understand religious matters. The entire speech is addressed, in a primary sense, to the king himself. Paul treated Festus with the utmost dignity when he was interrupted by the ruler with the charge that the apostle was insane. Although we are not told what Paul's reaction was to the interruption of his speech to the Athenians, it is probable that he remained calm in that situation as he did in others.

Goodwill was also expressed in the way Paul complemented his audiences for their religious zeal, personal knowledge, or some other notable feature of their culture or person. Even though a complementary approach is not as noticeable in his speech before the synagogue, yet it is even there, in an indirect sense.

Paul also helped create goodwill by identifying himself with his audience's needs. He identified himself with the Israelite hope of the coming of the Messiah in speech one. In speech two, he argued deductively that neither the Athenians nor himself ("we") ought to think that God
is contained within earthly elements. Speech three shows us that Paul identified himself with the hope of the Jews and with the religion of the Old Testament. By this self-association of his interests with those of his audience, Paul created an atmosphere of goodwill. In doing this, he was much more readily heard.

**Intelligence.**

The intelligence of Paul, as a speaker, is revealed by the fact that he always started where the people were. He moved from the general to the specific, from the known to the unknown. Thus, he began by stating things that all present would agree with and then gradually Paul moved to the place where he could give to them some new knowledge. By doing this, he led up easily to the subject of Jesus Christ. He never plunged into his interpretation of the Gospel until he first laid some type of foundation on which he could rest his case. The speeches in this study reveal that Paul used three different foundations. In the order of the speeches studied, they were Old Testament history and prophecy, natural theology, and personal experience.

Only one of the speeches incorporates what might be called an intellectual approach, the speech on Mars' Hill. All of the speeches demonstrate the well-ordered, reasoned approach of the apostle. Likewise, they all show Paul's intelligence in proper word selection for a particular audience. However, the Mars' Hill address has an approach not used in the other two speeches, that which would interest a speculative mind. The thoughts or ideas expressed by Paul were weighty and abstract. He began with a natural approach to God and, without announ-
ing it, led into the Christian concept of the nature of God. The other two speeches began immediately with revelation. The Old Testament was not referred to by Paul in the speech to the Athenians, where it forms the base of the other two speeches. The Jewish people were not mentioned by Paul to the Athenians which is quite the opposite treatment they received in the other speeches. Also, the name of Jesus Christ is not specifically mentioned on Mars' Hill. This is another point in contrast with the other addresses. These contrasts help us to see that Paul adapted his message to his audience. This, of course, is also true in the message to the synagogue and before Agrippa. The intelligence of Paul as an orator is seen in that he molded each speech to fit each audience, a type of tailor-made message.

III. THE AUDIENCE

As has been noted, each audience that Paul addressed was significantly different. The first was a dutifully worshipping congregation of God's people. The second was a philosophically minded group who were interested in Paul's message because of its uniqueness, not because of its particular spiritual importance to them personally. The third audience was composed of proud Roman and Jewish officials that sought to amuse themselves with Paul's case or, for some reason, to gain knowledge of the Christian religion.

Arousing Attention and Interest.

In every case, Paul turned the natural curiosity that each audience had concerning him into an effective means of gaining and maintain-
The apostle created tension in every speech by prolonging his evangelistic approach to Christ and using history, philosophy, and personal experience, respectively per speech, to create an atmosphere of intrigue.

Paul also spoke directly to the interests of his audiences. Although each audience had a different frame of interest, the apostle adapted himself to their needs and sought that emotional stimuli that would appeal to each one, both socially and personally. He spoke to the Jewish consciousness of historic religious solidarity, to the Greek desire for certainty as intimated by their own poets, and to the knowledge and self-esteem of a ruler that had long associated with the interests of a polytheistic state. Paul had no stereotyped message, but a flexible one that was capable of meeting the demands of different men. "A universal message in a local frame; that was Paul's technique." ²

In two speeches, to the synagogue at Antioch and before Agrippa, Paul maintained interest by the use of a narrative style of speaking. The use of questions played an important role only in speech number three. There the apostle appealed to the authorities, principally Agrippa, by the use of questions. Paul's general style of moving from the general to the specific also helped stimulate audience interest. Finally, of interest to each group was Paul's interpretation of either history, philosophical speculation, prophecy, or personal experience.

Reference to Audience Experience.

There are very few references in Paul's speeches that are directly concerned with audience experience. Yet, there were times when he tried to tie his audience's experiences directly with his message. He appealed to the Jews in the synagogue on the basis of their involvement in Jewish history as well as current events, i.e., the trial and death of Christ. He referred to the worship experience of the Athenians. He recognized Agrippa's personal experience in matters of judgment, his practical knowledge of Jewish matters, and his acquaintance with Paul's early ministry. In one sense, perhaps, these rather general references to audience experience undergird each speech.

Motives Appealed to in Hearers.

The one main motive that is found in every speech is simply "the fitness of things". Paul always appealed to this motive when making his application of Christ's Lordship. He argued from the standpoint that this is the way things ought to be. Such an appeal was always based on a logical structure of thought and constituted an intellectual as well as emotional appeal.

In each speech Paul appealed to some sense of audience dedication. He appealed to the Jew's national patriotism while speaking in the synagogue. He appealed to the dedicated spirit of worship as manifested by the Athenians. Finally, he appealed to a long-hidden loyalty of Agrippa to the religious ideals of the Jewish people. These motives were original and emotional. They were designed to stir up longings, arouse interest, and incite action.
The only appeal to fear was made in speech number one. There
Paul concluded his synagogue address with a quotation from the prophets
indicating the people’s proneness to spiritual failure. This was a moti-
vation based on spiritual security. To the Athenians and Agrippa, how-
ever, Paul appealed to their inner feeling of self-importance, their
ability to consider the matter and then respond as the apostle wished.
Connected with this appeal, as directed to Agrippa, Paul introduced the
aspect of fair play. In other words, the actions of the Jews were not
fair since Paul did nothing but expound the subject of Israel’s hope,
i.e., God’s promise of a Saviour.

IV. THE SPEECH

Paul’s one supreme purpose in speaking was to disseminate truth.
In the speeches selected for this study, this also involved a defense
of the propositions stated. Speeches one and three are definitely evan-
gelistic and apologetic. While speech number two tends toward an evan-
gelistic thrust at the end of what we have recorded, its basic drive is
defensive. In any event, Paul’s revealing of the Gospel message, direct
or indirect, was done in a persuasive manner.

Elements of Style.

\[\text{Paul’s ability to understand each situation and pre-}\]

\[\text{3This is not to say that Paul’s message was just philosophy,}\]
\[\text{instead of the Gospel. Quite the contrary, the Gospel is implied from}\]
\[\text{the beginning to the end. See R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of}\]
\[\text{the Acts of the Apostles (Vol. V of the Interpretation of the New}\]
pare his message to fit the needs of his audience contributed significantly to the clarity of the entire speech. The ideas that were presented were easily understood by the people because they were clear to the apostle. It is easy to sense that Paul was speaking from personal experience, although it is not always indicated by the pronoun "I". In speech number one, Paul introduces himself in the speech only in an indirect sense by such words as "we", "our", and "u..."

Whether or not it was intentional may be debated, but Paul used very few words of more than two syllables. Although this seemed more noticeable in speech one than in the others, the percentage of monoosyllables per speech is as follows: seventy-seven (speech I); eighty (speech II); and seventy-nine (speech III). So, it can be generally stated, among these speeches, that Paul did not burden down his audiences with a heavy vocabulary. The apostle avoided difficult words and word combinations, from the standpoint of the King James text.

Paul's main weakness seems to be that he frequently found himself involved in sentences that were much too long. Considering the three speeches as one, Paul's average words-per-sentence was approximately thirty-three and... That is, of course, a rather long sentence for a spoken style. This is particularly true considering some of the weighty matters that the apostle spoke about. Occasionally Paul would relieve his audience with a few short sentences, but then plunge back into a labored presentation. Paul's speech before the synagogue is the best balanced of the three, with the Mars' Hill address being the worst.
In contrast with Christ, Paul did not use very many illustrations. The bulk of those that he did use came from nature and personal experience. What few illustrations he used were apt and good. His speech before Agrippa contains more illustrations than the others.

Because of the interruptions in two of the three speeches, the matter of transitions is difficult to determine. Naturally, the transitions from thought to thought or from one part of the speech to another would tend to be choppy due to the interruptions Paul experienced. The only complete speech, in the sense of togetherness, is Paul's speech to the synagogue at Antioch. In this speech, the transitions tend to be neat and smooth. Although Paul passed quickly from point to point, the feeling of "stop" and "start" is missing. There is a natural flow of words and ideas. While there are areas of abruptness, Paul's messages tend to have sharply defined, but relatively smooth, transitions.

Each one of the three speeches is logical and concise. Paul did not stray from his main line of thought. Rather, he carefully explored his topic, picked carefully his material, and chose just the right moment to put it before his audience. Paul's messages were easy to follow because of their logic.\(^4\) Not only were his speeches presented in a precise manner, but they were psychologically sound. They were apt to the situation and this is probably the reason that audience interest was maintained at such a high level. Actually, the aptness of his speeches

was one of Paul's strongest speaking assets.

**Energy.** Particular words of force, as well as the use of verbs, are more significant in speeches one and three than in speech two. In these two speeches, Paul drew emotional associations by using certain words. He also rushed his audience along to a forceful climax by his use of verbs. But in speech number two, the approach is more subtle. Because of their philosophical outlook on life and their probable avoidance of excessive emotionalism, Paul appealed to the Athenians mostly through his thought content. He was bound to use some forceful words, words that evoked an emotional reaction through association, but this was not his main thrust.

The factors of curiosity and suspense lend a great deal of force to these speeches. Curiosity as to the person of the Messiah pervades speech number one. In speech two, the "unknown God" and "that man" form the basis for suspense as the Christian message was being interpreted. Before Agrippa suspense was strengthened by Paul's story of his conversion, call, and obedience. As a direct result of these factors, the emotional tone of the speeches was high. Even on Mars' Hill, the soft, but sweeping, emotional consciousness eventually gave way to interruption and dismissal.

**Ease.** Paul promoted ease in his speeches by the use of contrasts. By taking one area of thought and contrasting it with another, the audience was enabled to see clearly what the apostle was speaking about. Often Paul drew on large contrasts that, although more indirect because of size, made a deeper impression on the thinking minds before him. Of
Particular interest are the implied contrasts between the Greek and Christian concepts of God in speech number two. This was a unique approach by Paul and obviously studied. Doubtless this constant use of contrasts by Paul also gave force to his speech.

In the two longer speeches, the factor of repetition is significant, as it pertains to ease. It is interesting that in the Mars' Hill address repetition of thoughts or words does not play an important part. This may be so because Paul did not really expect much time to address the people and so avoided lengthening his speech by the use of repetition. It is likely that if he had been permitted to continue on for some length he would have used such a device to anchor his message in their minds. However, before the synagogue and Agrippa, Paul constantly recalled important statements to the audience's attention. These repetitions were often stated in different ways, but the truth they expressed was clear. By such expressions, which were psychological forms of persuasion, the audience gained a familiarity with Paul's major emphases.

Speeches one and three contain a great deal of imagery. This abundant use of imagery, coupled with simple wording and ordered phraseology, helped the audience to grasp Paul's message with some ease. The apostle used more images concerned with muscle effort and inner organ stimulation than anything else. He appealed to their active physical life and their inner emotional consciousness. Although Paul used imagery as psychological braces for his speech, he carefully avoided language that was flowery or flamboyant.
Finally, case was maintained by a definite sense of directness in the speech. In each speech studied, the forms of directness used by Paul were about the same. The apostle utilized the force of direct address. He also spoke directly to his audience by the use of the pronoun "you". He deliberately identified himself with his congregation and pulled them both into the speech situation. This last observation is particularly noticeable in Paul's address to the synagogue. Of course, the personal tone of the message produced a sense of directness. It is clear that each speech is so structured that each audience would have no difficulty in realizing that this man was speaking to them in particular.

Amplification of the Theme.

Each speech in this series has a definite theme or themes that dominate the presentation. Because of different audiences, the themes vary from speech to speech. The theme for speech one has two parts. First, that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of God's promise for a Messiah. Second, that Christ is alive. Thus, the dual theme is Christ and the resurrection. In fact, Paul always said something in his speeches about Jesus Christ, whether directly or indirectly, and the fact of His resurrection. The theme for speech two is the nature of God. The theme for speech three also has two parts, Paul's conversion and the doctrine of the resurrection.

The main purpose of the speech drive was always to persuade. In each case this involved some type of instruction and interpretation of current events. The chief desire of Paul was to get his audience to
admit the truthfulness of his message. Evangelical invitations are extended in speeches one and three. Although there is none in the Mars' Hill address, it is likely that there would have been if Paul had been permitted to continue speaking. Therefore, on this basis, it is evident that Paul's concern was with truth and action.

The address on Mars' Hill was developed entirely by definition. The other speeches do not follow that type of development, although speech three does contain an important use of definition. In it Paul defined two things for Agrippa. First, the apostle defined carefully his charge of motivation. Second, Paul defined what he meant by the Gospel. This second definition of speech three is akin to the structure of speech two, which is a definition of the Christian concept of God.

Paul was careful to offer some type of proof for his often disturbing speech material. The aspect of proof from personal experience is most prominent in speech three. This speech is autobiographical and therefore the appeal to personal proof is strong. The logical approach, as proof, is most clearly seen in speeches one and two. Speech number one has a good mixture of logical and emotional proof, whereas speech two is predominately proof from logical premises. Paul used emotional proof to a good advantage in speech number one. His main source of proof for each speech respectively was the Old Testament, Greek philosophy and poetry, and personal experience. Taking all three speeches into consideration, the appeal to logical proof is the strongest.

Paul's ability to properly utilize both concrete and abstract
terminology added to his attempts to amplify his theme. In each speech he used terms that would immediately strike some kind of association familiar to the particular audience that he was dealing with. A comparison of that terminology is not necessarily important as each speech would show both similarities and differences. The similarities would revolve around the concepts of Christ and His resurrection which formed an important part of each speech. The differences would be attributed to the differences in audience, speech theme, etc.

Investigation has shown that two of these speeches are definitely characteristic of an oral style, while one indicates strongly a written style. The speech before Agrippa contains many literary features. The Greek text uses several words that indicate a written style. The language used in that speech denotes a careful selection of terms suit- ing royalty, in contrast with those used by the common people. This can partly be explained by Paul's audience, but the literary garnishes are there, nonetheless. Irrespective of this, the speech was effectively spoken and contains features that are helpful to an oral style, i.e., like repetition, suspense, and

V. CONCLUSION

This chapter has been an attempt to condense the major findings of an analysis of three of Paul's speeches in the Book of Acts. By

comparing the occasion, the speaker, the audience, and the speech of each of these messages, we have been able to see the general style of Paul as a speaker. Each one of these speeches has made some particular contribution to a proper evaluation of Paul as a speaker. In speech one, we see Paul as a believing Jew, having received the end of the Old Testament promises in the person of Jesus Christ. Speech number two sheds light on Paul as an intellectual leader. The third speech shows us Paul as a Christian convert and missionary. His speech content was necessarily controlled by each of these speaking situations. However, certain characteristics have emerged that demonstrate his total ability as a speaker. The contents of this chapter will lay the foundation for some specific conclusions concerning Paul’s speaking ability that will be stated in the forthcoming chapter.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

An investigation and analysis of these selected speeches has been signally rewarding because of the practical insights one receives, seemingly designed for his own benefit. There will not be one conclusion reached that is not a lesson today to those who find that they must preach. Doubtless Paul's education played an important role in his later preaching ministry. But education and an evangelical approach to the Christian message are but the two eyes needed for proper vision. His ability to speak publicly, size up situations, and persuade masses was partly learned, partly earned.

The best method of understanding Paul's speech characteristics is simply to list them. Therefore, the remaining part of this chapter will consist of those aspects of Paul's ability as a speaker that have been gleaned from the selected speeches.

1. Paul always tried to sell himself as well as his message. The apostle was, in every case, concerned with the necessity of maintaining a good reputation. Thus, he was courteous, gentlemanly, and hone.

2. Paul always treated his audience with respect and, when possible, complemented them on some phase of their religious, social, or personal traits. At times, he identified himself with the needs of the people, but always in a manner that would help clarify his message and
aid them in belief.

3. The apostle began his message where the people were, gradually leading them into new phases of truth. Generally he avoided the use of too much abstract thought in order that his audience might see the relevance of his message to themselves.

7. Paul considered his audience and spoke to their particular needs. In relating to them the answer to their needs, he sometimes referred to his own experience, but never in an obtrusive manner.

5. Paul often referred to some phase of experience that the audience was familiar with. In doing this, he drew them further into the speech itself.

6. Paul's motives for speaking were always clear. Likewise, his appeals to audience motivation were always clear, direct, and honest. The speeches reveal more appeals to positive motivation than to negative.

7. Paul made sure that his message was clear to his audience. First, he made sure that he understood the situation himself. Then, he approached his subject logically, avoiding the use of too many lengthy words.

8. The apostle had a tendency to frame sentences that were too long. It is possible that the sentences did not sound so complicated when they were spoken. However, they are still too long in the written form that we have in the King James text. His illustrations were few, but his transitions were generally good.

9. Paul used words and ideas that would evoke audience interest
by association. He added force to his message by using suspense and curiosity.

10. Paul increased the factor of ease in understanding by the use of contrasts, repetitions, and different forms of imagery. He also employed various forms of address that helped promote ease. His forms of directness likewise emphasized ease in the speech.

11. Paul geared his whole speech to one basic end, persuasion. To him, speaking on great Christian themes was never an academic display, it was his call for him. All other speech purposes, in these speeches, actually revolve around this one.

12. Paul was careful to use some form of proof for his unusual claims about Christianity. In some way, he brought in some forms of proof that his audience would agree with.

13. The apostle attempted to answer questions that might ordinarily be raised in people's minds. He tried to connect his thoughts and not leave his speech full of loose ends. He was careful, in as much as possible, to make his message practical for the audience.

14. These different speeches show us that Paul was a very versatile speaker. He obviously was familiar with a number of subjects of interest and seemed to feel at home in any audience.

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2This obviously does not mean at home emotionally as most of his speeches were made at times of great outward pressure and inner...
15. Finally, Paul displayed a courage of conviction that enabled him to speak without apology before those whom he knew would probably spurn his \[ ... \] Therefore, his speeches are filled with Christian certainties, not doubts.

Paul was a speaker. Kathleen Innes has rightly said that "judged by the standards set by the greatest orators, St. Paul occupies a high place among those whose eloquence has moved mankind and swayed the course of human history". Although he would have discounted this if asked about it, yet Paul was evidently God's man in a day when Christianity needed a voice, a voice of power, a voice of personality, a voice of \[ ... \].

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