

The Church - A Needed U Turn! Acts 9:1-19

Message to Conversation Guide

Key Text

Acts 9:1-19

9 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, **so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way**, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, **suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him**. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." ¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. **He got up and was baptized,** ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength. NIV

Discussion Questions

1. The conversion of Saul is a pivotal moment in history. Paul's conversion meant a massive shift in the trajectory of the church now focusing on the mission to the Gentiles. Read the verses below that outline Paul's mission to non-Jews. How does this effect you? (hint you are probably a gentile if you attend a protestant or catholic church in America)

Acts 9:15

15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. NIV

Gal 1:15-16

15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man. NIV also see **Acts 22:21**

2. What are some pivotal moments in your life that has changed the direction of your life in significant ways?
3. Paul told his story, how he met Jesus 2 other times in the book of Acts (**Acts 22:4-21, Acts 26:9-18**). Everyone that has met Jesus has personal story to tell about how the met Jesus. What is your story? see **Rev. 12:11**.
4. Discuss the elements a personal testimony or story of how you met Jesus below.
 - Everyone story is unique and different from other people's story.
 - No one can tell your story like you can tell your story.
 - Your story is custom fit to help certain people.
5. Paul's radical story of persecuting the church and overseeing Stephen's martyrdom illustrate God's immense patience to forgive any sin.

1 Tim 1:15-16

15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — **of whom I am the worst**. 16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. NIV also see **Gal 1:13-16, 1 Cor 15:9, Acts 22:17-21**.

6. Describe the details of what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus. What is significant about some of these details (light, sound, his blindness)