Changed by Grace
11/15/26- Pastor Zach
Acts 9:1-19, 1 Timothy 1:15-16, 1Cor. 1:30, Col.1:27

Connect: Can someone really change? How do you think the Lord sees that individual? What was your conversation experience like?

Engage: Reread Acts; 1-19
What stands out to you? If you were Ananias, how do you think you would have responded?
Zach talked about 3 movements.
There is a big idea in this story: Jesus meets us in our resistance, makes us his own and displays a patience that gives us hope for ourselves and the people we love.

1. Movement 1 – Conversation- Conversation is more that becoming religious.

a. You can be deeply committed to religion and still need to surrender to Jesus.

How do you think this plays out today?

b. Vs. 3-5 Collision: Jesus Challenges the God Saul thinks He knows.

We all carry ideas about what God must be like, who He should accept, whom He should oppose, what He should ask of us? What does that look like for you?
What do you think of these 3 statements?
A god who always agrees with me cannot call me to repentance.
A god who only echoes my feelings cannot speak a stronger word than my shame.
The real Jesus confronts both our self- righteousness and our self – condemnation.
Are you listening to Jesus as He reveals Himself or are you asking Him to confirm what I already believe?

c. Vs 6-9 Darkness – Saul's confidence gives way to dependence
Conversation means admitting, I cannot be my own savior. Where have you tried to be your own savior ?

d. Embrace: Saul receives what He could never earn – 17-19
   1. Signs of New direction
      a. Prayer – a picture of dependence on God.
      b. Obedience- He receives Jesus's direction and is baptized.
      c. Sacrifice – His calling will include suffering for Jesus name.
      d. Community – he receives care from the people he once opposed.

Where are you in each one of these places? These are fruit not duty.
Are you trusting your goodness, religious upbringing or a past experience or are you truly trusting in Jesus

2. Identity – Jesus identifies with His people and gives us our identity in Him
Jesus takes the suffering of his people personally. What you do you think about that? When you say something hurtful – do you believe you have hurt Jesus ?

a. For someone who feels forgotten, rejected or wounded this is deeply comforting. How does this make you feel when you feel this way? Have you experienced Jesus in times like this?
b. Belonging to Jesus changes the foundation of our identity. What does this look in your life?
c. We often build our identity around what we accomplish, what others think, whether our family looks successful, or our worst failure or deepest regret? Which one of these do you struggle with the most?
d. Belonging to Jesus also means belonging to His people. Where are you caring for people?
e. What are you asking to give me the worth that only Jesus can give?
f. Does the way I treat Jesus's people reflect how closely He identifies with them?

3. Hope – Saul's conversation displays Jesus's grace and patience towards sinners.
   a. Ananias sees Paul's history – Jesus announces Saul's calling
   b. We have people in our lives where we know their history, and we do not know everything Jesus may yet do in their lives.
   c. Jesus has patience for us
      1. Your past does not make you beyond the reach of his mercy
      2. You do not need to make yourself worthy before you come to Him
      3. His patience invites you to turn and trust Him today.

Which one of these gives' encouragement to you today?

4. We need to keep praying, loving and remain ready to obey.

Who do you care about that you need to trust Jesus again to come into His life?

God has not given up and He will work.

Praise God for His faithfulness this week even if you cannot see it yet!