

ACTS, PART 11: “THE GAP”

Pastor Josh Pardee – December 15, 2019



SERMON NOTES AND SCRIPTURE

Acts 9: 19b -22 (NIV)

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. 20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

“The main thing God gets out of your life is not the achievements you accomplish. It’s the person you become.” —Dallas Willard

Anything God wants to do through you, he first wants to do in you.

Acts 9:23a (NIV)

23 After many days had gone by...

Galatians 1:15-18 (NIV)

15 But when God, who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. 17 I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus. 18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days.

Galatians 2:1 (NIV)

Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.

2 Corinthians 4:7-9 (NIV)

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

GROUP DISCUSSION

What would your reaction have been had Saul entered your city after all he had done against the faith?

What do you suppose was going through Saul's mind at the reaction of the people? Do you think he was hurt, disappointed, surprised? Or do you think he expected that reaction?

What role did Barnabas play at this point in Saul's life? Have you ever had to vouch for someone else's transformation in Jesus? Has someone had to vouch for you?

We see a lot of Saul's personality traits now being used to further the kingdom instead of to destroy it. What character or personality traits do you see in others in your group that God could use to advance his kingdom? Call that out for one another.

How can our life group pray for each other this week?