

“Grow in Jesus” – Week 1

“Experiencing God’s Son – Conversion of Saul”

May 15, 2022. FBCLA Acts 9:1-22 Rev. Dr. Scott T. Arnold

Series Hope: Newness rises out of brokenness, growth comes through pain, faith fights through fear and doubt, love transforms our hearts with understanding and compassion.

Word for the Day: ENCOUNTERS

Passage: Acts 9:1 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 holy people 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 proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to 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. 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.

Questions:

1. What Encounter and transformation of faith took place for Saul to go from persecuting the Church to proclaiming Jesus as the Christ becoming the Apostle Paul?

- A. God’s chooses unlikely people (v.1-2)
- B. God’s revelation in Jesus & the Church was affirmed. (v.3-6)
- C. People who knew Saul were speechless (7-9)

2. What encounter and adjustment of attitude did it take for believers to minister to Saul?

- A. It took a vision for Ananias to even approach Saul. (10-16)
- B. It took faith for Ananias to minister to Saul (17)
- C. It took a personal encounter for a breakthrough to happen (18)
- D. It takes a community to nurture faith and spiritual strength. (19)

3. What led Saul to preach and encounter others? (20-21)

4. What gifts allowed Saul to grow into effectiveness? (22)

Problem: Spiritual pride can blind us from God’s truth. Until we hear God’s word and receive God’s saving power, and respond in faith and obedience, we are living apart from God’s purposes.

Potential Hope: People can change by the love and grace of God, and people can grow into God’s purposes.

Essence: Spiritual growth begins through responding to God’s revelation. Saul opposed the church, but after Jesus revealed Himself to Saul, he had a change of heart and a new purpose for life. Jesus was real and was changing his life.

20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Eph. 3:20-21)