Pastor Jim Jackson, 11/22/26
THE CHURCH, Pt. 7—A Foe Becomes a Friend
Acts 9:1-22

Saul meets with the HIGH PRIEST

Saul was named after the first King of Israel, studied under the rabbi Gamaliel, and was a Pharisee zealous for all Jews to follow the Torah (Acts 22:3; Gal. 1:14). Seeing the new Christians not adhering to Jewish teachings, Saul began to persecute the church. He believed them to have aberrant, heretical theology by trusting in Jesus as Messiah/Savior. *Sometimes you can be sure you're right but end up being surely wrong!* Saul volunteered and got authority from the High Priest to go on a mission to the synagogues and arrest anyone who was follower of the Way (Gr. *hodos,* 'road/path'; John 14:5, 6). After he received permission, he went out to bring Christians back to Jerusalem for trial. *Sometimes you can think you are acting for God when you're actually acting against Him!*

Saul meets with JESUS

At the end of the 170 mile journey to Damascus, a bright light knocked him off his horse, and Jesus, whom Saul thought was dead, speaks to him. Saul's officers see the light and hear a voice but can't comprehend it (John 8:12; Acts 22:9). *When Jesus shows up in your life, those around you might not understand!* Jesus calls him by name and asks why he's persecuting him. Technically, he wasn't persecuting Jesus, but to persecute his people is to persecute him. *Sometimes God shines a light to give a new direction for our lives!*

Saul meets with ANANIAS

Being blinded, his officers take him by hand into Damascus. Confused and humbled, Saul doesn't eat or drink for three days as he's given time to accept the truth of Jesus and what just happened. *Sometimes God has to tear our life apart to rebuild it!* Jesus tells Ananias—a Jewish Christian Saul went to arrest—to go meet with him. He bravely goes to where they're staying and prays Jesus heals 'brother' Saul. After scales fell off his eyes, the Holy Spirit gave him spiritual and physical sight, and he was baptized. The man who had religion about God now had a relationship with God. He then went to the synagogues and preached the Gospel! The Jesus-persecutor was now the Jesus-promoter. Saul had become a member of what he was trying to destroy (1 Tim. 1:12-14)! *On the way to arrest the people of the Way, Paul became a person of the Way!*