

Foundations of The Christian Life
“Rope Holders”
Acts 9:19b-31
Jerry Grey

Introduction:

Think back to the day you were saved. From the first moment until now, you have had help along the way. You were disciplined. You were taught the truths of Scripture by others.

Who were they? Are you doing the same now for others?

* I could go through my memories and call many names today that have been rope holders in my life. People who helped me grow in Christ and not become a casualty of failure in discipleship.

- One of the greatest Christians of all time had help. What was he Taught? Who taught Him? Saul was helped by Ananias and Barnabas at first, and then Saul took off like a rocket on his own. He spent a great deal of time in Damascus too, with the disciples for three years.

Chronological Table of the Apostle Paul's Life

Arranged by Andrew Miller: A.D. 36– A.D. 67

- A. D. 36
 - Conversion of Saul of Tarsus ([Acts 9](#)).
- A. D. 36–39
 - At Damascus—preaches in the synagogue—goes into Arabia ([Luke does not mention this, but Paul does in Gal 1](#)) — returns to Damascus—flight from Damascus.
 - His first visit to Jerusalem, three years after his conversion.
 - Thence to Tarsus. ([Acts 9:23–26](#); [Gal. 1:18](#))
- A. D. 39, 40
 - Rest of the Jewish churches ([Acts 9:31](#)).
- A. D. 40–43
 - Paul preaches the gospel in Syria and Cilicia ([Gal. 1:21](#)).

- A period of uncertain length. During this time he probably undergoes the chief part of the perils and sufferings which he recounts to the Corinthians ([2 Cor. 11](#)).
- He is brought from Tarsus to Antioch by Barnabas, and stays there a year before the famine ([Acts 11:26](#)).
- A. D. 44
 - Paul's second visit to Jerusalem, with the collection ([Acts 1:11–30](#)).
- A. D. 45
 - Paul returns to Antioch ([Acts 12:2–5](#)).
- A. D. 46–49
 - Paul's first missionary journey with Barnabas—goes to Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and back through the same places to Antioch.
 - They remain a long time in Antioch.
 - Dissension and disputation about circumcision. ([Acts 13, 14, 15:1,2](#))
- A. D. 50
 - Paul's third visit to Jerusalem with Barnabas, fourteen years after his conversion ([Gal. 2:1](#)).
 - They attend the council at Jerusalem ([Acts 15](#)).
 - Return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, with Judas and Silas ([Acts 15:32–35](#)).
- A. D. 51
 - Paul's second missionary journey, with Silas and Timothy.
 - He goes from Antioch to Syria, Cilicia, Derbe, Lystra, Phrygia, Galatia, Troas. Luke joins the apostolic band ([Acts 16:10](#)).
- A. D. 52
 - Entrance of the gospel into Europe ([Acts 16:11–13](#)).
 - Paul visits Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth.
 - Spends a year and six months at Corinth ([Acts 18:11](#)).
 - First Epistle to the Thessalonians written.
- A. D. 53
 - Second Epistle to the Thessalonians written.
 - Paul leaves Corinth and sails to Ephesus ([Acts 18:18, 19](#)).
- A. D. 54
 - Paul's fourth visit to Jerusalem, at the feast.
 - Returns to Antioch.
- A. D. 54–56
 - Paul's third missionary journey.
 - He departs from Antioch—visits Galatia, Phrygia, and reaches Ephesus, where he stays two years and three months. Here Paul separates the disciples from the Jewish synagogue ([Acts 19:8, 10](#)).
 - Epistle to the Galatians written.

- A. D. 57
 - [Spring] First Epistle to the Corinthians written. The tumult at Ephesus—Paul leaves for Macedonia ([Acts 19:23; 20:1](#)).
 - [Autumn] Second Epistle to the Corinthians written ([2 Cor. 1:8, 2:13–14, 7:5, 8:1, 9:1](#)).
 - Paul visits Illyricum—goes to Corinth—winters there ([Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 16:6](#)).
- A. D. 58
 - [Spring] The Epistle to the Romans written ([Rom. 15:25–28, 16:21–23; Acts 20:4](#)).
 - Paul leaves Corinth—passes through Macedonia—sails from Philippi—preaches at Troas—addresses the elders at Miletus—visits Tires and Caesarea ([Acts 20, 21:1–14](#)).
- A. D. 58–60
 - Paul's fifth visit to Jerusalem, before Pentecost. He is arrested in the temple—brought before Ananias and the Sanhedrim—sent by Lysias to Caesarea, where he is kept in bonds two years.
- A. D. 60
 - Paul heard by Felix and Festus. He appeals unto Caesar—preaches before Agrippa, Bernice, and the men of Caesarea.
 - [Autumn] Paul sails for Italy.
 - [Winter] Shipwrecked at Malta ([Acts 27](#)).
- A. D. 61
 - [Spring] Arrives at Rome—dwells two years in his own hired house ([Acts 28](#)).
- A. D. 62
 - [Spring] Epistles to Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians written.
 - [Autumn] Epistle to the Philippians written.
- A. D. 63
 - [Spring] Paul acquitted and released.
 - Epistle to the Hebrews written.
 - Paul takes another journey, intending to visit Asia Minor and Greece ([Philem. 1:22; Phil. 2:24](#)).
- A. D. 64
 - Visits Crete and leaves Titus there—exhorts Timothy to abide at Ephesus.
 - First Epistle to Timothy written.
 - Epistle to Titus written.
- A. D. 64–67
 - Intends to winter at Nicopolis ([Titus 3:12](#)).
 - Visits Troas, Corinth, Miletum ([2 Tim. 4:13, 20](#)).
 - Paul arrested and sent to Rome.

- Deserted and solitary—having only Luke, of his old associates, with him.
- Second Epistle to Timothy written, probably not long before his death. These journeys and events are generally supposed to cover a period of about three years.
- A. D. 67
 - Paul's martyrdom?

Gal. 1:11-2:2 ¹I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹²I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

¹³For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

¹⁵But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶to 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.**

¹⁸Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas^[b] and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

²¹Then I went to **Syria and Cilicia.** ²²I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³They only heard the report: "The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching

the faith he once tried to destroy.”²⁴ And they praised God because of me.

Then, **after fourteen years**, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.² I went in response to a **revelation** and, meeting privately with those esteemed as leaders, I presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles.

Read Text: What do you need to make it as a Christian? What’s my point? Saul didn’t become Paul overnight, and you won’t either.

1. Verse 19b. The Disciples in Damascus. You must have Christian friends. Saul’s first encounter with “normal” Christians was in Damascus. Not Apostles, disciples.

* You change friends and locations when you get saved.

Those Saul hated, he is now loving, and he needs them.

Illustration: PGA tour rules on muddy days. Lift. Clean and place. You need to apply that in your Christian life.

1 John 3:14 – We know that we have passed from death unto life, because **we love the brethren**. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

1 John Salvation test: Here is a quick test for your beliefs.

- **The Commandment Test-**

1 John 2:3-4

³ And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ He that saith, I know him, and keepeth

not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

- **The Companion Test-**

1 John 3:14

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

1 John 4:20

²⁰ If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

- **The Commitment Test-**

1 John 5:10-13

¹⁰ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

¹¹ And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

¹² He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

¹³ These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

* This does not mean we are to have no contact with unbelievers. It does mean that if you spend all your time with them, you might still be one of them. There must be a time of separation after conversion. **Note Gal 1:16.**

* You cannot grow in your faith as a Christian and hang around with your lost friends. The karaoke bar is not a Fellowship Hall. The wrong people are there.

2. Verse 20-21: He Helped Himself.

You cannot change the past – move on. You have a new life, get new friends. I was obnoxious after conversion. But thank God I finally found something worth dying for. God tempered it with grace as I grew, so let the new Christians be fired up. The chosen frozen will calm them down in time.

~ What's the most important word in verse 2?

Notice Saul goes straight to the Synagogue. He brought fear there one day and a message the next.

(Adverb) **εὐθεως– Immediately**, If you delay your new life you will never get it. If you don't get on the correct journey, you will probably never do it. Anon, at once. Saul went to church. Started preaching Jesus.

Side Note Point: - If Saul was too ashamed of his past, he could not have moved forward. Same guy wrote this later on...

Philippians 3:13-15

¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

* Paul's calling comes out!

~He began to preach. A preacher has to preach!

Jeremiah 20:9

⁹ But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

NIV

~**He began to preach – Jesus!**

1 Corinthians 1:2: NIV ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles...

~**His method was to herald the message.**

Galatians 1:8- But even if we or an angel from heaven should **preach** a gospel other than the one we **preached** to you, let them be under God's curse!

Galatians 1:11-12 I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I **preached** is not of human origin.

~**His message was Jesus.** **Romans 16:25-** Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the **message** I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past...

Titus 1:9

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy **message** as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Hebrews 4:2

For we also have had the **good news** proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the **message** they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.

He was a murderer and an evil man before! Now a called Apostle of Christ. Preaching the message that Jesus is the Son of God.

Quote: Philipians 3:7-16 ff

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in^[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

This sounds like a man who made peace with his past. Have you?

Divorce, abortion, premarital sex, alcoholism, mistreatment of family, drugs – homosexuality.

None of these are the unpardonable sin **Jesus Saves!!!!**

Saul was saved and went to the synagogue, preaching. This had to have been difficult. What would the people think? I bet the Jews were just a gossiping about his past.

~ **Psalm 51_ – “Against you and only you have I sinned.”**

No one owes me an apology for their past. You sinned against Jesus, so do business with Him.

Illustration: I knew a couple who got pregnant before they were married. They felt the need to tell everyone they met that information. That's not necessary. *If it's helpful and brings glory to God, so be it*, but it's not necessary to punish yourself repeatedly for the past. Paul shows us how to speak of our past...

1 Cor. 15:9-11

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. ¹¹ Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

~Forgiveness is free – restoration is contingent (Conditional or dependent). Make restitution for your past with a life lived for Christ. If you could fix your past, you would not need Jesus.

A Practical Word: I must preach against vice and sin, and I will call it what it is, yet never think I want you to be in pain over past sins. I preach hard on sin to prevent those former sins from capturing and destroying lives. We must restore the belief that sin is destructive. From the back side, however, you need to move on.

Verse 21: This is what we are looking for when we meet people from our past – “Astonishment” means beside one’s self.

Existemi- from histemi. To be thrown off position. To throw into wonderment. To be insane or out of one’s mind. Now that’s a conversion. To be beside yourself.

Was your conversion an amazement to people?

Illustration: Zacchaeus the Tax Collector Luke 19:1-9.
NIV

19 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. **3** He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short, he could not see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” **6** So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

9 Jesus said to him, **“Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.”** **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

3. The Holy Spirit Helped Him.

Verse 22-23 – “He Grew” (the Word) – Two words we could never say about many people who have been saved.

Greek: Grew more capable or powerful. **Endynamoo-** to be more powerful or capable. The prefix may refer to more powerful according to some specific entity, e.g. ministry or debating. This refers to proving the message. Saul’s growing spiritually.

Proving: sumbibazo- Proving: To cause to coalesce, to come together. To unite or join together. To put together in the mind. Root is **basis** from **baino**. The foot. You get it? We start at the basis or foot. Build a foundation by putting the information together.

My favorite... to cause a person to unite with one in a conclusion or come to the same opinion, to prove, to demonstrate, to teach and instruct. To drive together. J. Thayer said to identify with, to board. To get on board. To board a ship. To grasp a truth, TDNT, to cause to stride together. To come to the necessary judgement. Bible Hub.

Here the verb Depicts intellectual defeat. Saul's Spirit enabled reasoning upends entrenched expectations about the Messiah, demonstrating that the Gospel does not fear rigorous debate. For ministry, the passage underlines the apologetic power of scripture when presented with spirit-filled clarity. Bible-Hub

Yes – he had sin in his past, but also a great education; family background – etc. – Now, empowered with the Holy Spirit, he could use it all for the Kingdom.

He proved to the people that Jesus was the Messiah.

2 Corinthians 5:11

Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to **persuade (Peitho is a synonym)** others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

* Here was a man who also had seeds of brilliance in his past that God used to increase his power and effectiveness. God uses your good and bad from your past to prove the truths

about the Messiah. *The more you grow, the more powerful you become in debate and proving truth.*

He had a great command of the Old Testament Scriptures. Now he had the Holy Spirit in him to explain it to him. He had growth, power, and persuasion! Saul was the perfect choice to be the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Point of Discussion: Verse 23:

Most see a break between 22-23.

I do as well.

“After many days had gone by”

(3 years between these verses).

Galatians 1:11

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. ¹² I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:19ff

¹⁹ We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were **carried along (Phero)** by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 27:15 -So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* ^[a]drive **(Phero)**.

Revelation→**Inspiration**→Illumination→Application

Make note that God turned this man aside and, by way of the Holy Spirit, put the grandest Spiritual thoughts in his mind that any man ever heard. He was moved along by the spirit.

Quote:

Philips – He returned later with Romans, Ephesians, and Thessalonians in his heart. Romans (Cross) Ephesians (Church) Thessalonians (Coming of Christ).

* All men and women who want to live the deeper Christian life must go to Arabia for training.

We need disciples, help yourself, Holy Spirit and... →

4. Verses 24-29: He Was Helped by the Church

Verse 24-25 – Kenny Rogers had a song – You Got to Know When to Hold ‘em and Know when to Fold ‘em.

~ Rope Holders – Kept Saul from getting killed. They let him down over the wall to get away... in a basket.

~ Anyone can hold a rope.

~ The most seemingly insignificant act can be great in Heaven. You may not be Paul the Apostle, but you can save his life. So the plot was to kill Saul, but God revealed the plan. When you are called to his purpose, you are protected.

Verse 26 – Understandably so, the church was afraid

of Saul. The church must protect herself. Notice that Saul “Tried” and “Tried.” **Imperfect verb** – *tried a lot*.

Saul knew he had to keep trying until he proved himself. He knew he needed the church. Many people come here and immediately think they should be able to serve anywhere in the church. There is always a testing and observation time for new disciples. The church needs to know you personally for our protection and your growth. We always want to be friendly and welcome you into the fellowship, but with caution. I have my babies and children here to protect.

It was Saul’s job to prove his integrity and genuineness. Love is given, but trust is earned. Saul could have been playing out the best scheme in history. He could have been an imposter or Trojan Horse.

People have come to Woodlake and told me they served with Dr. so and so and this guy and that guy, and they can preach and teach. Red flag. Red flag.

People say, “I can sing, brother Jerry.” I want to sing. I can play. Now listen carefully. It is my God-given responsibility to put people on this platform that are first holy and walking with Jesus. They must also be better than the average bear. Yes, the heart is important. Not perfect in skills, but must be capable to a certain degree and have the right heart. Some men have told me they have the gift of preaching. The problem was that no one has the gift of listening. We do not perform in this church. We worship God and give Him glory. CHS says that the platform is reserved for God’s brightest and best. Use your best singers and players. I won’t apologize for that. If that upsets you, then you don’t belong in worship leadership.

I let two guys fill in for me one Sunday when I went on vacation. They both had begged for the opportunity to preach. When I returned, my sheep told me to never let that happen again. I listened to both guys' messages, and neither was prepared to preach. If you get an opportunity, be prepared. I have never done that again.

I tried to critique a young man's first sermon to help him; he said he didn't need my help cause his mama told him he did *good*. ~The average Baptist tries once and quits. Saul tried and tried to prove himself. It's not my job to get you ready. It's my job to approve you. Put yourself in my position. You are now responsible before God to protect the sheep's spiritual life and worship service. You still as confident?

Your life is like Saul's... your life outside these walls determines what you get to do inside these walls. If I see what you post on FB and it's ungodly behavior, you likely will not be leading in worship. Is that fair?

When the SS teachers are away, they get fill-ins. It is imperative that they okay that with me if they do not know the fill-in personally. People need opportunities to grow; I am not saying people must be perfect. The only way to learn to teach, sing, preach is to get the opportunity to teach, sing, and preach. Yet, their witness and lifestyle, and maturity in the Lord all come into play.

I'm sure Sanford will get calls about what I just said, but that just proves my point. If that upsets you, then you are not ready to lead. Leaders have to first be able to take admonition and correction. Constructive criticism comes with leadership.

Every Tuesday morning, we have a staff meeting where we critique ourselves and the service to make it better. The car show leaders evaluated the car show every year from the start to make it better. I have evaluated Deacon ordination service so I can make it better next time. After every round of golf, I go over my scorecard to see what I can try to do better next round. If you are not willing to be evaluated, you not a leader.

Great Point: I cannot express how important this verse is. Tucked away, right here in Chapter 9, is the greatest spiritual lesson you will ever learn. It seems so unassuming and benign, but it is so important. It doesn't even stand out, and it's not explicitly stated, but it is an enormous spiritual lesson.

*** Saul knew his ministry was impotent without the **church** of Jesus Christ!*** A convention that forgets the pastors will not be an effective convention. A restaurant that does not consider the customer's satisfaction won't be in business long. A team that ignores the players and fans will not be a team very long. A politician who lies to his constituents will get voted out.

You may not get this, but I am trying to help you. The church is essential to your Christian life.

You cannot live the Christian life without the church. "Lone Ranger Christian" – Hogwash!

* Many have given up on the church! This is where many strange church-growth movements come from. The church is the bride of Jesus. He died for the bride; how can you give up on the church.

Verse 27: Thank God for Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement. Barnabas is God's grace to Saul.

To do what Barnabas did, you need a few things – (Rope Holders).

1. Trust of the Brethren
2. Character, Integrity
3. Courage
4. Good Reputation
5. Honesty- Don't recommend people that are not recommendable.

Barnabas was not Saul, but he helped Saul. He's going to be a lifetime friend. Barnabas **vouched** for Saul. **He also stood against Paul when He felt he was wrong.**

Acts 15:36ff

³⁶ Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Barnabas had learned Saul's testimony. He must have gone out and fellowshiped with him. (They ate at IHOP after church).

Illustration: My visit with Paul when He came to WBC. After that meeting, I was a Paul Gunter fan. I knew that Paul wanted to serve Jesus here. He was willing to prove himself. He was not offended to prove his holiness and beliefs about Jesus.

Verse 28: He is doing ministry – Look at what he is doing. Many are doing ministry, but Saul is more open, more bold, more confrontational - he needed the church, and they needed him. Saul is about to learn what mission works is all about.

If you will get to work for Jesus in the church, you will get more responsibility. I am watching. Attendance and service are

important. Some people want to serve, sing, and teach, and I am not sure they are even members I have not seen them in so long. The church is a training ground.

You need to do some coming and going here to be recognized.

Verse 29: Galatians 1:18 says Saul stayed 15 days and had to go. The Grecian or Hellenistic Jews tried to kill him. **This is three years after conversion, folks. Saul is still trying to prove himself.**

¹⁸ Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days.

The hunter is not the hunted.

* Acts 22:17 *ff* gives us the final details – vv. 17-22.

Acts 27:17-22

¹⁷ “When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance ¹⁸ and saw the Lord speaking to me. ‘Quick!’ he said. ‘Leave Jerusalem immediately, because the people here will not accept your testimony about me.’

¹⁹ “‘Lord,’ I replied, ‘these people know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. ²⁰ And when the blood of your martyr^[a] Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’

²¹ “Then the Lord said to me, ‘Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.’”
²² The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”

* Sometimes you get moved into a new ministry. Paul then goes to the Gentiles. God was using persecution to move Saul around. The church will correct you if you let it.

5. Making Things Right at Home: Verse 30: He needed the Disciples, Word, Holy Spirit, Himself and the Church – now he goes [home](#).

Saul goes off the scene for a while. Galatians 1:21 tells us he was busy in Syria and Cilicia. Maybe planting churches.

I'm sure, however, that he had to make a few things right at home. I think he went home to his family to share what had happened. I had to do the same. The hardest conversations I had after salvation were with my Dad and Grandfather. The people who knew you before conversion will need some clarity. They will need to see some perseverance.

6. Tranquility and Rest: Verse 31: Here is a postscript that I think many overlook. I believe that tribulation does grow us, and it spreads the church.

However, with Saul gone, things quiet down and the church in 3 areas enjoys a time of peace: Judea, Galilee, Samaria.

It's okay for things to go well!

There is a time for:

1. Peace ✓
2. Strength ✓
3. Encouragement ✓
4. Holy Spirit ✓
5. Salvation Experiences "Grew in numbers" ✓
6. Living in the "Fear of God" ✓

Political change as well helped the church.

- Pilate was pushed out or ousted.
- Herod Agrippa's territory was expanded and restricted the Jews' movement.
- Saul is at home.

Closing: Saul – Soon to be Paul.

A great man. Some say he is the greatest Christian who ever lived, outside of Jesus.

—Maybe so. I believe that.

But I do know this, he had help. Rope Holders along the way.

Sometimes you may hold the rope – Sometimes you might be in the basket. No matter.

We need - Other Disciples
 The Word of God
 Ourselves
 The Holy Spirit
 The Church
 Our Family- Home
 Peace and Rest

A sure recipe for Christian Success!

—Will you give your life to Jesus today? Let today be your Damascus Road Experience.

—John Philip's story of how Paul (Saul) went to the Synagogue to preach, and all came and got a different message than they expected. (p. 184-in loc. exploring) The Son of Judaism is now a Son of God. Saul's preaching caused an uproar in the church in Jerusalem and in the synagogues.