



ACTS OF GOD

God's First churches

YES, NO & MAYBE:

1. I would never murder someone, but there is at least one person in my life that, should they have an unfortunate fatal accident, I wouldn't be all that sad about!
2. If people here knew my full conversion story, they might not choose to remain seated next to me.
3. If I had the authority, I would help to refocus our church away from the toxic issues that have become so distracting to our God-given mission.
4. When God chooses you to do ministry, He chooses to make your life more miserable.
5. One of the ways that you can discern God's will, is that it is logical and rational.

NOTES:

DIG DEEPER:

Ø What is one of the greatest conversion experiences you've ever witnessed?

§ READ Acts 9:1-19 (NIV)

1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest 2 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.

- Ø God could choose anyone to be part of His church-planting team. What does it say about God that he would choose a murderous, right-wing, hot-headed Jew to be His "chosen instrument"?



NOTES:

DIG DEEPER...continued:

∅ **Breathing out** - [ἐμπνέων - empneōn] Saul's murderous breath is replaced by Pneuma, God's breath.

∅ Why do you think that God told Saul to go into the city, and THEN he would be told what to do? Why didn't God just tell him then and there what He wanted Saul to do? Does God typically stretch out His instructions? If so, why do you think He does this?

∅ What does the account of the witnesses traveling with Saul tell you about the abilities of God? What did they see and hear, compared to Saul? Why do you think God did this?

∅ Why do you think that God utilized the disciple, Ananias? What does this express about how God likes to involve people in the conversion process?

∅ What does the way God employed a "double vision" reveal about His character? In other words, why do you think God gave both Saul and Ananias visions of each other before they met face-to-face?

MY PRAYER THIS WEEK:

1. How much am I allowing God to define His will in my life?
2. How prepared am I to suffer for God's name?
3. What new things do I see of God's infinite character now?