

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

ACTS 9:1-16

Text:

Introduction:

In the story of the conversion of the Apostle Paul, we see the true power of the Lord. His power is demonstrated in the way He changes lives.

Saul was the great persecutor of the early church yet Christ forgave him and used him as no other man has ever been used.

Note

1. THE CRUELTY AGAINST CHRISTIANS (VS. 1-2)

Acts 9:1-2

¹ And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, ² And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

A. There was a consuming wrath – Breathing out threatenings

- He hated men and women who professed faith in Christ.

Acts 8:3

³ As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.

B. There was a collective wrath – went unto the high priest

Saul was zealous in his hatred of Christians. He asked the high priest for letters giving him authority to arrest any believers he could find in Damascus.

The fact that he had reason to believe he would find Christians in the city of Syria, some 120 miles from Jerusalem is a testimony to how far and how fast the Gospel was spreading.

C. There was a calculated wrath –Paul hated those who were of “the way.”

The first century Christians and church were not known for their buildings, but for their way of life.

2. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL (vs. 3-9)

Acts 9:3-9

³ And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: ⁴ And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? ⁵ And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. ⁶ And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. ⁷ And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. ⁸ And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus. ⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

The conversion of Saul reminds us that there is hope for anyone.

A. It was a sudden conversion

B. It was a sure conversion

1. Conviction of sin – Whom thou persecutest.

2. Confession of faith – Lord what wilt thou have me to do?

C. It was a sanctifying conversion

3. THE CONTINUATION OF THE FAITH (vs. 10-16)

Acts 9:10-16

¹⁰ And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. ¹¹ And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, ¹² And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. ¹³ Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: ¹⁴ And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. ¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: ¹⁶ For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

A. The Lord's commission to Ananias

We see the importance and necessity of follow-up for new believers.

B. The concern of Ananias

- Ananias had every reason to be afraid of Saul. He probably had friends and perhaps even family members who were either in jail or dead because of Saul.
- It was natural for him to express doubt regarding the genuineness of Saul's conversion.

C. The command of the Lord

- We can make every excuse for not doing the Lord's work; yet God calls us to go!
- Delayed obedience is disobedience.
- Despite his concerns, Ananias was still obedient to God's instruction.
- He was a vessel chosen for a purpose

Close:

Remember:

- Future disciples may be rebellious
- Future disciples may be religious

- Future disciples can be reached
- Future disciples can be redeemed

You may say I have never had a Damascus Road experience, but if you have been saved, your salvation and your purpose are just as sure as Paul's