

The Book of Acts

Paul's Conversion

Acts 9:1-31

MAIN IDEAS

- Saul is given authority by the High Priests
- Saul encounters Jesus on the Road to Damascus
- Ananias goes to Saul
- Saul proclaims Jesus in synagogues
- Saul escapes from Damascus to Jerusalem
- Saul is sent off to Tarsus

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Why might the new believers be referred to as “The Way”? John 14:16 may give insight to your answer.

A blinding light shone suddenly around Saul and he heard a voice from heaven saying, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” Jesus spoke to him with the same deep emotion spoken to Martha in Luke 10:41-42, Abraham in Genesis 22:11 and Moses in Exodus 3:4. What is significant about each of these accounts and what was the common call?

The Lord pursued Saul for salvation as Saul pursued followers of Jesus for destruction. Saul wasn't looking for God, he was “blind-sided” by Jesus on the road to Damascus. The Lord also used his servant Ananias to pursue Saul.

Today God continues to pursue his children. How does remembering this impact your perspective? Where do you see Jesus pursuing his children in the body of Christ? How did God pursue you for salvation? How does he continue to pursue you?

The Lord assured a reluctant Ananias that Saul was his man; his chosen instrument for a specific purpose and specific time. (Esther 4:14b; Acts 17:26-27) Ananias, also a chosen instrument for a specific purpose and specific time, needed to see Saul as such. How did this understanding shape the way Ananias approached Saul? As chosen instruments, (Galatians 1:15-16a; Ephesians 1:4-5) how might this knowledge, understanding and example shape how we approach others?

Ananias lay hands on Saul and called him brother. What does a touch and a word of connection/endearament communicate to Saul? In what situations would you call a non-relative brother?

The hunter becomes the hunted. Saul flees from Damascus to Jerusalem after proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues. What specific roles does Barnabus, known as the encourager, play in Saul's life and in the lives of the believers in Jerusalem? Do you have a Barnabus in your life? Are you a Barnabus to others?

GROUP RESPONSE

Consider how your group acknowledges and accepts new believers. What fears of an individual's past might prevent you and your group from fully engaging with and embracing someone? Is anyone beyond God's reach or the power of his redemption? How might being open to a period of testing be beneficial to both the individual and the group? What specific prayers will you offer up to the Lord?

REPRODUCE

Acts 9:1-31 is Luke's rendition of Saul's conversion. Saul, now Paul, shares his own story in Acts 22:1-21 and Acts 26:12-23. His testimony was and is powerful because God pursued him. Your testimony is equally as powerful - not because of who you are or what you have done but because of who God is and his great power to save to the uttermost. (Hebrews 7:11-25) The Lord did, and continues to do, a mighty work in you through the power of the Holy Spirit. Go and proclaim Jesus through your testimony as Paul did.

KEY VERSES

- John 14:16
- Luke 10:41-42
- Genesis 22:11
- Exodus 3:4
- Esther 4:14B
- Acts 17:26-27

- Galatians 1:15-16a
- Ephesians 1:4-5
- Acts 22:1-21
- Acts 26:12-23
- Hebrews 7:11-25