

Lesson 7 – Saul’s Conversion

Text: Acts 9

Main Characters: God, Jesus, Saul, Ananias, Barnabas, Peter, Aeneas, Dorcas (Tabitha)

Key Passages:

- Acts 9:15-16 – Saul had been chosen by the Lord to preach to the Gentiles and others.
- Acts 9:18-20 – Once Saul had been healed of his blindness, he immediately obeyed and preached.

Main Storyline:

After Stephen was stoned, Saul became even more zealous to persecute Jesus’ disciples, whom he believed were blaspheming God. He asked the high priest for written permission to go to the synagogues in Damascus to arrest any disciples of Christ that he could find. He was granted his request, and he and some other men began the journey to Damascus to continue the persecution of the church.

As Saul and the other men approached Damascus, suddenly, a light shone around Saul from Heaven. Saul was stunned, and he fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice which asked, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” Saul recognized the authority of the one speaking and asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The Lord responded, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting...” Saul trembled and was astonished when he heard Jesus reveal himself. He asked Jesus what he should do, and Jesus instructed him to go to Damascus for further instructions. The other men with Saul could not understand what was happening. When Saul got up from the ground, he realized that he had been blinded and could not see. The other men led him to Damascus, where he fasted for three days, still blind.

One of the disciples in Damascus, Ananias, saw the Lord in a vision. Jesus instructed him to go to a certain house on a certain street and inquire about Saul of Tarsus, who is praying. Further, the Lord revealed that, in a vision, Saul had seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him in order to restore his sight. Ananias was confused, as he had heard from many people about Saul. He knew that Saul had persecuted the church extensively in Jerusalem and had come to Damascus to do the same. Jesus explained that Saul had been chosen to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, to kings, and to the children of Israel. He was going to show Saul how he would need to suffer for Jesus.

Ananias went on his way and entered the house where Saul was staying. He laid his hands on Saul and told him that Jesus had sent him so that Saul’s sight could be restored and that he could be filled with the Holy Spirit. Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he was able to see again. Then he arose and was baptized. Saul began eating again and was strengthened.

Saul began to spend time with the disciples of Christ in Damascus. He immediately began to preach that Christ is the Son of God in the synagogues there. Everyone who heard Saul preaching about Jesus was amazed, recognizing that he had previously been persecuting Jesus’ disciples. Saul continued to grow in the Lord, and he confounded the Jews there, proving that Jesus is the Christ.

After some time passed, the Jews became angry with Saul (just as they had become with the other apostles and preachers), and they plotted to kill him whenever he left the city. Saul found out about their plot, however. In order to escape, one night, the disciples put him in a large basket and lowered him down on the outside of the city wall. Saul journeyed to Jerusalem and tried to join the disciples there. They were afraid until Barnabas took him to the apostles and vouched for his story. Saul continued to preach in Jerusalem until he was again threatened, and the disciples sent him to preach elsewhere.

Peter also journeyed around all parts of the area. At one city, Lydda, he found a man who had been paralyzed for eight years, Aeneas, and healed him. In another city, Joppa, he raised a good woman, Dorcas, from the dead. Because of these miracles, many in those cities believed in the Lord.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) There is no one that is too wicked to repent and come to Christ; anyone can be forgiven of their sins.
- 2.) Those who are seeking the Lord will be given the opportunity to learn what they must do to serve him.