

## Chosen To Carry The Name of Christ (Acts 9:10-30)

Saul has just experienced the unlikely and unexpected supernatural experience of encounter with Jesus. But there is someone else in the the city of Damascus who was also receiving a supernatural revelation.

### 1. People in Damascus have heard about Saul's poisonous pursuit. (10-16)

#### A. His pursuit of believers goes beyond Jerusalem, to Damascus.

1. Imagine the fear that must have filled hearts. Surely they were praying for protection.
2. And then, Ananias was told to go and lay hands on Saul, not to harm him, but to heal him. (15-16)

#### B. Saul is a chosen instrument.

1. Out of all the people in the world that God could choose, he chose Saul.
2. Later, Paul would write to the Galatians that he was "set apart" before he was born for the very purpose of preaching Christ among the Gentiles. (Galatians 1:15)
3. God had been sovereign over every day of his life, working out his plan for Saul—in his timing—in the life of this sinner.
4. Isn't God's timing in salvation an amazing thing? Do we not wish that God would save people in our timing?

#### C. Amazing! God had been preparing Saul to fulfill the purpose he had for him.

1. Being raised in a Gentile city and given two names (Saul / Paul) prepared Saul to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
2. Being gripped by rage and self-righteousness prepared him to cherish the gospel of grace so that one day he would write:

1 Timothy 1:13-14 "even though I was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus."

### 2. Save by Supernatural Sight. (17-18)

#### A. The Heart of Ananias.

1. If it were me I would have dragged my feet.
2. But, this isn't the first time Luke has written about Jesus healing physical blindness.

Luke 4:18 ""THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO BRING GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,"

Luke 7:21 "At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind."

3. Jesus healed a blind man beside the road. (Luke 18:35-43)

4. After his resurrection, as he ate with the two followers he had walked with on the road to Emmaus:

Luke 24:31 “And then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight.”

B. Jesus is at work even from his throne in heaven in healing Saul. (18-19)

1. As the scales fell off his eyes, Saul could see that for all of his life he had been living in spiritual darkness. No longer filled with rage, he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

2. The blasphemer has become a baptized believer. The one who had been breathing threats against them became a brother instead. The predator has become the gospel preacher! (20-22). Imagine being in his circle of believers in Damascus.

3. Saved to Face Hostility and Opposition.

A. Skepticism followed by celebration.

1. The unbelieving Jews in Damascus, were not happy with this change. They were determined to do to Saul what Saul had planned to do to believers.

2. After “many days”, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plan became known to Saul. (23-25)

B. Saul made his way back to Jerusalem. (26)

1. He tried to join the disciples but they were hesitant / skeptical.

2. This was a well founded skepticism. They had recent / vivid memories of Saul holding the coats of those who stoned Stephen.

C. Fear gave way to fellowship among the disciples. (27-28)

1. They embraced Saul and together they faced the opposition.

2. The Sanhedrin was a different matter. Saul, who once opposed and persecuted believers, now proclaims Christ together with them. They were “murderously mad.” He was sent off to Tarsus where he would be able to preach Christ. (29-30)

C. God saves all kinds of people in all kinds of ways.

1. God saved Saul by blinding him with the light of the face of the glorified Jesus so Saul would believe that he really did rise from the dead.

2. Molly Worthen would say she was saved as she slowly became convinced that Jesus rose from the dead. How did God save you?

3. Every person who is saved by the supernatural power of God. It may not appear sensational or emotional but it is sensational nonetheless.

4. Whether you know the exact moment or simply know God saved you, there is a moment in the secret place of the soul when a person who is saved went from being spiritually dead to spiritually alive.

God chose you and saved you to carry his name into places and to people whose eyes have not yet been opened. Perhaps the Spirit will use your words to heal the blindness of people you know so that they can see the beauty, sufficiency, and necessity of Jesus.

