

# ACTS

## of the Holy Spirit

### Session #14 – 9:1 - 19

#### 7 The Conversion of Paul (Acts 9:1 - 19)

Prep: Stephen's Martyrdom  
Super: Voice and Light of Christ  
Catalyst: Jesus Christ  
Event: Moment of confrontation  
Fruit: Direction and devotion change

#### 1 The Disciples of Christ (Acts 1)

Prep: Seeking Messiah  
Super: Ministry and Teaching of Christ.  
Catalyst: Jesus Christ  
Event: Relationship Time/Resurrection  
Fruit: Faith increases/fear decreases/boldness

#### 6 The Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26 - 40)

Prep: Reading God's Word/  
Worship in the Temple  
Super: Appearance of Philip  
Catalyst: Philip  
Event: Relationship – one day  
Fruit: Baptism and Joy

*How does  
a person  
get saved?*

#### 2 The 3000 Jewish Attendees (Acts 2:41)

Prep: Surprised by miracle  
Super: Pentecost Testimony  
and tongues gift  
Catalyst: Peter preaching  
Event: Revival message  
Fruit: Repentance/baptism

#### 5 Simon and the Samaritans (Acts 8:1-18)

Prep: Preaching/Healings  
Super: Healings and truth  
Catalyst: Philip  
Event: Relationships over time  
Fruit: The presence of the HS

#### 4 The Colonnade Crowd (Acts 5:14)

Prep: Preaching/Healings  
Super: Healing and truth  
Catalyst: The Apostles  
Event: Healing service  
Fruit: Faith increased

#### 3 The Daily Disciples (Acts 2:47)

Prep: Pentecost/Ministry  
Super: Love and truth  
Catalyst: Relationships  
with truth  
Event: Random times  
Fruit: Praising God

### How does a person get saved?

- There is NO specific formula for time, method, or message
- There is definite preparation by the Holy Spirit as God seeks to save people
- There is a Catalyst person or persons
- There is a supernatural (unusual) proof of God's presence
- There is a Catalyst moment – crisis/decision
- There is fruit of a Direction and Devotion change

## I. Saul's Conversion (9:1 - 9)

### Verse 1

Meanwhile, (point to scene change)

Saul (Saulos = “desired”) was still breathing out  
murderous threats

against the Lord's disciples.

He went to the high priest (Caiaphas)

### Verse 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.

The early name of the movement is  
called “the way” from Jesus' words in  
John 14:6 – “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life”.

This is Paul's first missionary journey! As a missionary for the  
Jews! His method was force! This six day journey proves Paul  
commitment to this cause!



### Verse 3

As he neared Damascus  
on his journey,  
suddenly (exaiphnes – unexpected)  
a light from heaven  
flashed around him.

In Acts 26:13, Paul reports that  
this happened to him at “mid-day” and  
this light was “brighter than the sun”.



#### Verse 4

He fell to the ground  
and heard a voice say to him,  
“Saul, Saul,  
*why do you persecute* (dioko = to cause others to  
flee/pursue) *me?*”

**Note:** The rabbis of Paul’s day did not believe that God still spoke to men directly as in the days of the prophets. I think Paul learned differently today!

“Saul, Saul” is a cry of deep emotion. (Lk. 10:41; Matt. 23:37)

Saul is persecuting GOD not men!

#### Verse 5

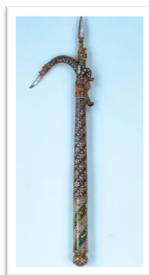
1) “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, (direct answer – identified speaker)  
*whom you are persecuting*,” he replied.

[It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” So he, trembling and astonished, said, 2) “Lord, what do you want me to do?”]

Again we find an “insertion” that is included in the KJV but is NOT found in the oldest manuscripts found in history. Usually, Bible translators use the “shortest is more accurate” principle. A scribe is more likely to add words rather than delete them! This phrase comes from Acts 26:14 where Paul retells the story.

A goad is a metal pointed stick (like a stirrup) that is used for disciplining animals.



**This is two of the most important questions for all of us!**

#### Verse 6

“*Now get up and go  
into the city,  
and you will be told  
what you must do.*”

What God called Paul to do is limited to this moment! We would like to know the “long range view” but God usually gives us the “short term steps”. (Psalm 119:105 – Thy word...is a light unto my path)

#### Verse 7

The men traveling with Saul  
stood there speechless; (eneos = unable to speak from  
terror)  
they heard the sound (phone = voice)  
but did not see anyone.

The evidence is mixed. The companions did not see Jesus, they heard a voice, they were unable to speak and they say the results in the face of Paul.

#### Verse 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.

The supernatural element in this story includes 1) the light, 2) the voice, 3) the force of terror, and 4) the blindness of Paul.

Another factor in this Catalyst moment is the humiliation factor of Paul – a man who boasts of his credentials and strength.



#### Verse 9

For three days

- 1) he was blind,
- 2) and did not eat or drink anything.

God often takes us to places where we separate from the world and fast from food in order to receive His message.

Wouldn't you love to know what Paul was thinking and feeling during these three days? I believe he was dying to self and preparing for his resurrection.



## I. Saul's Healing (9:10 - 19)

### Verse 10

In Damascus

there was a disciple named Ananias. (Hananiah = Heb. = "whom Jehovah has graciously given")

The Lord called to him

in a vision, (horama = sight given though dream state)  
"Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered. ["Here I am, Lord"]

Ananias was a "disciple" which means that he was a part of "The Way" which means that he is Paul's mortal enemy!

**"Behold! I am here! Lord" = idou ego kyrios**

- 1) Can you hear the voice of God's Spirit?
- 2) Do you know how to answer?

### Verse 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."

Paul, being an orthodox Jew, would have known how to pray in a more ceremonial way. I have a feeling this was not so formal and trivial at this time.

Imagine yourself in Ananias' shoes – you have been sent to the man who was sent from Jerusalem to kill you! How would you feel? Would you question God's direct call?

I have often wondered about Judas as well, he was obviously a Jewish person and in support of Paul and his companions.

### Verse 12

In a vision (horama)

he has seen a man

named Ananias

- 1) come
- 2) and place his hands on him  
to restore his sight." (anablepo = to recover ones ability to see clearly)

Ananias has already been announced to Paul! God confirms his call with evidence!

Now he has to Go and Do what God expects – no matter the personal costs.

It is interesting that Paul has to submit to this stranger from "The Way" to receive his healing. Paul had come to Damascus to "lay hands" on his enemies, now they are laying hands on him!

### Verse 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.*

Don't you love how we feel like we need to inform God about what is really happening here on earth! Does God realize what he asking us to do? Is The Father concerned about our personal costs in this situation? I'm sure the Christians in Damascus have been praying for Paul's destruction – not that he might be healed!

### Verse 14

*And he has come here*

*with authority*

*from the chief priests*

*to arrest all*

*who call on your name."*

### Verse 15

But the Lord said to Ananias,

**"Go!"**

[for] – rational argument

Did God have to use a human agent? No – He chose to use a simple man who was willing. If God had spoken through a prominent person, Paul would have been commissioned by them instead of God!

*This man is my chosen instrument* (ekloge skeuos = by action of God's free will and purpose a vessel is selected)

*to proclaim* (bastazo = to carry/lift) **my name**

1) *to the Gentiles* (ethnos = the nations)

2) *and their kings*

3) *and to the people of Israel.*

Verse 16

*I will show him* (hypodeiknymi = reveal the future as in prophecy)  
*how much he must suffer* (pascho = The pain of experience)  
*for my name.”*

As we know from the other Books of the Bible, Paul did suffer a great deal for the name of Christ.

Verse 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.”



The Spirit enters ONLY into believers! Therefore, we have to assume that Paul understands and accepts Jesus as Messiah, Christ, and Lord! Paul knew law, but now he knows grace!

Verse 18

Immediately,

something like scales (lepis = flakes, peelings)  
fell from Saul’s eyes,  
and he could see again.

He got up and was baptized,

“scales” appears to be physical.

Again, a person cannot be baptized unless they profess their faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is clear that Paul has all the signs of a believer!

Verse 19

and after taking some food,  
he regained his strength.  
Saul spent several days  
with the disciples in Damascus.

What an amazing transformation!

Questions remain:

- What about his companions?
- What did the High Priests have to say?
- What about Judas the home owner?