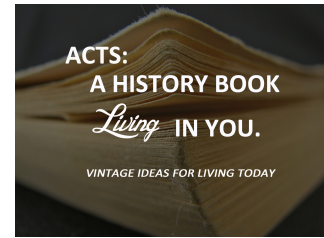


Part 13

The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1 –19



3. A Radical *New Relationship* (vs. 17 – 19)

¹⁷ So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. ¹

⁹ Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength.

Some remarkable things happen here:

- Ananias lays his *hands on him*
- calls him *brother*
- and *baptizes* him

¹Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest 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. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

⁵ “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.

⁶ “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ So Saul got up from the ground, but although his eyes were open, he could see nothing. Leading him by the hand, his companions brought him into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he could not see, and he neither ate nor drank anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered.

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. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

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. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

¹⁵ But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

¹⁷ So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ Instantly something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. ¹⁹ Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength.

Recommended Reading:

- C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
- C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*

“I am a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia” – Acts 21:39

“I was born a citizen” – Acts 22:28

“Saul, who is also called Paul” – Acts 13:9

“A Hebrew of Hebrews” – Philippians 3:5

“As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue” – Acts 17:2

“In person he is unimpressive” – 2 Corinthians 10:10 (NIV)

“I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees” – Acts 23:6 (NIV)

ELEMENTS OF CONVERSION

1. Collision with the *Untamed God* (vs. 1 – 5)

¹Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest ²and 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. ³As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He *fell to the ground* and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

⁵“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

The key to understanding salvation: “Who are you?”

2. *Paradigm Shift* (vs. 6 – 9)

⁶“Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.” ⁷The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸So Saul got up from the ground, but although his eyes were open, he could see nothing. Leading him by the hand, his companions brought him into Damascus. ⁹*For three days he could not see, and he neither ate nor drank anything.*

Saul was rethinking his understanding of God

Paul was also rethinking his understanding of who he was

Acts 26:14 – . . . I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”

Acts 5:38 & 39 — ³⁸“So my advice is, leave these men alone. Let them go. If they are planning and doing these things merely on their own, it will soon be overthrown. ³⁹But if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God!”

Philippians 3:4 – 6 – ⁴If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. (NIV)

Romans 7:24 & 25 — ²⁴Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? ²⁵Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Philippians 3:7 – 9 – ⁷I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. ⁸Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ ⁹and become *one* with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God’s way of making us right with himself depends on faith. (NLT)