

Saul's Conversion Acts 9:1-22

I. Intro

- A. Happy Mother's Day!
- B. Today we celebrate salvation, rescue, and hopeless cases.
- C. Have you ever given up on someone?
 1. As we read the story of the conversion of Saul, we are reminded that there is no reach that is too far for God
 2. God rescues Saul, the church, and the gentiles in this story.
- D. Saul was feared by the church, and then met Jesus!

II. Text

- A. Verses 1-9
 1. Saul: his Hebrew name, Paul, his greek name
 - a) Many people had their name changed by God in scripture: Abram (Abraham), Jacob (Israel), for God's purposes in better identifying who they are.
 - b) Saul is the Jewish name, Paul was never dictated as name change by God, Paul was simply the Greek name that was the same as Saul in the Hebrew.
 - c) My favorite modern example of this is in Spanish: Santiago is the same as James in English
 2. Saul was persecuting the church, and does not try to defend his actions.
 3. Saul recognizes the LORD and is powerless in His presence
- B. Verses 10-16
 1. Ananias was given the task that no one in the church would have signed up for
 2. Ananias properly labels Saul as "Evil" due to the actions regarding the church
- C. Verses 17-19
 1. Ananias deals with Saul with kindness, calls him brother Saul
 2. Ananias explains his role, in obedience, and sees God work
 3. Saul was baptized, then ate
- D. Verses 19-22
 1. Saul immediately began to preach and teach Jesus is the Son of God
 2. Saul went from murderous threats to proclamation of hope by the power of God

III. Point

- A. Evil is Powerless
 1. The "Problem of Evil" is a theological discussion that continues on.
 - a) The key to understanding "Evil" is understanding the "Will" of Man
 - (1) Never underestimate the depravity of the "Will" and "Mind" of man
 - (2) Romans 1:30: slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, **inventors of evil**, disobedient to parents,
 - (3) People have a sin problem, people have a will problem
 - b) God allows people to choose disobedience: Romans 1:24 God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity
 2. Evil is not an equal and opposing force to God.
 - a) The philosophy of Yin/yang may be true in some aspects of life,
 - b) But it is not true regarding the One True God
- B. Providence is Powerful
 1. Providence definition (Webster): divine guidance or care
 2. God intervened in Saul's life
 3. God provided for the next mission of the early church:
 4. Think of the logic here:
 - a) God chose Saul for ministry
 - b) Specifically ministry to the gentiles

- c) God chose the Pharisee of all Pharisees, the most religious Jewish keeper of the law, to reach the Gentiles
 - d) Gentiles were not considered “dogs” by the Jews.
 - e) God sent the most Lilly white keeper of the law from the perspective of the Jews, to reach those that he had previously looked down upon as almost subhuman.
5. What a power statement of God’s providence!
- a) God cared for us so much
 - b) That he saved a terrorist
 - c) Filled him with the Holy Spirit
 - d) And sent him on the mission to reach the nations!
6. THERE IS NO PERSON BEYOND THE REACH OF GOD
- a) Saul was the most unlikely candidate, but here we are today!
 - b) The person you are grieving over is not beyond the reach of God!
 - c) FACT
- C. Proclamation is Powerful
- 1. Paul Proclaimed JESUS
 - 2. His reputation preceded Him
 - 3. Know this:
 - a) A reputation is hard to overcome
 - b) A testimony will be SEEN and HEARD
 - c) Proclamation will be powerful as God overcomes reputation with testimony
 - 4. When you have a life changing experience and, people need to hear the story, and see the story.
 - 5. When you speak of what you know to be true about God, you have just entered into supernatural ministry!

IV. Close