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Beyond the Walls – Saul’s Conversion

Acts 9:1-31

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week we will pick up in Acts where we left off last summer. In the first part of our Acts series, we saw the early church begin to grow. We also saw the persecution of the church through the stoning of Steven and Saul pursuing the Christians. Now in chapter 9 we will see a significant shift as Saul encounters the Lord, and is confronted about persecuting God’s people. In Saul’s dramatic conversion, God uses a man named Ananias to come pray for Paul. Ananias knew of the evil that Saul had done toward the church, but in obedience to his Lord he goes to meet Saul, the chosen instrument and future of God’s work.

*But Saul became more and more capable,
and was causing consternation among the
Jews who lived in Damascus by proving
that Jesus is the Christ. Acts 9:22*

EXAMINE His Word (Observation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in these passages.

Read Acts 9:1-31 (NET)

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing out threats to murder the Lord's disciples, went to the high priest² and requested letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, either men or women, he could bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem.³ As he was going along, approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"⁵ So he said, "Who are you, Lord?" He replied, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting!"⁶ But stand up and enter the city and you will be told what you must do."⁷ (Now the men who were traveling with him stood there speechless, because they heard the voice but saw no one.)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 Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias," and he replied, "Here I am, Lord."

¹¹ Then the Lord told him, "Get up and go to the street called 'Straight,' and at Judas' house look for a man from Tarsus named Saul. For he is praying,¹² and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and place his hands on him so that he may see again."¹³ But Ananias replied, "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem,¹⁴ and here he has authority from the chief priests to imprison all who call on your name!"¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before Gentiles and kings and the people of Israel.¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."¹⁷ So Ananias departed and entered the house, placed his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."¹⁸ Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he could see again. He got up

and was baptized,¹⁹ and after taking some food, his strength returned.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus,²⁰ and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "This man is the Son of God."²¹ All who heard him were amazed and were saying, "Is this not the man who in Jerusalem was ravaging those who call on this name, and who had come here to bring them as prisoners to the chief priests?"²² But Saul became more and more capable, and was causing consternation among the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ. **Saul's Escape from Damascus**

²³ Now after some days had passed, the Jews plotted together to kill him,²⁴ but Saul learned of their plot against him. They were also watching the city gates day and night so that they could kill him.²⁵ But his disciples took him at night and let him down through an opening in the wall by lowering him in a basket.

²⁶ When he arrived in Jerusalem, he attempted to associate with the disciples, and they were all afraid of him, because they did not believe that he was a disciple.²⁷ But Barnabas took Saul, brought him to the apostles, and related to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.²⁸ So he was staying with them, associating openly with them in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord.²⁹ He was speaking and debating with the Greek-speaking Jews, but they were trying to kill him.³⁰ When the brothers found out about this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹ Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria experienced peace and thus was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, the church increased in numbers.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?
5. What is emphasized?
6. What is in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?
7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

③ **EMBRACE His Word (Application)**

Why does this MATTER to me?

13. Ananias played a small but important role in Saul's conversion because he was faithful to the Word of God. His contribution helped convert Saul who becomes one of the most prolific missionaries ever. How could your faithfulness make an impact like Ananias?

14. What are some things we all need to be willing to do in order to be used by God like Ananias was?

15. Share if there is a time when you have been a part of someone coming to know Christ.

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to **KNOW**, to **FEEL**, and to **DO**...

SERMON NOTES