

**Acts 9:1-31 (#15) 8.2.20 (20059)**  
**Crucial Conversion**

**I. Saul's conversion is one of the most important events in world history.**

- A. It is recorded three times in Acts (chapters 9, 22, 26).
  - 1. This must indicate something of its importance.
- B. It is among the strongest evidences for the resurrection of Christ.
  - 1. There is no other explanation for Saul's radical and immediate conversion, from arch-enemy of the gospel to staunch evangelist and apologist for it, other than what he himself claims—He saw the risen Lord.
- C. It is the foundational witness to Paul's apostolic authority. 1 Cor.15:1-11
  - 1. Clearly it says that the risen Christ himself commissioned Paul as an apostle.
- D. And Paul's voice for Christ's gospel changed world history. Rom.1:16-17
  - 1. Romans alone changed the face of western civilization through the Reformation.

**II. Acts 9:1-31.**

- A. The Criminal: Saul of Tarsus is a really bad religious man.
  - 1. The terror of the Church. See 7:58-8:3 savaged the church ...
- B. The Confrontation. Paul is stopped in his tracks 3-8
  - 1. I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.
    - a) To attack a Christian or the Church is to attack the Lord personally. *He takes it personally.* (2 Thess.1:5-10)
- C. The Conversion. Paul gets born again. 10-20.
  - 1. Why did Ananias need to be involved?
    - a) Because God uses believers to bring new ones in. It's His way
- D. The Confirmation: talking about Jesus and being hated for it. 21-31
  - 1. He immediately began to talk convincingly about Jesus as the Christ. 20-22
    - a) Proving that Jesus was the Christ.
  - 2. He very soon experienced strong (life-threatening) opposition. 23-30
    - a) The right kind of opposition is a good sign.
- E. The Conclusion: the gospel continues to penetrate the world 31.
  - 1. The Church had peace and was being built up, multiplying.
    - a) Growing spiritually and numerically

### III. What did Jesus Christ do to Saul to make him a disciple? 4 Things:

#### A. He revealed to him that He is the resurrected Messiah (Christ). Acts 9:4 Gal.1:16

1. The resurrection is the key to everything. Rom.10:9-10
2. If he is the risen Lord of the universe, then the whole gospel is true (1 Cor.15)
  - a) All other religions and philosophies are at best partial and inadequate
  - b) Many other theological issues are secondary.
3. There is plenty of evidence, but it is also a revelation. Gal.1:16; Matt.16:17

#### B. He convinced him that he was evil. Rom. 1-3, 3:23.

1. **1 Tim.1:12-17.** Rom. 3:23; 1 Cor.15:8-11. Lk.11:13
  - a) Ignorant, unbelieving, blaspheming, persecuting, opposing
  - b) Insolent opponent = insulting, violent opposer, a bully.
  - c) *We cannot simply add Jesus to an otherwise ignorant and unbelieving worldview. He is the center or nothing at all.*
2. **Religion rejects this. *We can rescue ourselves through religious actions.***
  - a) People are sinful, yes, but *they can change their own status and character with God by application of certain rules and regulations, especially those that come from the Bible*
  - b) Saul completely let go of this. (Gal.1)
3. **Secularism rejects this: *we don't need rescued. We just need better politics.***
  - a) Humans are basically good already. (not fallen or evil really)
    - (1) So, all they need is education and money (yours)
  - b) Life in this age is all there is. All that really matters.
    - (1) God does not exist and there is no eternal judgment for evil committed in this age. Hell.
    - (2) The absence of the knowledge of hell contributes to the evil that humans do. Ecc. 8:11
  - c) So, it's up to us to force utopia on everybody.
    - (1) any violence is justified if it promotes our view of utopia.
    - (2) Marxism in Russia, Nazism in Germany, Communism in Cambodia (Pol Pot).
    - (3) There are forces in our own country that believe these things.
4. ***The problem with the world is not simply politics—it is our heart...***

#### C. He transformed him by putting the Spirit in him. Titus 3:3-7

1. Born again. Regeneration by the Spirit.; Jn.3:1-15; 1 Pet. 1:3,23; Jn.3:3, 7; Jn.6:63
2. He transformed Saul instead of killing him. This is what he does for all who come to him.

#### D. He forgave him for all his sin and evil. Rom.7:21-8:2

1. The Lord is gracious and intends to save all who come to him. Eph.2:1-10; Jn.6:37.
2. The purpose of the gospel is to rescue people from their sin and the destiny of punishment.