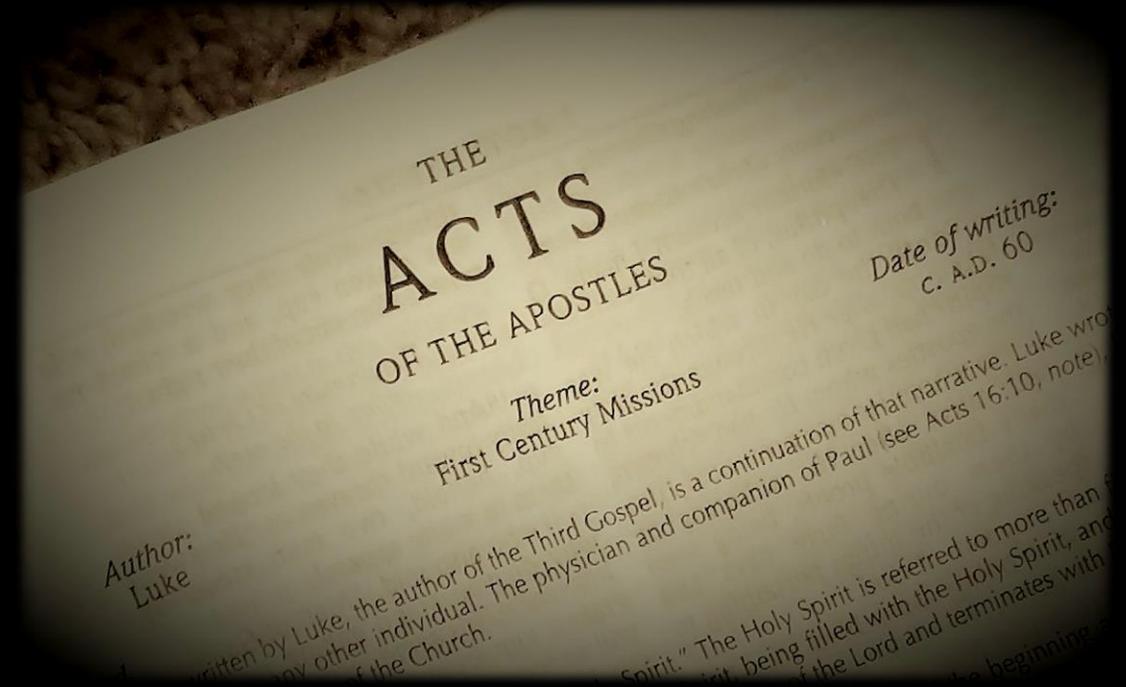


# Verse by Verse

## Acts 9



# Previously in Acts

## Previously in Acts

- In Acts 7, Stephen gave his defense before the Sanhedrin, which ended with the following.
- Acts 7:58 (ESV)

Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul.

- Then we moved into Acts 8.

# Previously in Acts

- Acts 8:1-3 (ESV)

And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

<sup>2</sup> Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. <sup>3</sup> But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.

# Acts 9 Introduction

## Acts 9 Introduction

- Acts 9 picks up with the next step in Saul's life.
- Christ appears to him on the road to Damascus, which brings about Saul's conversion.
- We will then check in again with Peter whose miracle-working ministry is still continuing.
- With all of this Luke is preparing us for the expanded witness of the church to the nations of the world.

# Acts 9 Key Verse

## Acts 9 Key Verse

- Acts 9:31 (ESV)

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

# Acts 9 Outline

# Acts 9 Outline

1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9
2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a
3. Saul Proclaims Jesus 9:19b-22
4. Saul Escapes 9:23-25
5. Saul in Jerusalem 9:26-31
6. Peter and Aeneas 9:32-35
7. Peter and Tabitha 9:36-43

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9

- 9:1-2 the high priest the priests were Sadducees.
- Saul, the young Pharisee and fanatic, led the way in the Sanhedrin's persecution of Christ's followers.
- They did not always work together well, but it seems both groups felt threatened by the early church.

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9



*But fanaticism is always a compensation for hidden doubt. Religious persecutions occur only where heresy is a menace.*

*– Carl Jung (1875 – 1961),  
Analytical Psychology and  
Education, p.81*

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9

- 9:3-7 Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? ... I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.
- Jesus Christ fully identifies with us, his people.
- To attack Christ's followers is to attack the Lord himself.

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9

- 9:8-9 Saul left Jerusalem for Damascus as the aggressor, ready to teach these heretics a lesson.
- He arrives there completely humbled.
- Unable to see, he has to be led there by the hand.
- God certainly has a way of stopping us in our tracks when he has something important to say to us.

# 1. Jesus and Saul 9:1-9

- The **conversion of Saul** is a turning point in the history of the early church.
- Luke will repeat it for us **two more times** in **Acts 22** and **Acts 26**.
- The whole idea of **conversion** needs to be emphasized in the church today.
- We will bring out a few important points at the end of this message.

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

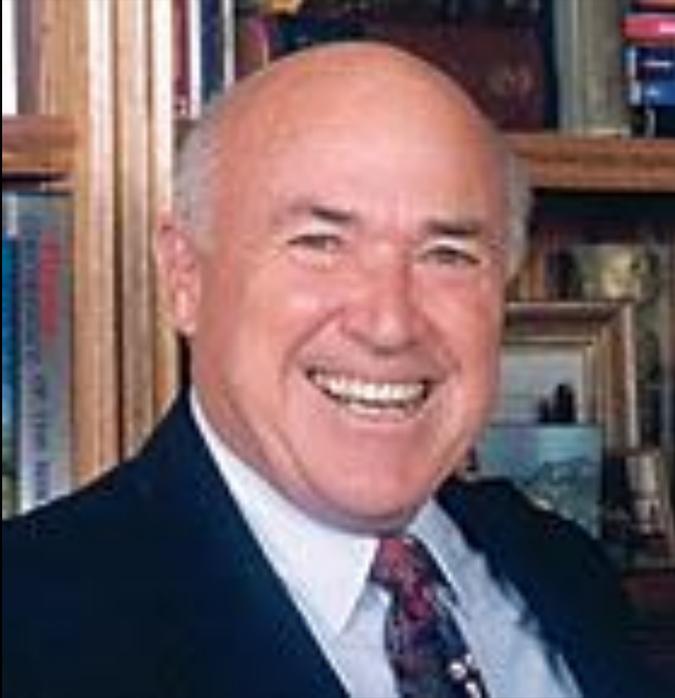
## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- 9:10-12 We know almost nothing about the two disciples mentioned here, **Ananias and Judas**.
- Yet they each played an important role in the conversion of Saul, who became a great apostle.
- We might compare them with **Mordecai Ham**.

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- Mordecai Ham is the evangelist God used to bring Billy Graham to faith when Graham was 16.
- Every single believer is important to God.

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a



*9:13 This is the first time believers are called “saints” ... As far as God is concerned, you who are followers of Jesus Christ are saints. You don’t have to be canonized to be a saint. As a believer in Jesus Christ, you are one.*

*– Pastor Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013),  
Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa*

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- 9:16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.
- This is probably not the kind of promise we want to see on the day of our conversion.
- Yet Saul, who caused many to suffer was destined to suffer much himself for the cause of Christ.

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 (ESV)

<sup>23</sup> Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup> Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea <sup>26</sup> on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers ...

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 (ESV)

... danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; <sup>27</sup> in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup> And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

## 2. Saul in Damascus 9:10-19a

- 9:17-19 Brother Saul These words must have been so strange for Saul to hear.
- He was now officially a follower of Jesus Christ.
- Ananias prayed for him and baptized him.
- Saul received his sight and began eating again.
- We will focus on the idea of conversion a bit later.

### 3. Saul Proclaims Jesus 9:19b-22

### 3. Saul Proclaims Jesus 9:19b-22

- This must have been a shocking development for the synagogues in Damascus.
- Saul was trained as a rabbi in Jerusalem under **Gamaliel**, one of the greatest rabbis of his day.
- Once he trusted Jesus, it was a small step to now use the Scriptures, “**proving that Jesus was the Christ.**”

## 4. Saul Escapes 9:23-25

## 4. Saul Escapes 9:23-25

- 9:23 When many days had passed
- In **Galatians 1**, Paul mentions that it was three years before he went back to Jerusalem.
- This three years included time outside Damascus in Arabia.

## 4. Saul Escapes 9:23-25

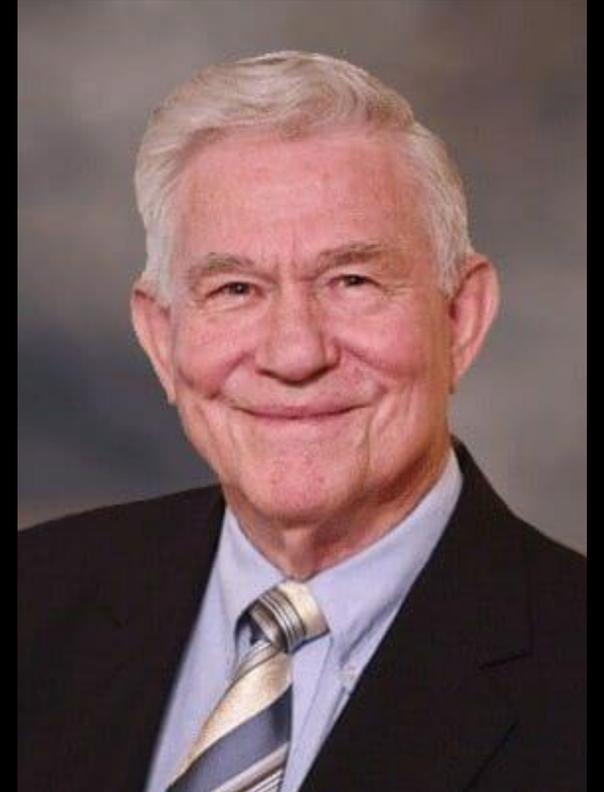
- 9:25 Elsewhere he also describes his escape, in which (significantly!) he was helped by his disciples.
- 2 Corinthians 11:32-33 (ESV)

<sup>32</sup> At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas was guarding the city of Damascus in order to seize me,  
<sup>33</sup> but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall and escaped his hands.

## 4. Saul Escapes 9:23-25

*The apostle was in the city teaching and setting an example of witnessing before the church, but the real evangelizing of the area came through those persons Paul was discipling, who in turn were reaching others.*

*– Robert Coleman,  
in The Master Plan of Discipleship.*



## 5. Saul in Jerusalem 9:26-31

## 5. Saul in Jerusalem 9:26-31

- Saul left Jerusalem as a persecutor.
- He now becomes the persecuted, with the Hellenists “seeking to kill him.” (v.29)
- The church in Jerusalem sends him away to Tarsus, which was Saul’s hometown in modern Turkey.
- We can thank God for Barnabas who made sure Saul was accepted by the church.

## 5. Saul in Jerusalem 9:26-31

- Luke likes to add these marker verses to tell us that the church kept growing against all odds.
- **Acts 9:31** (ESV)

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

## 6. Peter and Aeneas 9:32-35

## 6. Peter and Aeneas 9:32-35

- **Lydda** is between Jerusalem and the coast.
- We do not know if **Aeneas** was a believer before this time, but many turned to Christ once he was healed.
- The Lord worked many miracles through Peter, a fact which is related to the final story in our chapter.

## 7. Peter and Tabitha 9:36-43

## 7. Peter and Tabitha 9:36-43

- 9:36 A footnote in the [ESV Bible](#) explains, *The Aramaic name **Tabitha** and the Greek name **Dorcas** both mean *gazelle*.*
- If you are looking biblical names for your baby girl, of the two, I would personally recommend [Tabitha](#).

## 7. Peter and Tabitha 9:36-43

- 9:40 Compare this verse and the story in which Jesus heals the daughter of Jairus in Capernaum.

- Mark 5:40-41 (ESV)

... But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. <sup>41</sup> Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise."

## 7. Peter and Tabitha 9:36-43

- All of this sets us up for the further growth and expansion of the church.
- In **Acts 10** we will find **Peter** still in **Joppa**, from where he will be called to **Caesarea**.
- In **Acts 11**, **Barnabas** will get **Saul** from **Tarsus** and bring him to **Antioch**.

# Acts 9    What We Just Read

# Acts 9    What We Just Read

1. Jesus and Saul                    9:1-9
2. Saul in Damascus                9:10-19a
3. Saul Proclaims Jesus            9:19b-22
4. Saul Escapes                      9:23-25
5. Saul in Jerusalem                9:26-31
6. Peter and Aeneas                 9:32-35
7. Peter and Tabitha                 9:36-43

# Acts 9    Key Verse

## Acts 9    Key Verse

- Acts 9:31 (ESV)

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

# Acts 9    A Few Notes on Conversion

## Acts 9    A Few Notes on Conversion

1. Conversion is the result of **God's initiative**, not ours.
2. There needs to be **a personal encounter with Christ**.
3. From our side, there is **an act of surrender**.
4. Conversion is **individual**, but **never individualistic**.
5. Conversion **connects us** with Christ and Christians.
6. It **directs us** (eventually) to some form of ministry.
7. It is **not always dramatic** but it will change your life.

# Acts 9    A Prayer

# Acts 9    A Prayer

- Heavenly Father,
- We thank you first and foremost for the work you did so long ago, by bringing both Peter and Paul to a saving knowledge of Christ.
- We thank you also for the work of Dr. Luke, who wrote so much of the New Testament for our benefit.

# Acts 9    A Prayer

- As we think of Saul's conversion and the commitment of the early church we see so many ways that we are lacking.
- Please renew us, restore us and fill us with your Spirit, so that we might be involved in multiplying disciples even as the early church did so well.
- In Christ,
- Amen

# Acts 9    References

1. Evans, Tony; CSB Bibles by Holman. *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary*. B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.
2. Fernando, A. (1998). *Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.
3. Marshall, I. H. (1980). *Acts: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 5). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
4. Polhill, J. B. (1992). *Acts* (New American Bible Commentary, Vol. 26). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
5. Stott, J. R. W. (1994). *The message of Acts: the Spirit, the church & the world*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.