

Acts 9:1-9 ----

The Play: Surrender

ACT I. Stephen...and His Display of Courage in the Face of Death

(Already Completed)...Minor player: Paul

ACT II. Philip Preaches Under Heavy Persecution.... but acts with courage in the face of danger...

Wins Converts...and has Peter and John come to Samaria to Confirm conversion experience

Scene 1. (Samaritans)..and Simon, the Sorcerer

Scene 2. Ethiopian Eunuch converted and baptized

Scene 3. Philip transported miraculously...

Already Completed:

***ACT III. Scene 1.**

- **Saul's Consistent Commitment to Carrying out Vengeance Against the Followers of Christ (The Way).**

Scene 2.

Encounter = Conviction and Convincing...

Reality Sets In.

Paul did not have a sudden conversion...He had a sudden surrender.

After Act I.....Paul's mind probably could not understand how a man could die believing in something that was so against all that Paul had been brought up to believe...

In his mind he was probably wondering, "How could a bad man die like that?"

To ease his conscience, he plunged into the most violent attacks and action possible.

- **First, he persecuted the Christians in Jerusalem**
- **2nd, he went to the Sanhedrin to get permission to go into Damascus, seek out the fleeing Christians and extradite them back to Jerusalem.**

Jerusalem to Damascus...140 miles (7 day journey)

Paul walked alone....accompanied by officers of the Sanhedrin (Police Force).

Why did Paul walk alone?

Paul was visited by Jesus...Paul knew that he was guilty...Paul knew that he had been wrong...Paul knew that he must obey.

Blind Saul (Paul) surrendered to the calling of the Lord. He went into Damascus...not in an avenging fury...but, blind, led by the hand, and helpless.

Notice, up to this time Paul had been:

- **Doing what he liked**
- **What he thought best**
- **What his will dictated.**

From this time forward, Paul would be told what to do.

The Christian is a man who:

- **Has ceased to do what he wants to do**
- **Has begun to do what Christ wants him to do.**

Are we there yet?

What do we need to do to get there?

Acts 9:10-19

Ananias is one of the forgotten heroes of the Christian Church.....

- **The Church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen**
- **The Church owes evangelism to the Gentiles to Peter and Paul**
- **The Church owes Ananias for being willing to follow the Lord's call and humbling Paul to the point of being a willing and acceptable vessel to be used for God's work.**
- **The Christian owes Salvation to a Father and Son that gave their all.**

Paul started to witness for Jesus (Acts 9:19-22)

Note:Paul preached in Damascus (3 years, Galatians 1:18).

Paul Escapes a Plot to Kill Him....Acts 9:23-25

This incident was:

- **A Witness to Paul's Courage**
Remember Stephen
- **A Witness to the Effectiveness of Paul's Preaching**
Remember...
 - **No one persecutes a man who is ineffective**
 - **The biggest compliment you can pay an author is to burn his books**
 - **Counterfeit Christianity is always safe; real Christianity is always in peril.**

Acts 9:26-31

We might be in peril...we might be persecuted....But, we will win!

Why?

- * We walk in the fear of the Lord
 - * We walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit!
- Does the Church stand in fear today?**
Why?
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Peter Calls Out to Jesus for His Healing Power.... Acts 9:32-43

Have you ever called out to Jesus for His Healing Power?

Was it in desperation...last chance effort.....or was it from a faith that has grown through reading the Word, soaking in the Word, and acting on the Word ?

In the scripture read (9:32-43), What was the source of Peter's power? Jesus Christ.. through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Too many times we think too much of what we can do and too little of What Christ can do through us.

The Christians at Lydda are called "saints." Also, the Christians in Jerusalem (v.13) were called "saints."

Paul used this same word to describe the church member(s)—"to the saints" at such and such a place.

The Greek word used here is "hagios"...which properly translates as "holy" or "different."

Actually, the Church member ought to be "saintly"; "holy" and "different."

Different only in that we are here for a purpose....being a peculiar people, set apart to do God's work. You see, God works through people. Peter only did what he was commanded to do...but, more than that, He chose to do it as he realized that he was chosen for a purpose.

Two miracles....the healing power of Jesus.

- Aeneas...a paralyzed man for 8 years...walked at the name of Jesus
- Tabitha/Dorcas (Hebrew/Greek) means Gazelle..was raised from the dead at the name of Jesus.

The critical point here is that both Aeneas and Tabitha were immediately healed....because they immediately responded in faith.

Acts 10:1 - 8

This passage of Scripture is a turning point in the history of the Church.

For the first time a Gentile is to be admitted into its fellowship.

Who was Cornelius?

- ***A Roman centurion stationed at Caesarea, the headquarters of the government of Palestine. Century..same as a company...Centurian (same as a Sargeant Major)...back bone of the Roman Army....A good leader with a steady and prudent mind***
- ***A God-fearer..remember, Gentiles who were weary of the gods and the immoralities and had attached themselves to the Jewish religion. Were not circumcised and under the laws of the strict Jewish person...but, attended the synagogue and believed in one God. A God seeker.***
- ***A man given to charity...characteristically kind. His search for God made him love mankind.***
- ***A man of prayer. When you pray to a God who is the God...He takes notice.***

Acts 10:9-43

Lessons Learned...Lessons Taught...Lessons Caught!

Lessons Learned (10:9-33)

Peter learned that what God makes clean...is clean.

- ***Peter stayed with a “tanner” (10:5; 9:43)....who worked with the dead bodies of animals, which made him unclean (Numbers 19:11-13)...Against the Jewish Law.***
- ***Peter was shown in a vision that it was approved to eat that which has been declared unclean (Leviticus 11)...but had been cleansed by God***
- ***Asked the Gentiles (those sent by Cornelius) in to the home he was staying...(Against what the Jewish people believed..that Gentiles were unclean...therefore, set yourselves apart from them). Peter also crossed the threshold of Cornelius.....***

Lessons Taught (10:34-43)....The Heart of the Gospel

The barest summary of what Peter said to Cornelius and those present is the very essence of the first preaching about Jesus...to the Gentiles:

- ***Jesus was sent by God and equipped by Him with the Spirit and with power (God’s gift to men)***
 - ***Jesus exercised a ministry of healing.***
 - ***They crucified him.***
 - ***Jesus rose again.***
 - ***The Christian preacher and teacher is a witness of the resurrection.***
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- *The result of all this is forgiveness of sins and new relationship with God.*

Lessons Caught (10:44-48)

The Gentiles are Taken Into the Fold (Church)

The Gentiles are Baptized in the Spirit

The Gentiles are Baptized into the Church

The Gentiles Have the Same Spirit as those Messianic Jews

Three (3) Interesting and Important Highlights of This Scripture:

1. *The Gentile converts were baptized there and then.*
2. *They asked Peter to wait with them for a few days*
Why? They wanted to be taught some more...
3. *They were Baptized in Holy Ghost*
With the evidence of speaking in tongues.

It is the natural thing when the Holy Ghost comes upon you...These people heard the word of God and was not even taught about speaking in tongues....it is a "prayer language"...no where does it say that there was an interpreter... What is the difference in this type of "Speaking in Tongues"and that which calls for an interpretation?

God provides salvation...God provides healing...God provides the deeper walk...God provides the Son to help us understand it all!!
