Acts 9:1-22

- SALVATION OF SAUL...
 - o Meeting Christ...
 - When SAUL ran out of DISCIPLES in Jerusalem to persecute and imprison...
 - He went to the High Priest and asked for permission to hunt them in Damascus...
 - But as he came near to the city he was surrounded by a BRIGHT light [noon day sun]
 - Jesus asked him: Saul why are you persecuting Me Matthew 25:42
 - It was hard for Saul to kick against the GOAD [death] I Corinthians 15:57
 - God BLINDED Saul to show him he was SPIRITUALLY blind John 9:39
 - o Chosen vessel...
 - God came to a disciples called ANANIAS [God is Gracious]
 - And gave him exact details to go and pray for Saul to receive his sight...
 - ANANIAS had doubts because Saul had a reputation for persecuting Christians...
 - But God said He had chosen Saul to be an Apostle [twelfth] to the Gentiles...
 - And when ANANIAS prayed for him he did receive his sight and was BAPTIZED [before eating]
 - Immediately SAUL began to preach that Jesus is the Christ [Messiah]!
- 1st Impossible to stop... vs. 23-25
 - o 1st Plot to kill... vs. 23
 - Pleasing men...
 - Saul had served beside the Jews under a RELIGIOUS system they both cherished...
 - He advanced beyond all his peers working harder than them all **Philippians 3:5-6**
 - So that by following the rules he had become FAMOUS among the Jews...
 - But FAMOUS among men but it did NOTHING to make him right with God!
 - RELIGION is NOT about pleasing God it is all about LOOKING good...
 - Wearing the right clothes saying the right words following the right traditions...
 - It is all to IMPRESS those around us but it CANNOT save us from our sin!
 - Pleasing God...
 - Now after many days were past the Jews plotted to kill him!
 - The very same men who had PRAISED Saul when he was a Jew...
 - Now sought to KILL him because he was preaching Jesus Christ...
 - Saul rejected RELIGION realizing it kept him from SERVING Christ!
 - Galatians 1:10 "If I still pleased men I would not be a bondservant of Christ."
 - People prefer RELIGION to a relationship with Jesus...
 - Because RELIGION can be used to justify their sin...
 - They can do what they want the rest of the week so long as they go to church on Sunday!
 - o 2nd Protected by God... vs. 24-25
 - No worries... vs. 24
 - But their plot became known to Saul!
 - [δέ] BUT their PLAN was made [passive] KNOWN [γινώσκω] to Saul...
 - Saul had no reason to be worried of concerned the Lord was watching out for him!
 - ANXIETY and WORRY come from thinking about things we have NO control over [future]
 - We spend countless hours trying to work out what we should do [but have no answers]
 - The irony about worrying about our problems is it does NOT help...
 - Because we focus on the PROBLEM rather than the SOLUTION...
 - The answer is Jesus He see EVERYTHING and lets us KNOW [passive] what to do!
 - Philippians 4:6 "Do not worry about anything instead pray about everything." [NLT]

- Helping hand... vs. 24-25
 - And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.
 - Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket!
 - The Jews were constantly watching [imperfect] the gates of the city...
 - They even asked the governor to guard it with soldiers II Corinthians 11:32
 - Day and night they were there hoping [subjuntive] to KILL Saul...
 - Therefore the ONLY way out of the city was over the wall [in a BASKET]
 - But Saul could NOT do this himself he needed others to HELP...
 - The DISCIPLES $[\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\dot{\eta}\varsigma]$ came to his aid and made sure he got out safely...
 - What a twist the people Saul used to trust as friends were trying to KILL him...
 - The people Saul used to try and KILL were the ones who SAVED his life!
 - When we chose to LIVE for Jesus those in the world will NOT like it...
 - We may lose friends people who used to LOVE us now HATE us...
 - Because we are NO longer living by their RULES we are following Christ...
 - And since they do NOT want Jesus they will reject us!
 - **John 15:19** "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world but I chose you out of the world therefore the world hates you!"
- 2^{ND} Impossible to silence... vs. 26-31
 - o 1st Bad reputation... vs. 26
 - Not convinced...
 - When Saul had come to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples.
 - But they were all afraid of him and did not believe that he was a disciple!
 - When Saul returned to Jerusalem he TRIED [imperfect] to join in the DISCIPLES [$\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\dot{\eta}\varsigma$]
 - $[\delta \dot{\epsilon}]$ BUT they were ALL $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma]$ including the Apostles afraid [imperfect] of him...
 - Because they did NOT believe [πίστις] he was a DISCIPLE [$\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$]!
 - No words...
 - It had been THREE years since Saul had chosen to follow Jesus Galatians 1:18
 - Rumors had spread the great persecutor of the church got SAVED...
 - But most did NOT believe the man who hunted them to death was a Christian...
 - Rather they FEARED it was a ploy to draw them out and ARREST them...
 - And NOTHING Saul said could convince them they needed to SEE the CHANGE!
 - I knew a man whose wife was a believer and prayed for his salvation EVERY day...
 - Driving home DRUNK one night he almost crashed his car...
 - In that moment he called out to Jesus to SAVE him and became a Christian...
 - He immediately ran home to tell his wife the GREAT news but God stopped him...
 - The Lord spoke to his heart do not TELL your wife SHOW her!
 - After we believe in Jesus people will naturally be skeptical...
 - They will say we are NOT different we are still the same old sinner...
 - And there is NOTHING we can SAY to change their mind...
 - We do NOT need to TELL people we believe in Jesus we need to SHOW them...
 - No matter who we were they will NOT be able to argue with a transformed life!
 - o 2nd New definition... vs. 27
 - Barnabas...
 - But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles!
 - ullet [$\delta \dot{\epsilon}$] But Although everyone else FEARED Saul Barnabas believed he had CHANGED...
 - This is the same Son of encouragement [Barnabas] we read saw **Acts 4:26**
 - He took Saul to the Apostles only Peter and James were there **Galatians 1:18**
 - All Jesus...

- He declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road and that He had spoken to him.
- And how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus!
- Barnabas told the APOSTLES how Jesus had MET and SPOKE to Saul Acts 9:4
- And how Saul had boldly spoken in the name of Jesus in Damascus...
- Notice he NEVER made any references to his past [persecuting the church]
- He only pointed out what Jesus had done in his life...
- Because Barnabas did NOT see who SAUL was he saw what JESUS could do!
- We are NOT to judge each other by our MISTAKES...
- We are not DEFINED by our PAST we are NEW creations in Jesus II Corinthians 5:17
- We are now DEFINED by our Father in heaven the righteousness of Christ!
- o 3rd Bolding preaching... vs. 28-30
 - Another plot... vs. 28-29
 - So he was with them at Jerusalem coming in and going out.
 - And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus.
 - And disputed against the Hellenists but they attempted to kill him!
 - So [καί] Saul became part of the church in Jerusalem [going in and out]
 - He CONTINUED [imperfect] to speak BOLDLY in the name of the Lord [κύριος] Jesus...
 - AND [καί] he began [imperfect] to DISPUTE [συζητέω] with the Hellenists!
 - The same Greek speaking Jews who had DISPUTED [συζητέω] with Steven Acts 6:9
 - Like Steven Saul wanted them to believe in Jesus but had SIMILAR results...
 - The men plotted to KILL Saul the same way they had KILLED Steven...
 - These men did had NOT learned you CANNOT kill the Gospel message...
 - If you knock down one messenger God will just send another!
 - Voltaire was one of the most vocal critics of the Bible during the Enlightenment [late 1700]
 - The Bible is what fools have written what imbeciles commend *Philosophical Dictionary*
 - His house would one day be purchased by Geneva Bible Society!
 - The Gospel is NOT some idea of men it is powered by God and unstoppable!
 - I Peter 1:25 "The word of the LORD endures forever."
 - Called to Gentiles... vs. 30
 - When the brethren found out they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus!
 - It was NOT the believers who discovered the PLOT against Saul...
 - They got him out of the city and took him to Caesarea [port city]
 - From there they sent him back to his home in the city of Tarsus...
 - ullet Where he will stay until Barnabas comes to get him to help in Antioch **Acts 11:25**
 - But it is worth noting the PLOT to kill Saul was revealed by Jesus!
 - Acts 22:18-21 "I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me: Hurry! Leave Jerusalem for the people here will not accept your testimony about me... The Lord said to me: Go for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!"
 - Saul wanted more than anything to be able to reach the JEWS Romans 9:3
 - He assumed that because of his PAST his PERSECUTION of the church...
 - That he had consented to the DEATH of Stephen the Jews would believe him...
 - But God told him they would REJECT him because they did NOT want Jesus...
 - Therefore God would instead use Saul to share the good news with the GENTILES!
 - Just because we REALLY want someone to be saved does NOT mean they will listen...
 - God wants more than anything for EVERYONE to be saved but it is their choice II Peter 3:9
 - All we can do is open the door it is up to the person to choose to step through!
- o 4th Growing church... vs. 31
 - Built up...

- Then the churches throughout all Judea Galilee and Samaria had peace and were edified!
- As a RESULTS of the SALVATION of Saul and his acceptance into the CHURCH...
- ALL of the churches: Judea Galilee and Samaria [that is as far as they had spread]
- Had [imperfect] PEACE [εἰρήνη] the man who led the persecution was now saved...
- EDIFIED [οἰκοδομέω] meaning to build [δῶμα] a home [οἶκος]
- They were BUILT up because God had done the IMPOSSIBLE...
- God had taken their greatest ENEMY and make him a BROTHER!
- When we realize that God can make a murderer into a righteous saint...
- When we see that NOTHING is too difficult to God no one too hard to save...
- Then we will have PEACE in life because we understand Jesus has it all under control!
- Multiplying...
 - Walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit they were multiplied!
 - And because the church was WALKING [present]
 - In the FEAR of the Lord whom they saw could do ANYTHING...
 - And the COMFORT [παράκλησις] of the HOLY Spirit who could change ANYONE...
 - The Lord [passive] was continually [imperfect] MULTIPLYING the church!
 - When the church BELIEVES that NOTHING is impossible for God...
 - When we understand that He can save ANYONE...
 - We are going to step out in FAITH and reach out to EVERYONE...
 - And the results is going to be the Lord [passive] MULTIPLIES His Church!
- 3^{RD} Nothing is impossible... vs. 32-43
 - o 1st Encouraging churches... vs. 32-35
 - Seeing the need... vs. 32-34
 - Now it came to pass as Peter went through all parts of the country.
 - That he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda.
 - There he found a certain man named Aeneas.
 - Who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him:
 - Aeneas Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed. He arose immediately!
 - After the departure of Saul the story shifts back to Peter Acts 10-12
 - Who went down to visit ALL $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma]$ the churches...
 - AND $[\kappa\alpha i]$ when he came to the city of Lydda [near Tel Aviv]
 - There he met AENEAS [praise worthy] he had been PARALYZED [passive] for EIGHT years...
 - Peter said to him Jesus is healing [present] you [indicative] STAND up [imperative]
 - IMMEDIATELY the man stood up and was HEALED!
 - We are NOT told HOW Peter knew Jesus was healing this man...
 - What we do know is that Peter was out walking so he saw the NEED!
 - We do NOT know WHO or WHEN God might want to do a work...
 - But we do know that as we are LOOKING going out to encourage others...
 - We will be ready and available whenever and whenever God comes calling!
 - Turning to God... vs. 35
 - So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord!
 - EVERYONE [$\pi \tilde{\alpha} \zeta$] who lived in Lydda and the surrounding region of Sharon [שָׁרוֹן]
 - TURNED to the Lord [κύριος] when the SAW [εἶδον] the miracle!
 - It ONLY takes a SPARK to set a forest on FIRE...
 - In the same way ONE miracle can start a REVIVAL!
 - People go about their lives with MUNDANE routine [wake up work sleep]
 - What they need is for someone to help them SEE that there is MORE to this life...
 - As we step out in FAITH see the NEED and believe God does MIRACLES...

- We can be used to OPEN their eyes bring REVIVAL to a dying world!
- o 2nd A good woman... vs. 36-37
 - Disciple... vs. 36
 - At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha which is translated Dorcas.
 - This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did!
 - In the city of JOPPA [יָפוֹה] meaning beautiful [modern day Tel Aviv]
 - There was a DISCIPLE [$\mu\alpha\theta$ ήτρια] only women given this title in NT...
 - Here name was TABITHA [אֶבִיָה] or DORCAS [Δορκάς] both mean gazelle...
 - She was ALWAYS [imperfect] going GOOD [$\dot{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\theta\delta\varsigma$] and showing MERCY [$\ddot{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\sigma\varsigma$]
 - HELPING out the poor she even knitted clothes for all the women!
 - Death... vs. 37
 - But it happened in those days that she became sick and died.
 - When they had washed her they laid her in an upper room!
 - BUT [δè] Tabitha got sick and then DIED...
 - They washed her body [preparation for burial] and put her in an UPPER room Acts 1:13
 - I am sure many people asked why did God let such a GOOD woman die!
 - If an ELDERLY person dies it was their time if a BAD person dies they deserved it...
 - Yet if the person is YOUNG or KIND dies we tend to think of it as a tragedy!
 - But for the believer that could not be farther from the truth...
 - Sometime God lets GOOD people die because he wants to bring them HOME...
 - He knows that life in heaven is far better than anything here on earth!
 - **Isaiah 57:1** "The righteous pass away. The godly often die before their time... no one seems to understand that God is protecting them from the evil."
- o 3rd Bold prayer... vs. 38-40
 - Come quickly... vs. 38
 - Since Lydda was near Joppa and the disciples had heard that Peter was there.
 - They sent two men to him imploring him not to delay in coming to them!
 - The DISCIPLES $[\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\dot{\eta}\varsigma]$ heard that Peter was in the nearby city of Lydda...
 - So they sent two men to ask [παρακαλέω] for him to come QUICKLY...
 - Tabitha had LOVED the people so the people were willing to do anything for her!
 - Often we look for others to take care of our needs but there is no connection...
 - It is when we care for others that then in turn care for us!
 - Everybody out... vs. 39-40
 - Peter arose and went with them. When he had come they brought him to the upper room.
 - And all the widows stood by him weeping.
 - Showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.
 - But Peter put them all out!
 - When Peter came into the UPPER room where Tabitha has been laid...
 - ALL $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma]$ of the widows showed him the CLOTHES she had made for them...
 - BUT $[\delta \hat{\epsilon}]$ Peter kicked them ALL $[\pi \tilde{\alpha} \varsigma]$ out perhaps DOUBTING what would happen!
 - There was an evangelist named Smith Wigglesworth [early 1900s]
 - He was asked to pray for a DEAD man he picked him up out of his coffin...
 - Commanded him to STAND he slumped to the ground [two times]
 - The THIRD time the man slumped down half way then stood up!
 - I am NOT sure I would have the confidence to pray for someone who has DIED...
 - Much less try a THIRD time if the first TWO did not work...
 - But praise God it does not take perfect faith for God to do a work just a step of faith...
 - If we have the faith of a mustard seed nothing is impossible Matthew 17:20

- Seen this before... vs. 40
 - [He] knelt down and prayed and turning to the body he said: Tabitha arise.
 - And she opened her eyes and when she saw Peter she sat up!
 - Peter knelt down and PRAYED then turned to the BODY [she was dead]
 - He commanded her to RISE [imperative] it was not a question there was NO more doubt...
 - And she OPENED her eyes saw Peter and say up!
 - If I has been Peter I would have come to COMFORT the church for their loss...
 - But Peter came and PRAYED for Tabitha to come back to LIFE and she DID...
 - Why did Peter believe she could be resurrected because he had seen it before...
 - When Jesus went into the house of Jairus and said little girl get up Mark 5:41
 - It is easy for us to DOUBT what we have NEVER seen...
 - We can look at the circumstances and conclude it is IMPOSSIBLE...
 - Jesus had given us VICTORY over DEATH I Corinthians 15:57
 - But if we do NOT know His WORD we will NOT have FAITH and miss out on the miracles...
 - It has been said SEEING is believing but that is NOT true...
 - It is when we BELIEVE God can do the IMPOSSIBLE that we get to SEE!
- o 4th Greater work... vs. 41-43
 - Many believed... vs. 41-42
 - Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up.
 - And when he had called the saints and widows he presented her alive.
 - It became known throughout all Joppa and many believed on the Lord!
 - Peter called for the SAINTS [ἄγιος] and presented Tabitha ALIVE...
 - EVERYONE heard what happened and MANY came to the Lord...
 - But what was even more amazing was what happened NEXT!
 - The tanner... vs. 43
 - So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon a tanner!
 - It came to pass that Peter STAYED [μένω] in the house of a TANNER...
 - According to the Law a tanner was an UNCLEAN profession **Leviticus 11:35**
 - Therefore it was VERY unusual for Peter [a Jew] to choose to stay in his home...
 - The reason was God was preparing Peter for an even GREATER work...
 - God had used Peter to heal a lame man and even to raise the dead...
 - Now God was going to use Peter to bring the Gospel to the unclean Gentiles!
 - **John 14:12** "He who believes in Me the works I do he will do also and greater works than these he will do."
 - God wants to do a GREAT WORK through our lives...
 - What could be greater than healing the sick raising the dead...
 - If you heal they will get sick again if you raise the dead they die again one day...
 - The greater work is giving the Gospel bringing eternal life that never fades away!