

Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“SAUL: FROM PERSECUTOR OF CHRIST TO PROCLAIMER OF CHRIST”

Discuss

The Saul of Acts 9 can be difficult for us to imagine separately from all that we know about the towering figure of the Apostle Paul. But for a moment let's put aside that knowledge and think about how the Christians in Damascus and Jerusalem viewed him. We know the rest of the story and then some. They knew about a murderous zealot who wanted to stamp out every ember of the Christian faith. Then they were asked to believe the stunning claim that he was no longer a persecutor of Christ, but a proclaimer of Christ.

- 1) Saul knew his history and would later refer to himself as the “worst of sinners.” (1 Tim. 1:15) He didn't hesitate, however, to begin preaching Christ immediately after his conversion (“at once” as the account in Acts 9 tells us).
 - Why was he so bold? Was it just a function of his personality? Or was it a gift from God? See Exodus 4:10-11 and 1 Cor. 2:4 as you consider your answer.
 - What in Saul's past had prepared him to preach, and in particular, had prepared him to be able to “prove that Jesus is the Christ”? (v. 22) See Phil. 3:4-6 and Acts 22:3.
 - What was so offensive about Saul's message that both the Jews in Damascus and the Grecian Jews in Jerusalem wanted to kill him?
- 2) In his journals, John Wesley made numerous entries saying essentially the same thing: “Arrived at _____. People numbering _____ came to hear me. I preached Christ to them.”
 - What does it mean to preach Christ—to preach that “Jesus is the Son of God”? (v. 20) What is the core of that message?
- 3) Saul's early days as a believer were marked by neither safety nor comfort (and, of course, much worse was to come).
 - How do you explain the lack of ease in Saul's life? In Christian life in general?
 - Do you consider the marvelous provisions given to Saul at this time to be enough? Why or why not?
 - How does the story of Saul and his life fit into the story of Acts and the story of Jesus and his church? Does understanding that help us understand the suffering he endured?
 - What will help us to recognize the provisions that God is giving us? In other words, how can we fix our gaze on Jesus and his gifts to us instead of seeing only our suffering? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in all of this? (v. 31)

DATE: March 1, 2020

SPEAKER: Aaron/Frank

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 9:19b-31

Pray

Heavenly Father,

We ask that you would make us a people:

- who die to self and live for you.
- who are not afraid of adversity.
- who desire only inward wealth.
- who do not covet the things of others, but give freely of what you have given us.
- who by compassion are quickly moved to forgive others.
- who study the Bible so that we may be able to water even the driest of hearts with streams from your Word.
- who are learning by the use and trial of prayer that we can obtain what we have requested from you, remembering that you have given us your reply when we cry for help, “Here am I.” (Isa. 58:9)

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

- based on the writings of Gregory the Great (560-604 AD)

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