

Acts of the Holy Spirit
“*God of the Impossible*” – Series

~LET'S PRAY~

NOTE TAKERS...

- I've titled todays message: **The Evidence of Change.**
➤ READ [\(Acts 9:17-22\)](#).

~INTRO~

NOW...

- As we begin our study today...
➤ There has been a big change WITH the persecution of the church.
- **Saul** the chief instigator of persecution... has come to faith in Jesus.

AND THE CHURCH...

- In the surrounding areas... are not sure what to think...
➤ When it comes to trusting him.

SAUL...

- Persecuted the church for nearly 3-years... ¹
➤ And in an instant... his encounter with Christ changed him.
- Jesus told Ananias that Saul [“is a chosen vessel of Mine”](#) (Acts 9:15).

SO... CHRISTIAN...

- As you read your Bible... remember what God has given us.
➤ A written document that tells the big picture of **His story**.

RATHER...

- We have the main story line that continues God's narrative thru time.

IN [\(Acts 9\)](#)...

- We've seen a supernatural work of God...
➤ Followed by basic ministry!

HERE'S A FEW THINGS WE CAN LEARN TODAY:

¹ Swindoll, Charles R.. Insights on Acts copyright © 2016. (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 5) (p. 261). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

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IDEA #1 – MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION: (vv.17-22)

AFTER WE READ ABOUT SAUL'S CONVERSION.

- God recorded the very practical advancement of ministry.
 - We have a picture of an older believer...
 - Wrestling to obey God (Anaias)...
 - As he steps out to serve a younger believer (Saul).

REMEMBER...

- Saul was 28 - 31 yrs. old at this point.
 - And... some think this Ananias...
 - Was a leader in the church at Damascus at the time.²

CHECK THIS OUT...

- With a simple observation we learn...
 - In (vv.10-12) God was at work on both sides of the meeting...
 - Between Saul & Ananias.

IN A VISION...

- Ananias was told to visit Saul...
 - AND in a vision Saul was told ABOUT a visit from Ananias.

SO... **THE LESSON IS...**

- When God calls us to step out...
 - We can trust that He has already prepared the details...
 - On the other side.

NOW LOOKING AT (vv.17-22)...

- Once again... we're reading about the power of God at work...
 - In the life of repentant sinner.

SAUL...

- Is healed by God & filled with the Holy Spirit (v.17).
 - Baptized in (v.18).
 - In (v.19) he spent a few days with the disciples at Damascus.

NOW... FOR YOU BIBLE STUDENTS...

² Information sourced from BibleAsk.org © 2023. Sourced on 09/16/23 from link: <https://bibleask.org/ananias-new-testament/>

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- Take note here!

BETWEEN (v.19) & (v.-20)...

- There are a few opinions about what happened with Saul here.

Option #1 – Chuck Smith (et al) teaches **between** these two verses...

- There is a gap of 3-years as seen in (Gal. 1:15-19).

Option #2 – Charles Swindoll (et al) teaches that between...

- (Acts 9:23) “many days.”
- (Gal 1:17) “went away to Arabia.”
- (Gal 1:17) “returned once more to Damascus.”
- (Acts 9:24-25) escaped from Damascus.

➤ All these events take place within 3-years.

TODAY I'M TEACHING FROM **Option #1**.

- Because Saul was so heavy into the Law...
➤ That any message of grace thru Jesus needed instruction.

AND JUST LIKE IN SEVERAL OTHER PLACES...

- The Bible skips timeframes without notice.

IN (Acts)...

- We're given a picture of 30-years... (thru snapshot narratives)...
➤ So we can capture **the broader story** of how the church started.

NOW...

- It's certain that Paul received both (Galatians) & (Romans)...
➤ During his 3-years in Arabia... as he was taught by the Lord.

AND... (I believe)...

- That the message he preached.

IN... (Romans)

- i. The Sin of man – all have fallen short.
- ii. Justification thru Christ (salvation).
- iii. Sanctification (learning how to walk w/ Jesus).
- iv. Faithfulness of God.

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v. Duty & service of man as a response to God.

IN... ([Galatians](#))

- i. Justification was by faith apart from the law.
- ii. The rule of the believers life is grace not law.
- iii. He presents the life of a person justified by faith in Christ.

BUT IN THE END...

- Just understand that Saul was a changed man...
 - Who now preached GRACE over LAW.

IDEA #2 – PROBLEMS WHILE PREACHING: ([vv.23-29](#))

SAUL WAS A CHANGED MAN...

- In both **Mission & Message**.

YET... THERE WERE MANY PEOPLE...

- Who didn't believe he was a changed man – they doubted his conversion!

SO...

- I think it's helpful to highlight some simple truth here.
 - So OUR **mission & message** is NOT lost.

TRUE REPENTANCE...

- Is NOT just to turn from sin... ONLY to turn back to sin.
 - That's not faith!!!

THE POINT OF REPENTANCE...

- Is to turn from sin ... as we come to Jesus...
 - AND our life continues to turn from sin... as we follow Jesus.

BEFORE JESUS...

- I was stuck in MY sin...
 - AND spiritual dead... to the reality of living apart from God.

SAUL HAD PROBLEMS WITH PREACHING...

- 1) Because of his past reputation... (believers didn't trust him)

AND...

- 2) Because of the message he delivered...

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➤ The enemies of Jesus wanted to kill him.

EVEN THOUGH...

- Saul was a totally new guy because of Jesus!

NONETHELESS...

IDEA #3 – MORE PREPARATION WAS NEEDED: (vv.30-31)

AS OUR STUDY CLOSES...

- Saul escapes death once again and was sent back to Tarsus.
 - He was there another 7-years.

BY WAY OF APPLICATION...

- Maybe you feel like your ministry is a mess!

BE ENCOURAGED...

- Because God is preparing you... for what's ahead.
 - So stay faithful... learn your lessons...
 - And be ready when He calls you!

AMEN!