

Defining Moments

Saul of Tarsus: Damascus Road

Text: Acts 9:1

Paul was a unique individual:

- by birth, a Jew;
- by conviction, a Pharisee;
- by citizenship, a Roman;
- by education, a Greek;
- and then by grace, a Christian.

He became a:

- missionary
- theologian
- evangelist
- pastor
- teacher
- preacher
- leader
- thinker
- statesman
- apostle all at the same time.

“They laid their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.” Acts 7:58

“And Saul approved of their killing him.” Acts 8:1

What do we know about Saul?

Paul’s CV: Philippians 3

- circumcised the eighth day,
- of the nation of Israel,
- of the tribe of Benjamin
- “a Hebrew of Hebrews”
- “as to the law, a Pharisee.”
- “As to zeal, a persecutor of the church”
- “as to the righteousness, which is in the law, found blameless.”

"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities." Acts 26:9-11

Saul's Conversion

1. A Divine Confrontation

"Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' (Vs. 3)

"We all fell to the ground" Acts 26:9

"My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me." Acts 22:9

"The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth." Acts 22.14

2. A Divine Conviction

"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

"If anyone does not love the Lord, let that person be cursed!" 1 Corinthians 16:22

3. A Divine Conversion

'Who are You, Lord?' (Vs.5)

"If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything." 1 John 3:20

"I am Jesus of Nazareth." (vs.5)

4. A Divine Command

"Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (vs.6)

5. A Divine Communion.

“Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.” (Vv.8-9)

Why did God strike him blind?

Epitaph

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Timothy 1:12-17.