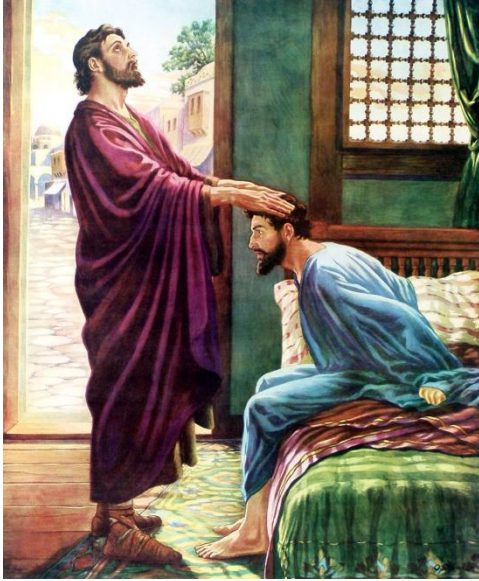


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 2



SAUL'S CONVERSION

Scripture Text: Acts 9:10-22

In the last lesson we learned: Persecution of saints is persecution of Jesus. Jesus sometimes speaks from Heaven to people on earth. A sinner's life, rebelling against the Truth, is a hard conflict. Saul yielded to God, and God led him. Hunger for God can be stronger than hunger for food.

God knows His servants. When He has a work to be done, He puts His hand upon one. He had Ananias at Damascus in the lesson today. Ananias was listening and received a blessing as well as Saul. Sometimes God looks and finds no man. When He needs you and me, will He find us faithful? Or will a work go undone, a soul unsaved, because we were not listening?

MEMORY VERSE: *And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.*

—Acts 9:20

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Isaiah 61** Good tidings of salvation.
- Tue.—**Isaiah 65:1-7** A rebellious people.
- Wed.—**Isaiah 53:1-12** Believe the Gospel.
- Thu.—**Romans 2:1-11** No respect of persons.
- Fri.—**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10** Spreading the Gospel.

Devotional Reading: Romans 10:11-21 Salvation for all.

God Instructs Ananias

Acts 9:10-14 There was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias. He was one God could use. The Lord appeared to him in a vision and told him to go into the street . . . called Straight, to the house of Judas, to Saul, of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth. All with a desire to meet Jesus must be willing to go to Straight Street. Saul had also been given a vision. He was shown beforehand the name of the man and what he would do. Thus both Ananias and Saul were prepared for meeting. God's work is perfect. **Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man.** Saul's reputation was well known among the saints. Ananias questioned the wisdom of meeting with Saul. The evil he had done to the saints at Jerusalem frightened them when they knew he had come to do the same—to bind all that call on thy name—Jesus' name.

A Chosen Vessel

Acts 9:15-16 The Lord said . . . Go thy way. Jesus knew all about Saul. He wanted Ananias to do as told. He explained, he is a chosen vessel unto me. He was to carry Jesus' name to kings, Gentiles, and Israelites. But there were great things he must suffer for the sake of Jesus' name. Christ spoke to Ananias by name. Christianity is a personal matter. God deals with us as individuals. The God who notes the fall of a sparrow knows His children by name. Sometimes we do not like the tasks to which God commissions us, yet we find later that they are the very things we would want most to do if we knew how it would end. Here Ananias was guiding into the church the most influential saint that the church has known through the centuries.

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LESSON 2

Saul Becomes a Brother

Acts 9:17-18 Convinced, Ananias obeyed. The meeting was a loving, tender experience. Conviction had finished its softening work on Saul. He had counted the cost and was ready to pay the price. Ananias put **his hands** on Saul, calling him **Brother Saul**. It must have thrilled Saul's heart. Ananias came in the name of the Lord Jesus and said Jesus sent him. That was his authority. It was also the bond of love between them. The kindly greeting of Ananias and the tenderness of his touch must have convinced Saul that Christians were different from any group of people he had ever dealt with before. He came that Saul might **receive . . . sight**—a physical blessing—**and be filled with the Holy Ghost**—a spiritual blessing. **Immediately** the likeness of scales **fell from his eyes**. On the road his thinking had been changed. For three days he had been counting the cost, praying, yielding all to God, and asking for His directions. As Ananias spoke with him, his faith leaped up and took hold. His heart was open to receive Christ. Now his heart was changed also. His burden of guilt was gone. He was a new man. He **arose, and was baptized**. Saul did not draw back. He bore witness to all by this symbol of death to sin and new life in Christ that had been accomplished in his heart. Saul turned from misguided zeal and adhering to dead religion and following the customs of men and became an Apostle of Christ. His soul was healed. He was no longer the cruel enemy of any man; he was the loving servant of all.

Saul Bears Fruit

Acts 9:19-20 His burden of sin gone, Saul took food, **he was strengthened**. He stayed a time **with the disciples . . . at Damascus**, fellowshiping, learning, rooting in this new soil, and growing. He was not only taking in, he was giving out. **Straightway**—without waiting—**he preached Christ . . . that he is the Son of God**—the Truth he had not believed, but which now gripped his soul. He preached it **in the synagogues**—just where he had intended to destroy Christ's name. The letters in his pocket empowered him to punish those who called on that name. The Spirit in his heart empowered him to proclaim it. The Spirit had won his heart and made the letters useless.

Saul began to preach at once. Who licensed him? What school trained him? What church was he a member of? God had made him a member of His church, placed him, and enabled him to preach. God gave him authority and controlled him through His Spirit. Nothing more was necessary. Nothing more is necessary for anyone. Education is good, but it is not enough. Human joining and control are not good.

A Different Saul

Acts 9:21-22 **All that heard him were amazed**—an unbelievable change. **Is not this he that destroyed ...?** Yes, the same, yet no, not the same—transformed by Jesus Christ. **Saul increased the more in strength**—grew in grace—**proving that this is the very Christ**—the One anointed to be the Savior, the One God promised to send, the Son of God.

JUST A THOUGHT

No title a human being can hold carries greater honor than "Brother."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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