

## A Radical Case of Conversion

### (Acts 9:1-18)

The books of Acts is loaded with powerful true stories of conversion (Acts 2:1-42; 8:26-39; 16:22-34; 18:5-11). But of all the conversion accounts in Acts, the one of Saul of Tarsus has to be the most radical. In this case the most unlikely person not only converts, but becomes one of the strongest advocates of the gospel in the history of the world!

It is important to understand what kind of man Saul was before he gave his life to Christ.

- Zealous and devout in the Jewish religion (Galatians 1:13-14)
- a Hebrew of Hebrews and member of the Pharisees (Philippians 3:5)
- a fierce opponent of the gospel (1 Timothy 1:13; Galatians 1:13)
- consented to the death of Stephen (Acts 8:1)
- cast Christians into prison (Acts 8:3; 9:1-2)

Despite all of this, he eventually converts to the Lord! What can we learn?

#### I. Everybody has the potential to become a Christian .

- A. Saul was a very bad man. He was someone who literally tried to destroy the Lord's church.
  1. Because of Saul's reputation, Ananias saw no potential in him (Acts 9:13-14).
  2. But Ananias was wrong! Saul did change his life (Acts 9:19-22).
- B. It is easy to view people like Ananias initially viewed Saul.
  1. It is easy to look at someone who is a homosexual, or in an adulterous marriage, or well-educated, or part of a denominational church and conclude the person will never be interested in obeying the truth of the gospel.
  2. We must always remember that we can't read hearts and the power to save souls is in the gospel, not us (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 3:6-7).

#### II. Soul-winners must trust God and have courage .

- A. How would you have liked to have the job of Ananias?
  1. But Jesus told him to go (Acts 9:15).
  2. "So Ananias went ..." (Acts 9:17).
- B. Like Ananias...
  1. We have been given the mission to go (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19).
  2. We have to trust the Lord (Matthew 28:20).
  3. We must have courage .

#### III. There is only one plan of salvation.

- A. Saul's sins were not washed away on the road .
- B. Saul's sins were not washed away until he was baptized (Acts 9:18; 22:16).

**Conclusion:** Saul's sinful behavior at the beginning of Acts 9 was not the end of his story. He changed ! What about your story?