



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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Brother Saul!

Focus Verses: Acts 9:17-18 - ¹⁷ And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸ And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

Lesson Text: Acts 9:1-20

Truth About God: God can transform a person completely.

Truth For My Life: I will submit to God's transforming power in my life.

The Christians knew a raid was coming, but they knew from whom. A holier-than-thou hotshot named Saul was rising through the ranks of the Jews. He was all too happy to travel over hill and dale to hunt down Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem to be tried and killed. We read his resume in Acts 8:3: "*Saul made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.*" Saul mangled the Christians like a wild animal mangles its prey. He stormed into their houses and houses of worship and dragged them into the street. To Saul, Christians deserved to die simply because they loved Jesus more than life. Saul cost many Christians their lives and a few of them their faith. Saul's hands were stained with the blood of just men and just women who were just following Jesus.

Saul was the Jews' most valuable player; Saul was the Christian's most feared foe. His very breath brought "*threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord*" (Acts 9:1). But all of that changed one day on his way to Damascus. Saul was riding over one hundred miles away to sniff out and snuff out every last living Christian. With wind in his hair, warrants in his hand, Saul seemed to be unstoppable . . . until.

"*Suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*" (Acts 9:3-4). **The mercy of God reached for a murderer named Saul to change his life and save many Christians' lives from that day forward.** He pensively cried out, "Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (Acts 9:5). Paul offered the only appropriate response: "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do*" (Acts 9:6). Ananias was understandably hesitant (Acts 9:13), but God assured him that Saul was a chosen vessel (Acts 9:15). God saw Saul's sincerity and connected him with a believer who was willing to be obedient despite his fears. Ananias prayed and immediately scales fell from Paul's eyes and he received sight, and was filled with the Holy Ghost, and was baptized (Acts 9:17-18, 22:16). After Saul was converted, he immediately preached in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20). The persecutor of the church had become a preacher of the gospel.

Like Saul, we must obey the biblical commands to repent of our sins, call upon the name of Jesus in baptism, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). Paul himself later preached this same message to both Jews and Gentiles. He saw the power of Jesus Christ transform their lives as it had transformed his (Romans 1:16).

God did not save us so we could sit on a pew and pad the church's attendance statistics. Rather, He calling each of us to be active participants in His kingdom. God still calls some to be globe-trotting missionaries like Paul, taking the gospel to settings like Mars' Hill where the name of Jesus has never been preached (Acts 17:16-34). But most of us will have a ministry closer to home, resembling Ananias, the faithful saint who took the gospel down the street. And that one service changed the preacher whose preaching and writing would forever change the world.

No matter who you are, God wants to use you to minister to others. Who knows? Your next disciple may become a modern-day apostle who shakes the nations with the message of Jesus. God will use you in ministry if you are willing. God often uses unlikely individuals to glorify His name and preach His gospel. You are at the top of the list of people God wants to use. **(We all are.)** You can share the story of what Jesus has done for you right here, right now. Do not wait until later to share the good news with someone now.