



<b>SERIES:</b>	44 Acts – 2017
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>Acts 9:20-43</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	Acts 9:20-43

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Saul of Tarsus (later called Paul the apostle) had an amazing impact on the early church. But what many fail to realize is that it didn't happen overnight. In this message, we learn what Saul did right after his conversion, and we see how God prepared him for ministry.

## DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
  - A. Saul of Tarsus was a new creation in Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:17)
    1. He encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus (see Acts 9:1-9)
    2. What seemed like a bad day to him would turn into a really good year
      - a. All of his anger and hatred was gone
      - b. It would all be in the past
  - B. He met with Ananias, who counseled him (see Acts 9:10-19)
- II. Acts 9:20-26
  - A. Saul preached the gospel in the synagogues
    1. He began preaching as soon as he was saved
      - a. He felt an urgency to immediately tell people about it
      - b. He went from on his back repenting to on his knees praying to on his feet preaching
    2. The people were skeptical
    3. Even though he was a young believer, he had the ability to demonstrate to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ
  - B. "Many days" (v. 23)
    1. About three years passed between verses 22 and 23
      - a. Saul went away to Nabatean Arabia (see Galatians 1:11-18)
      - b. He might have lodged in the shadow of Mount Sinai, where God gave the Law to Moses
        - I. He was a man of the Law (see Philippians 3:6)
        - II. He could have been going over the Law and what it meant
    2. God was preparing him for what lay ahead
      - a. Sometimes God gives people a formal education
      - b. Sometimes He educates people while they are alone
      - c. Ananias predicted that Saul's life would be marked with suffering (see Acts 9:15-16)

- C. The Jews plotted to kill Saul
  - 1. The disciples let him down through the wall in a basket
  - 2. Large baskets were typically garbage baskets
- D. It was difficult for Saul to join the disciples
  - 1. He was like a man without a country
  - 2. He experienced difficulties right at the beginning of his Christian walk
    - a. He is the man God used more than any other person in the New Testament, aside from Jesus
    - b. He wrote thirteen of the New Testament books
  - 3. If you're going through difficulty, God is up to something; He never makes a mistake (see Romans 8:28)
  - 4. The salvation of a soul is the miracle of a moment; the manufacture of a saint is the task of a lifetime

### III. Acts 9:27-30

- A. Barnabas took Saul under his wing
  - 1. Barnabas' given name was Joses
    - a. *Barnabas* = son of encouragement
    - b. Encouraged the church financially
  - 2. Every church needs people like Barnabas
- B. Saul disputed with the Hellenists
  - 1. He was born a Hellenistic Jew
  - 2. He preached at the Synagogue of the Freedmen
    - a. This was the synagogue Stephen had preached at where he was stoned (see Acts 6-7)
    - b. Saul was there, egging on the crowd to kill Stephen
- C. Saul went to Caesarea and then to Tarsus
  - 1. Caesarea was the closest port to sail to Tarsus
  - 2. He did not show up again for seven years
  - 3. When he returned, he did not go to Jerusalem
    - a. He showed up in Antioch of Syria
    - b. Barnabas brought him there
  - 4. It took a decade of isolation and preparation before he was ready for the operation of ministry
  - 5. When he finally returned to Jerusalem, he told them of the vision he received from God instructing him to go to the Gentiles (see Acts 22:17-21)

### IV. Acts 9:31-43

- A. Peter healed Aeneas in Lydda
  - 1. Peter was on the move, and the Lord used him
    - a. It's easier to direct a moving person in ministry
    - b. A busy person will find many opportunities to serve the Lord
  - 2. Aeneas became a walking testimony
    - a. The greatest miracle is the saving of a soul, not the healing of the body
    - b. The first miracle enabled the second miracle of salvation to Lydda
  - 3. Salvation is the greatest miracle
    - a. It cost the blood of Jesus
    - b. It brought the greatest results
    - c. It brings the greatest glory to God

- B. Tabitha
    - 1. Hebrew for *gazelle*
    - 2. She was a Proverbs 31 woman
      - a. She extended her hands to the poor and needy
      - b. She ministered to people's needs
      - c. When a person like that goes to be with the Lord, it brings great sadness to the church
    - 3. Peter made everyone leave the room
      - a. He may have remembered when Jesus raised a little girl (see Mark 5:35-43)
      - b. He used the same words Jesus did
        - I. Jesus: "*Talitha, cumi*" ("Little girl, I say to you, arise")
        - II. Peter: "*Tabitha, cumi*" ("Tabitha, arise")
    - 4. Before the power came the prayer (see v. 40)
  - C. Peter stayed with Simon, a tanner
    - 1. A tanner was an unclean profession in Jewish culture
    - 2. They were considered unclean because they handled dead animals
    - 3. The Jews looked on them with disdain
- V. Closing
- A. Saul had a hard year behind him, but a whole new life in Christ
  - B. Peter saw miracles by his hand
  - C. Though you have good times and bad, the Lord will be with you through it all

**Figures referenced:** John DeLorean, Alan Redpath, Charles Spurgeon, Corrie ten Boom

**Hebrew words:** Tabitha

**Cross references:** Proverbs 31; Mark 5:35-43; Acts 6-7; 9:1-9, 10-19; 22:17-21; Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 1:11-18; Philippians 3:6

**Topic:** Ministry

**Keywords:** salvation, ministry, Christian walk, gospel, persecution, law of Moses, suffering, encouragement, testimony, prayer, miracles