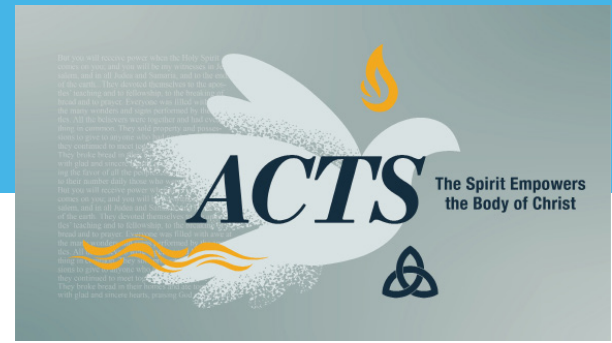


Discussion Questions

September 22, 2024

Acts 9:1-31

Saul Follows the Way of Jesus



1. In today's passage, Ananias & Barnabas both believed in Saul when others would not. Share an example of someone who was a Barnabas to you, who saw your potential or believed in you even when others didn't, maybe even yourself.
2. Read Acts 9:1-31 to refamiliarize yourself with the passage.
3. Re-Read Acts 9:1-2
 - a. Discuss: What is the significance to Saul of Jesus saying twice that he is persecuting Jesus?
 - b. What does that mean for us today?
4. The early Christians were called 'followers of the way,' reflecting a lifestyle of living according to the way Jesus lived.
 - a. How does this differ from just identifying as a Christian?
 - b. What does it look like for us today to follow the way of Jesus in our daily lives?
5. Paul was deeply humbled, you could even say "crushed" by God
 - a. Describe what happened to Paul in his humbling.
 - b. Discuss what role God has in using circumstances and adversity today that can feel like crushing?
 - c. Share any examples you have undergone and the fruit of it.
6. Read Matthew 11:28-30.
 - a. Discuss what it means to be yoked to Jesus?
 - b. The sermon described how Jesus was getting Saul to submit to his yoke and that it required Saul giving up his own plans & understanding. Discuss what that looks like for us today.
 - c. Prayerfully seek the Lord for where we might be fighting for our own way, rather than yielding to his and share if appropriate.

Acts 9:1-21 (NLT)

Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest. 2 He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains. 3 As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" 5 "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting! 6 Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." 7 The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one! 8 Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. 9 He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink. 10 Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord!" he replied. 11 The Lord said, "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. 12 I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again." 13 "But Lord," exclaimed Ananias, "I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! 14 And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name." 15 But the Lord said, "Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. 16 And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake." 17 So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. 19 Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. 20 And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is indeed the Son of God!" 21 All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus' followers in Jerusalem?" they asked. "And didn't he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?"

Quote - Lloyd Olgivie - Drumbeat of Love

"But we do not need a new term; we need to return to the original one. The early Church exemplified a quality of life in fellowship with Christ, each other, and the world that earned the compliment. Before they had carefully worded creeds, elaborate church organization, and professional clergy, Christ's people startled the world with the consistency of belief and behavior and the congruity of the ethos of Christ and their ethics."

Acts 9:1-2 (NLT)

Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest. 2 He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

2 Samuel 22:31 (NIV)

31 God - his way is perfect;

Psalms 37:5

Commit your way to the Lord;

Psalms 103:7-8

7 He revealed his ways to Moses

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love.

Isaiah 30:21

"This is the way. Walk in it."

Lamentations 3:40

40 Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord.

John 14:6

"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Acts 26:9-11 (NLT)

9 "I used to believe that I ought to do everything I could to oppose the very name of Jesus the Nazarene.

10 Indeed, I did just that in Jerusalem. Authorized by the leading priests, I caused many believers there to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. 11 Many times I had them punished in the synagogues to get them to curse Jesus. I was so violently opposed to them that I even chased them down in foreign cities.

Acts 5:38-39 (NLT)

38 "So my advice is, leave these men alone. Let them go. If they are planning and doing these things merely on their own, it will soon be overthrown. 39 But if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You may even find yourselves fighting against God!"



2 Corinthians 11:32-33 (NLT)

32 When I was in Damascus, the governor under King Aretas kept guards at the city gates to catch me. 33 I had to be lowered in a basket through a window in the city wall to escape from him.

2 Corinthians 11:30 (NLT)

If I have to “brag” about myself, I’ll brag about the humiliations that make me like Jesus. The eternal and blessed God and Father of our Master Jesus knows I’m not lying.

Acts 22:17-21 (NLT)

17 “After I returned to Jerusalem, I was praying in the Temple and fell into a trance. 18 I saw a vision of Jesus saying to me, ‘Hurry! Leave Jerusalem, for the people here won’t accept your testimony about me.’

19 “ ‘But Lord,’ I argued, ‘they certainly know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.’

21 “But the Lord said to me, ‘Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles!’ ”