

July 5, 2020

The Conversion of Saul

By Michael Hickox

Olney Church of Christ

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Services

Sunday

Bible Study	9:30 am
A.M. Worship	10:20 am
P.M. Worship	2:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Class	7:00 pm
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Elders: Mike Gerber, Travis Hall

Deacons: John Frost, Dave Goff, Roger Sholders

Visitors are welcome

We offer Bible classes for all ages

We also offer in-home Bible studies

We have Bible lessons on the radio
(92.9 FM) Sundays from 8:00-8:30 a.m.

Acts 9 tells about a man named Saul who was heading to Damascus to persecute Christians (**verses 1-2**).

On the road to Damascus, Saul was met by Jesus. Following this encounter, Saul was converted to the truth. He became known as Paul, and was inspired to write about half of the New Testament. A number of important lessons can be learned from Saul's conversion:

Repentance is a 180° Change: In **Acts 9**, Saul was transformed from one persecuting Christ (**Acts 22:19-20**) to one who "**straightway... preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God**" (**Acts 9:20**).

This shows the nature of repentance. It is an "about face." It is a 180° change. Saul's conversion was manifested in an immediate, wholehearted turn to God. Like Saul, we must turn in the opposite direction when we have sin in our lives.

"Chief" of Sinners Can Be Forgiven: If there was ever a time for God to say, "*you've caused too much harm for me to forgive you,*" one might think that would happen with Saul of Tarsus.

Yet, when Saul did what the Lord required, his sins were washed away (**Acts 22:16**). Through Saul's conversion, God showed us that the "**chief**" of sinners (**1 Tim. 1:15**) can be forgiven.

The Conversion of Saul

(Continued)

All who have reached a point of accountability before God have sinned (**Rom. 3:23**). Yet, as long as we are on earth, we all have the opportunity to submit to God's terms for forgiveness.

Such assurance should not make us take the thought of future sin lightly or "procrastinate" obedience. It *should*, however, dissuade us from thinking we cannot be forgiven by God of *past* sins.

Sinners Can Become Servants: Not only was Saul forgiven, he was granted the opportunity to "***preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ***" (**Eph. 3:8**). One of the most influential preachers in the history of Christianity "***was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious***" (**1 Tim. 1:13**), yet by the grace of God became someone who did much good.

Paul remained humbled by his mistakes long after he repented (**1 Cor. 15:9**). Yet, he trusted in God's grace, "tore off the rear-view mirror," and failed to let his sinful past haunt him (**Phil. 3:13-14**).

The Truth Can Change Anyone (with the Proper Heart): As outsiders considered Saul, he may have seemed like the unlikeliest of individuals to follow Jesus. Those who "pre-judged the soil" (see **Matt. 13:19-23**) may have avoided him and sought someone else to teach. Yet, when Saul learned the truth, it changed his life.

God's Word has the power to do the same today. Those who view themselves as ones who will "never be good Christians" should think of Saul's example, and realize you too can be servants of Christ.

God's Terms for Washing Sins Away:

Through Saul's conversion, we see an example of how one becomes a Christian and has his or her sins forgiven. While we have the complete written Word available today and do not have miraculous encounters like Saul did, we ought to have the same *response* to the truth that Saul did.

Saul *believed* the truth about Jesus, and he was *repentant* (see **Acts 9:6**). As a repentant believer, Saul was told that he needed to be baptized to have his sins washed away (**Acts 22:16**). This is how one must respond to the truth to get into Christ today (also see **Rom. 6:3-4** & **Gal. 3:27**).

Saul's baptism did not assure all *future* sins would be forgiven. If he sinned *after becoming a Christian*, he would need to repent and pray for God's forgiveness (**Acts 8:22**). Through Saul's conversion, though, we learn what is needed for a *non-Christian* to get into Christ and receive forgiveness.

May we learn from these and other lessons seen in Saul's conversion.

Area Gospel Meetings

Bellair Church of Christ:
July 6-10 (with Jim Stauffer)
M-F: 7:00

First City Church of Christ (Vincennes):
July 20-24 (with various speakers)
M-F: 7:00 (Eastern time)

Yale church of Christ:
July 20-24 (with L.A. Stauffer)
M-F: 7:00

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God's Plan for Saving Man

God's Grace	Ephesians 2:8
Christ's Blood	Romans 5:9
The Holy Spirit's Gospel	Romans 1:16
Sinner's Faith	Acts 16:31
Sinner's Repentance	Luke 13:3
Sinner's Confession	Romans 10:10
Sinner's Baptism	1 Peter 3:21
Christian's Work	James 2:24
Christian's Hope	Romans 8:24
Christian's Endurance	Revelation 2:10

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Words to Consider

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me.'— John 14:6

Prayer List

Holly G
Sandy S
Mabel H
Cheryl S
Norma C
Raymond & Maxine
Randy & Kim S
Ken & Chris F
Brandon O's Grandmother (Lung Cancer)
Jeanette's Mother, Fontella
Jerry S (Prostate Cancer)
Donna G

Daily Bible Reading

July 5 – 1 Kings 8-9; Luke 21:1-19
July 6 – 1 Kings 10-11; Luke 21:20-38
July 7 – 1 Kings 12-13; Luke 22:1-30
July 8 – 1 Kings 14-15; Luke 22:31-46
July 9 – 1 Kings 16-18; Luke 22:47-71
July 10 – 1 Kings 19-20; Luke 23:1-25
July 11 – 1 Kings 21-22; Luke 23:26-56

"Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words of eternal life.'— John 6:68

Prayer Leaders

Sunday, July 5, 2020

Bible Study: Larry
Worship: Carlyle
Evening: John

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

Darrell

Clean Building

Halls

Prepare Communion

Halls

Upcoming Reminders

**Our summer Gospel meeting is scheduled
for August 9-14 with L.A. Stauffer*

Assignments

Sunday, July 12, 2020

Reading: Jeff
Announcements: Mike
Table: Harold
Serve: Steve
Dave
Dan H
John

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

Invitation: Michael

Anniversaries

July 11 – Ethan & Lindsay
July 16 – Darrell & Sidney

Birthdays

July 8 – Mark
July 12 – Holly
July 12 – Jessilyn