

# Paul: From Persecutor To Persecuted

Acts 9:1-25

## Introduction:

- A. The First mention of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 7:58).
  - 1. Became "Paul" (Roman name) rather than "Saul" (Jewish Name)
  - 2. Became most influential man other than Christ in N.T.
- B. Our text traces Paul through four important phases of his life: from persecutor to persecuted.

## Discussion:

### I. Paul, the *Persecutor* (Verses 1-2).

- A. Whom did he persecute?
  - 1. "The Way" (v. 2)
  - 2. "Jesus" (vv. 4,5).
  - 3. "The church" (Acts 8:1-3; I Cor. 15:9).
  - 4. "Men and women" (Acts 8:3; 9:2)
  - 5. "The saints" (Acts 26:10-11).
- B. How did he persecute?
  - 1. Officially but sinfully. (Acts 9:1,2; 26:11,12).
  - 2. Religiously but sinfully. (Acts 26:5; Phil. 3:6).
    - a. Murder in name of religion. (Acts 9:1).
    - b. Kill, gamble, slander, bully, and defame etc. often in the name of religion.
  - 3. Conscientiously but sinfully. (Acts 23:1; 26:9).
  - 4. Ignorantly but sinfully. (1 Tim. 1:13).
    - a. His ignorance did not excuse - still chief sinner. (v. 15).
    - b. Had it been wilful he would not have been as receptive.

### II. Paul, the *Penitent*. (Verses 6-19).

- A. He repented on the Damascus Road. (vs. 1,2,6)
  - 1. Jesus preached directly to him. (v.5).
  - 2. Jesus appeared to Saul for a special reason. (Acts 26:14-18).
    - a. Every sinner cannot expect such a call (Cf. Rom. 10:5,6,17). Cf. Other conversions in Acts.
    - b. Every preacher cannot expect a personal call. (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2; Acts 8:1).
- B. He was saved in "the city". (vs. 6).
  - 1. Jesus told him what he must do after his salvation.
  - 2. Ananias told him what he must do to be saved. (Acts 22:16; 9:18).
  - 3. God choose to save through human instrumentality - did so in every case. (cf. 1 Cor. 1:21).

### III. Paul, the *Preacher*. (Verses 20-22, Cf. 1 Tim. 2:7).

- A. He preached what his once persecuted - "Christ".
  - 1. He now promoted "The way", "The church", etc.
  - 2. We see what his preaching Christ produced in rest of Acts. (Lydia, Jailer, Corinthians, etc.).
- B. He preached to please Christ and not men. (Gal. 1:8,9).

### IV. Paul, the *Persecuted*. (Verses 23-25).

- A. By former brethren - the Jews. (v. 23; cf. 2 Cor. 11:24-25)
- B. By false brethren. (2 Cor. 11:26).
  - 1. Such persecution often from fear, envy, or resentment.
  - 2. Such persecution often either - verbal (reviled), physical (persecuted) or defamation. (1 Cor. 4:12,13).
- C. Accepted it with grace and gladness. (2 Cor. 12:9,10,15).

## Conclusion:

- A. If Paul's life could be so turned around - anyone's can.
- B. But, we must be willing to do what Paul did:
  - 1. Obey the Lord.

2. Count all things for loss that we might gain Him.
3. Be willing to suffer for Christ.