

Small Group Questions | February 17, 2019

The Great Explorers — Paul Part 1

Acts 9:1–25

Context: Acts 7:58–9:25

Other Passages Referenced: Isa 11:1, 6, 10; Eze 1:22, 26; Deut 21:23; Acts 26; 2 Cor 4:6–10; Gal 6:2;

FOR THOSE OF YOU LEADING THE GROUP DISCUSSION YOU MAY FIND EXPANDED RESOURCES AT

<http://wcchapel.org/resources-for-small-group-leaders/>

Sermon Recap: Saul was an explorer (one searching for and following God’s direction) who was transformed by a humbling encounter with Jesus and help from a fellow disciple of Jesus. Paul moves from being a great persecutor of Christians to become a persecuted proclaimer of Jesus as the Christ. Real transformation in our lives is more likely to happen if we will create space for humbling encounters with Jesus and ask fellow disciples of Jesus for help.

Background Helps

- Luke uses “the Way” in 9:2 to refer to followers of Jesus who trusted that He was the promised Messiah. At this point, Jesus’ followers were a movement within Judaism rather than a completely separate group. The use of the term “way” for the Christian movement and the kind of life in accordance with God’s will that was associated with it (19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22)¹ Jesus called Himself “The way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6).
- Damascus — It normally took six days to walk from Jerusalem to Damascus.

Hook: A Question to Help Ignite Conversation

In a minute or less, tell about a time you tried to make a personal change such as diet, exercise, rest, etc. Was it hard? Why or why not?

Look:

Read Acts 9:1–25

1. Verse 1 mentions Saul, “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.” What can we recall about Saul’s previous threats or persecution of Jesus’ followers?
2. What do 9:4–5 teach us about the relationship between Jesus and His followers?
3. What do we learn about Ananias in 9:10–17?
4. What two reasons does Ananias give in 9:17 for his going to Saul?
5. What two actions did Saul take following the word “Immediately” in verses 18 and 20?
6. Why did some Jews living in Damascus plot to Kill Saul?

Illustrations:

Illustrations and quotes can be found on the “Sermon Slides” link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org

Took: Applying the message to our lives.

¹ I. Howard Marshall, “Acts,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007), 575.

Practical Applications:

1. Other than the more general transformation from not following Jesus to following Jesus, can you point to a humbling encounter with Jesus that resulted in transformation? If God used other disciples of Jesus in a direct way, how so?
2. A conversation referenced in the sermon quoted the Pastor of Eastside church saying, "Tell me the gift God has put in your heart so that I can help you use it." What gift do you believe God has given you that the rest of us might be able to help you use?
3. Who do you know that would benefit from hearing something God is speaking to you about? Will you pray for God to make you a proclaimer to that person?

Prayer:

- Ananias faced a big challenge in overcoming his fear to go to Saul in obedience to the Lord's instruction. Can you briefly share a challenge that you are facing?
- Please spend time praying for one another.

Verse (You might consider memorizing this one): "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied"
– Acts 9:31