

ACTS – Christ's Ministry Continues

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And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. ¹² Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

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¹⁶ Then Paul stood up, and motioning with *his* hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen:....

GOD'S LEADER MAKING PROCESS

Life Lessons from Paul's Story

1. First, Jesus calls us to Himself.

ACTS 9 ³ ...he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?**"

⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.**"

⁶ So he, trembling & astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

2. He then empowers for ministry.

ACTS 9 ¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, **the Lord Jesus**, who appeared to you on the road as you came, **has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**"

3. God reveals our ministry calling.

ACTS 9 ¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, (Ananias) "Go, for **he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles**, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

4. The Lord prepares us gradually.

GALATIANS 1 ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who* were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.....

5. He connects us with other Christians.

ACTS 11 ²⁵ Then **Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.** ²⁶ And when he had found him, **he brought him to Antioch.** So it was that **for a whole year they assembled with the church** and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

6. Christ appoints us in His timing.

ACTS 13 ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now **separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.**" ³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

7. We will often face oppositions.

ACTS 13 ⁴⁹ And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. ⁵⁰ But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, **raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas**, and **expelled them from their region.**

8. Like Jesus, life will become sacrificial.

- Faithfulness will produce fruit.
- Fruitfulness glorifies the Father.

SHA'UL'S (PAUL'S) CALLING

ACTS 9 ³...he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. ⁸ Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

¹¹ So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying.

¹² And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

¹³ Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸ Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

22 ⁶ "...near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. ⁷ And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' ⁸ So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

⁹ "And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. ¹⁰ So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?'

And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.' ¹¹ And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

¹² "Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, ¹³ came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. ¹⁴ Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.' ¹⁶ And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

¹⁷ "Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance ¹⁸ and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' ¹⁹ So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. ²⁰ And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' ²¹ Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'"

26 ¹² "....as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, ¹³ at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. ¹⁴ And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' ¹⁵ So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

¹⁹ "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

GALATIANS 1 ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰ (Now *concerning* the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)

²¹ Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which *were* in Christ. ²³ But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once *tried to* destroy." ²⁴ And they glorified God in me.

EPHESIANS 3 ⁸ To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,...

2 TIMOTHY 4 ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

JOHN 15 ⁸ "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."

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13 ¹ Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

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