

SAUL'S EARLY MINISTRY

Acts 9:20-31

INTRODUCTION

Acts 9:20-31 is about the transformation and boldness of Saul (later Paul) as he begins to preach that Jesus is the Son of God. Despite initial skepticism and fear from the disciples in Jerusalem, Saul's powerful testimony and fearless proclamation of the gospel lead to the strengthening of the church and the spread of the message throughout the region.

THIS WEEK:

Discover this week the dramatic change in Saul's life, the initial challenges he faced as a new believer, and the significant impact of his ministry on the early Christian community.

OBSERVATION *What does it SAY?*

Discover key details of the passage by reading Acts 9:20-31 and answering the following questions:

1. What was the message of Saul to the people in the synagogues of Damascus (vv. 20, 22)?
2. What were the various responses to Saul's change of heart (vv. 21, 23)?
3. Describe the ministry Saul engaged in when he returned to Jerusalem and what the disciples were forced to do as a result (vv. 28-29):
4. What happened to the church after Saul was sent to Tarsus (v. 31)?

INTERPRETATION *What does it MEAN?*

Use the Bible to interpret the Bible. Look up the cross references and use them to interpret the passage under study:

5. Look up the following verses, what are the various implications of Jesus being the Son of God, List as many as you can:
 - a. Matthew 8:29
 - b. John 5:25
 - c. Romans 8:3
 - d. John 20:31



Saul's Escape, Horne, Charles, and Julius Bower. The Bible and Its Story: Acts-Epistles, Apostles to Revelation. Vol. 10. New York, NY: Francis R. Niglutsch, 1910.

6. Look up 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, John 3:18-19, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, 1 Corinthians 2:14, and 1 Corinthians 1:18 and list the possible reasons Saul received such a negative reception from of the Jews in Damascus and Jerusalem:
7. Summarize what happens in Acts 13:50-51, 14:5-6, Acts 14:19-20, 16:19-23, 21:27-36; 22:24-3. How do these events fulfill Acts 9:16?
8. Saul was fearless. Ultimately, what had to happen for him to agree to leave for Tarsus (Acts 22:17-20)?

APPLICATION *Why does it MATTER?*

Now that you have discerned what the passage means, how does it apply to your life?

9. Give some examples of how you see God using your past, both good and bad, to shape your current ministry or witness.
10. In contrast to many, Saul (Paul) was very zealous and proactive in sharing the message. What strategies motivates believers towards zeal and commitment? What robs you of zeal and commitment?
11. Notice how the early believers supported and protected Saul after his conversion. What would be a modern day parallel to this kind of support?
12. Share of a time or a season in your own life when you were the most zealous and committed. What factors contributed to that season?

TAKE AWAY *How does this change me?*

13. What does this passage reveal about God?
14. What does this passage reveal about humanity?
15. What is the Holy Spirit revealing in this passage about your life?