

SERMON: A QUESTION FROM A CHANGED MAN

Acts 9:1-6

(1) And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, (2) And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. (3) And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: (4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me? (5) And he said, Who are thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (6) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

Introduction

This passage of Scripture is the first recorded words of one of the pillars of the early church. This passage records the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to Paul the apostle born out of season. Before his conversion, Paul was bent on the destruction of Christians. He was on his way to Damascus with official letters from the high priest authorizing him to arrest all Christians in that city and bring them to Jerusalem for trial, which would have probably ended in the death of those arrested.

Something strange happened. Paul – then Saul- and his companions, perhaps temple police to help transport those soon to be arrested, saw a great blazing light from heaven and the voice of Jesus. Paul fell to the ground and began to dialog with the heavenly voice.

During this unusual dialog, three questions were asked. One question posed by Jesus and two posed by Paul. Jesus asked Paul, “Why are you persecuting me?” It is worthwhile to note that Jesus did not accuse Paul of persecuting the church; it was Jesus himself who was being persecuted. Paul would later understand the close interrelationship between Jesus and His followers and would incorporate this concept into the epistles he penned.

Paul asked the second question, which was his first, “Who are you? Jesus responded by emphatically identifying Himself.

Paul asked the third question, which was his second, “Jesus, what do you want me to do?” In answering Paul’s question, Jesus told him to go on to Damascus and wait for further instructions. When he got on his feet to comply, he discovered he was still blind and had to be led by others into the city. It was quite a humbling turn of events. Paul had come to Damascus to arrest anyone who believed in Jesus. Instead He was arrested by Jesus, whose light shined not only in his eyes, but also in his heart. He expected to enter the city as an arrogant, self-confident opponent of Christ, but found himself humbled and blind and a captive of the very One he had opposed.

In Damascus lived a disciple named Ananias. The Lord appeared to Ananias in a vision with instructions to seek out Paul at the house of a man named Judas. At first, Ananias protested this short commission. He knew who Paul was and was afraid of him. Ananias obeyed and went to Paul, laying hands on him so he might recover his sight and start his newly transformed life. The troublemaker had been transformed into a fervent believer with a unique mission.

Now that we have reviewed the story of Paul’s conversion, let’s go back to the question Paul – then Saul- asked Jesus. “What do you want me to do?” This is a very significant question. Let’s explore.

Exposition

1. This Question Acknowledged The Complete Lordship Of Jesus.

2. This Question Was The Expression Of A Surrendered Heart.

3. This Question Implied An Instinct For Action.

4. This Question Was The Beginning Of A Successful Sacred Career.

(Paul Planted Many Churches.)

(Paul Wrote Half Of The New Testament.)

(Paul Codified The Fundamental Christian Doctrines.)

5. This Question Prepared Paul For His Heavenly Home.

(2nd Timothy 4:6-8.)

Closing Thoughts

Paul’s question should be everyone’s question. We should ask it all the time for all aspects of our lives. Proverbs 3:6 states, “In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.” One way to acknowledge our Savior is to ask Him, “What do you want me to do?” Then wait for the answer and become completely obedient. There is one thing I know for certain that Jesus wants you to do. That is to accept Him as your personal Savior and let His blood cleanse you. Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

Entire Sermonic Scripture

Acts 9:1-31

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