

Saul to Paul - Fundamentals of Salvation

Intro: What are we to do if we want to be in a right relationship with our Creator. We can depend on the ideas that are passed around by the creation or we can read of conversions to Jesus Christ written in God's word. Today, we look at the conversion of Paul to determine what we can learn from it for us today.

1. Review of Common Elements
 - A. Simon the Sorcerer - Heard, Believed and Obeyed (Acts 8)
 - B. Cornelius the Roman Soldier - Heard, Believed and Obeyed (Acts 10)
 - C. Consider the unique aspects of each experience.

2. Paul (Saul) the Pharisee
 - A. Let's start at "the end of the beginning" - Acts 9:18; 22:16
 - B. His life leading to the command received in Acts 22:16.
 1. Raised in Tarsus - Thought to be relatively well-to-do. Acts 22:3
 2. Schooled in Jerusalem - Acts 22:3
 3. His response to the disciples of Christ. Acts 8:1; 22:20; 26:9-12
Probably justified in his mind - See Numbers 25:1-5
 - C. His "Wake-up Call"- Acts 9
 1. The light
 2. The dark
 3. The voice
 4. Remember, not everyone responded to Jesus favorably. (Soil?)
 - D. Why Ananias was Essential
 1. Acts 22:10; 9:6 - He would be told what he would need to do.
 2. Why him? Chosen by God. He was a man respected by many. Acts 22:12
 3. He would be used to remove Paul's blindness.
 4. He informed Saul that now he would be filled with the Holy Spirit.
 5. He extends the words of Jesus to Saul (Mark 16:15-16) as recorded in 22:16.

3. Experiences of Saul Different from Simon and Cornelius
 - A. He actually spoke to Jesus
 - B. He sees a great light and then loses his sight.
 - C. He regains his sight.
 - D. He had a unique mission. Acts 9:15-16
 - E. He almost immediately began preaching. Acts 9:20-22
 - F. What appears to change Saul? Realized, he had been wrong about Jesus.

Conclusion: No, the experiences of Saul, Cornelius and Simon are not uniform. As we know, all three were unique to the time of establishment of Christianity when the Holy Spirit was revealing the truth as it would eventually be known for the ages. But all of them had this in common: They heard teaching; they responded to it positively with belief; and then they acted with humble obedience. Simon "didn't stick" as far as we know, Cornelius leaves a favorable conclusion. We know what happened to Paul.