

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 01.02.2021

RADICAL CHANGE – ACTS 9:10-25



Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Ray shared with us the radical change that took place in the life of Saul of Tarsus. The dictionary defines metamorphosis as a change of the form or nature of a thing or person into a completely different one, by natural or supernatural means. Every Christian has experienced metamorphosis. We all have a story to tell because we have been powerfully changed from death to life by the gospel of Christ. There are few more radical transformations in Scripture than that of Saul on the road to Damascus. In an instant Saul was transformed from a persecutor of the church to one of its greatest champions...Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most or spoke to you from Pastor Ray's message this last weekend?
2. Over time, what is something on which your views have radically changed? (A few ideas include: political affiliations, how to raise kids, the role of the church, etc.)
3. Who or what was influential in this transformation?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 9:10-19

1. How do you think Ananias must have felt when the Lord asked him to go take care of Saul?
2. What does Ananias' response to Jesus' directions reveal about his own life and obedience?
3. What plans did the Lord have for Saul? How might this have differed from Ananias' expectations?

Ananias' response of "Here I am, Lord" revealed a heart that was eager to please the Lord and obey Him. This incident shows us clearly that God's assessment of people is often radically different than our own. Where most Christians would have looked at Saul with warranted fear and trepidation, God saw a "chosen instrument" that He would use to carry the gospel to the known world.

4. Why did the Lord send Ananias to Saul to restore his sight? Why didn't the Lord restore Saul's sight without Ananias's involvement? What does this tell us about how God desires for spiritual growth to happen?
5. How did Ananias address Saul? What does this reflect about the change in Saul's life? How did Saul respond after his physical healing?

Ananias followed directions and went to Saul. God could have healed Saul without the personal interaction with another believer, but God has never intended anyone do the Christian life alone. Ananias addressed Saul as

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

brother, which reflects the familial relationship that exists between the family of faith.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 9:20-25

1. What would the crowd have expected Saul to say when he came to the synagogue? When he proceeded to preach about Christ, how did they react (v. 23)?
2. Why do you think some of the people were upset by Saul's preaching?
3. When did Saul began to preach and what did he share?
4. How soon after conversion should new Christians tell non-Christians about Jesus today?
5. What should new Christians tell non-Christians about Jesus?

Saul's earliest ministry was characterized by bold witness, Jewish persecution, and a timid response from the rest of the church. Boldness characterized Saul's evangelism. Acts 9:31 ends the account of Saul's conversion. With that watershed event, the early persecution of Christians also ended. The church experienced peace, the Spirit's encouragement, and numerical growth.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

God needed a man with the background of Paul, a man who could address the Hebrews, who could address the Greek culture, who could address Kings. He is chosen... Later Paul realized God's hand had been on his life from his mother's womb, God was with him, training him, developing him for his work. And so it is with every servant of God. We can look back over our lives and watch the processes by which God was developing us for the work He had in mind for us to accomplish.

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

1. When were your eyes open to the Gospel of Christ? Share a 30 second testimony of how you came to Christ.
2. What are some events in your life that you now realize that God was preparing you for greater service to Him?
3. Ananias played an important role in helping disciple Paul. Who in your life could you begin to disciple?

PRAYER - Thank God for using the most unlikely people for His kingdom. Praise God for His grace in your life that transformed you into a new person living for Jesus. Think of the person that you would like to disciple and begin to pray for them and what you can do specifically to disciple them.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)