

“Common Conversion”

Acts 9:1-31

Church history is replete with the conversion stories of sinners gloriously saved by God’s grace. But no conversion is as impressive as the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. Nonetheless, Saul’s conversion, like every believer’s conversion, was a conversion . . .

I. Of an _____ of Christianity (1-2)

II. As a _____ of God’s grace (3-19)

III. That made a _____ change (20-31)

IV. To be a _____ to others for the
_____ of God (1 Tim. 1:13-17)

This, then, was the man who in a few days’ time would be a converted and baptized Christian. But he was in no mood to consider the claims of Christ. His heart was filled with hatred and his mind was poisoned by prejudice. In his own language later, a “raging fury” obsessed him (26:11, RSV). If we had met him as he left Jerusalem and (with the benefit of hindsight) had told him that before he reached Damascus he would have become a believer, he would have ridiculed the idea. Yet this was the case. He had left out of his calculations the sovereign grace of God.

- John Stott

Jesus pricked Saul’s mind and conscience with his goads. Then he revealed himself to him by the light and the voice, not in order to overwhelm him, but in such a way as to enable him to make a free response. Divine grace does not trample on human personality. Rather the reverse, for it enables human beings to be truly human. It is sin which imprisons; it is grace which liberates. The grace of God so frees us from the bondage of our pride, prejudice, and self-centeredness, as to enable us to repent and believe.

- John Stott