

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 26TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

CHANGED (ACTS 9:19B-25) BE MY WITNESS

Verses 19b-30 cover around the first three years of Paul's life as a Believer. While in Damascus, Paul "immediately" began to proclaim the gospel about Jesus to the Jews in the synagogues.

- We often see new Believers excited about their faith and quickly telling others about Him. For those of us who have been Christians longer, **do we still joyfully tell others about Jesus?**

CHANGED LIVES OFTEN CONFOUND PEOPLE

Saul had quite the reputation as a persecutor of the Church. The very name that caused Saul to put people in prison is now the name he unashamedly professes.

- **Only Jesus can change lives like this. He calls people far from Him into His family. People may not understand how it happened, but they can see the effects.**

GROWING IN THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

As Saul continued to study Scripture with the Holy Spirit's help, His understanding that Jesus is the Messiah grew. His arguments against the Jews sharpened, and his love for Jesus deepened.

- **The more we're with Jesus, the more our faith in and love for Him should grow and the more we should put off His aroma.**

THE SUFFERING BEGINS (V. 16)

Jesus said He would show Saul how much he would suffer for Him. It didn't take long for the suffering to start. The Holy Spirit worked to save Saul from opposing Jews. Saul had already made disciples—a pattern he would repeat over and over—and they took action to save him.

- **Sometimes we die; sometimes we're delivered. At all times, we trust the Lord.**

TRUST (ACTS 9:26-30) SEEING BEYOND PEOPLE'S PASTS

Either the Jerusalem disciples hadn't heard about Saul's conversion or didn't believe it. Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement, lived up to his name and encouraged the church and apostles to listen to Saul's story.

- Reputations from our past lives can carry current consequences. **In Jesus, our pasts are forgiven and our futures are secured.**

ANOTHER PATTERN EMERGES

Saul will say that the gospel is for the Jews first, then the Gentiles (Romans 1:16). He went to the Jews first, proving from their Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. When the Jews couldn't refute him, they tried to kill him. God used these times of persecution to move Saul to the Gentiles.

- **God never stops working, whether in times of blessing or times of stressing.**

GROWTH (ACTS 9:31-35) THE CHURCH WILL PREVAIL

The Church, Jesus' Bride, "had peace and was strengthened," even in the midst of persecution. They feared the Lord more than they feared what man could do. And the Holy Spirit was at work as the Church grew, not only spiritually but also numerically.

- **As we go deeper into the Word, the Spirit empowers us to take the Word wider.**

TAKING THE GOSPEL WITH US

Luke turns back to focus on Peter as he traveled, taking the gospel from place to place. There were Christians in Lydda who Peter visited. While there, Peter healed a man who had been bedridden and paralyzed for eight years.

- **Showing Jesus' power over disease and sickness allowed Peter to share the gospel, with many turning to the Lord as a result.**

LIFE (ACTS 9:36-43) EVERYONE DIES

In Joppa, lived Dorcas (Tabitha), a good woman who loved Jesus and loved people. She was noted for her good works and acts of charity. But everyone dies, and so did Dorcas.

- **We shouldn't worry about death. Our concern should be to live the daily life we've been given to the glory of God and for the good of others.**

OUR WORKS FOLLOW US

The disciples heard Peter was in nearby Lydda and asked him to come to Joppa. He found a group of people mourning Dorcas's death, and they showed him the fruitfulness of her ministry.

- While our good works won't save us, our salvation will produce good works. **These good works should point to Jesus and encourage others to do the same.**

FROM DEATH TO LIFE

Peter sent everyone out of the room where Dorcas's lifeless body laid. He knelt, prayed, and spoke to the body to "get up." And life returned to Dorcas! Because of this miracle, many more believed in Jesus.

- While we may never be used to raise a dead body to life, **each of us has the privilege of speaking life to those dead in sin.**

THE TESTIMONY OF A CHANGED LIFE

- **Our lives should show others that we hold onto Jesus tightly and hold everything else with open hands.**
- Our joy in Jesus should be shown and seen by all with whom we come into contact.
- Whether on the mountain or in the valley, people should see our hope and trust in Jesus.
- **Is Jesus our crutch or our Savior and Lord?**

OUR PAST IS JUST THAT—PAST!

- Jesus gives us a new life, a new name, a new family, a new present, and a new future.
- Consequences from our past don't have the final word. **Jesus does.**
- Satan **condemns** us and **accuses** us. Jesus **forgives** us and **empowers** us.
- We are new creations! The old has passed away, and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

A FALSE HOPE

- The abundant life Jesus promises is less about **material prosperity** and more about **joy, hope, and peace.**
- People are struggling to see any glimmer of hope that there's a life worth living out there.
- We speak life to the Sauls of this world who are anything but alive with joy. But they can spot fakes—**are we the real deal?**