

Bay City Wesleyan Church
July 21, 2019

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Learning to be Witnesses: Embracing the Fear in Faith- Who Are You?
Continuing our teaching series in Acts
<http://bible.com/events/655846>

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[Plan]
Life With The Holy Spirit
5 Days
<http://bible.com/r/113>

What does God want us to hear today?
How can we be witnesses to the holiness of God?
When were we transformed by the Holy Spirit?
Who are we in Christ?
Who has God called you to be?

What is in a name?
Saul- Saulos- Desired
Paul- Paulus- Small or little/humble
Dual citizenship, raised by a Pharisee and Roman citizen, making Paul Jewish by faith and education and Roman by nationality.
However, he counted all as lost and garbage when compared to who he was in Christ.
After his conversion and time preaching and teaching about Jesus, Paul learned that his life was only to be used as a slave for Christ.
The Lord told Paul and Ananias that Paul must learn about suffering as Christ did.
Paul stayed in Damascus for three years, where he proclaimed Jesus Christ as the Messiah to all of those in Damascus.

Acts of the Apostles 9:1-19 NLT

1</small> Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest. 2</small> He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them both men and women back to Jerusalem in chains. 3</small> As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. 4</small> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" 5</small> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!" 6</small> Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do. 7</small> The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one!

<small>8</small> Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. <small>9</small> He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink. <small>10</small> Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord!" he replied. <small>11</small> The Lord said, "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. <small>12</small> I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again." <small>13</small> "But Lord," exclaimed Ananias, "I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! <small>14</small> And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name." <small>15</small> But the Lord said, "Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. <small>16</small> And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake." <small>17</small> So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <small>18</small> Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. <small>19</small> Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/act.9.1-19.nlt>

Who Are You?

What is your story?

What is your name?

Do you know what your name means?

How has your relationship with God, through Jesus Christ changed you?

Acts of the Apostles 9:19-31 NLT

<small>19</small> Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. <small>20</small> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is indeed the Son of God!" <small>21</small> All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus' followers in Jerusalem?" they asked. "And didn't he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?" <small>22</small> Saul's preaching became more and more powerful, and the Jews in Damascus couldn't refute his proofs that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. <small>23</small> After a while some of the Jews plotted together to kill him. <small>24</small>

They were watching for him day and night at the city gate so they could murder him, but Saul was told about their plot. 25</small> So during the night, some of the other believers lowered him in a large basket through an opening in the city wall. 26</small> When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer! 27</small> Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus. 28</small> So Saul stayed with the apostles and went all around Jerusalem with them, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. 29</small> He debated with some Greek-speaking Jews, but they tried to murder him. 30</small> When the believers heard about this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus, his hometown. 31</small> The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/act.9.19-31.nlt>

The word "suffer" or pascho, is used 41 times in the NT in 39 verses. To suffer is to feel or experience immense pain, which is the same word used to describe Christ's suffering, the woman afflicted with chronic bleeding, and so forth.

The suffering of Saul began as soon as he experienced the glory of Christ. He was blinded and then chose not to eat or drink for three days.

Saul was in the process of becoming a new creation in Christ.

God chose him to be His chosen instrument to the Gentiles.

Only Saul was uniquely qualified and also equipped to complete the mission God had set before him, but Saul still needed a faithful believer to pray over him and commission him to have the Holy Spirit- Ananias.

Have you ever had the prompting to pray for someone?

Have you ever heard the Spirit whisper to you to pray for someone you perceived as an "enemy?"

How would you react?

Who Are You?

God is the Creator. Christ is our Redeemer. Spirit is the Power.

From death to life, you are created, redeemed, and empowered to be holy, healed, and hope-filled people.

[Plan]

IDENTITY - Who Are You?

6 Days

<http://bible.com/r/19K>

