

# Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



## Episode 150 - God's Great Reclamation Project (Acts 9)

### The Persecutor

Intense zeal can make someone a great friend to the Church—or a great foe. When wielded against the Church, zeal is a deadly weapon. But turned in the right direction, it is an undeniable gift of the Holy Spirit. Before knowing Jesus Christ, Saul's whole life is consumed in a fiery desire to take down everyone who follows Him.

- Give an example of people who are zealous devotees of their faith.
- How many Christians do you know who are as zealous for Jesus as this?
- How strong was Jesus' zeal for His Heavenly Father and for our salvation?
- What things get in the way of our zealousness for our Lord?

### Stopped Dead in His Tracks

God had no intention of cooling Saul's zeal or changing him. He only wanted to turn his passion and zeal in the right direction.

- Do you think anything less than a personal appearance of Jesus would have turned Saul from his destructive path? Why or why not?
- What are some ways God gets your attention when you are going down the wrong path?
- What things are you passionate about in your life?
- How can God channel those passions to serve Him and His Church?

### A Reluctant Healer

Jesus' intervention on the road left Saul blind. This blindness made a huge impact on Saul, reminding him how blindly he had persecuted the followers of Jesus Christ. It also would make a huge impact on a Christian leader named Ananias.

- Why is Ananias' caution understandable?
- When is it appropriate for us to keep up our guard and not immediately trust someone?
- How do you know when it is safe to let down your guard and trust a person who has not always been worthy of your trust?

## Finding Trust amidst Suspicion

Paul would never have accomplished so much so quickly for God's Kingdom if not for a man named Barnabas. We first meet this fine Christian in Acts 4:36-37, "Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

- How had Barnabas established such a good reputation with the apostles?
- What does his nickname from the apostles tell us about his impact on them?
- How was the Holy Spirit able to work through Barnabas to convince the Church that the former persecutor Saul was now a genuine believer, and not a spy?
- Do you have a "Barnabas" in your life or in your church?
- Why is a person like Barnabas so important for a church and its pastor(s)?
- How can each of us become more of a Barnabas for others?