

Sermon Notes

From a Lion to a Lamb

Acts 9:1–18

Pastor Jeff Hinds

1. God's Word suggests that when a Christ-follower is unjustly treated (persecuted), in God's economy this is equivalent to unjustly treating Jesus Himself (Acts 9:4). This truth should give us pause if or when we are tempted to mis-treat a fellow Christ-follower. An offense against God's child is seen (by God) as an offense against God Himself.
2. God's word makes clear that a natural expectation of being God's child is that we follow God's instructions (Acts 9:6; also Ananias' instructions to befriend Saul – Acts 9:1–18; and Saul/Paul's obedience for the rest of his life). Every conversion to Jesus should result in lives that are constantly, incrementally, growing in obedience to God's Words and service to His Kingdom (I Corinthians 12).
3. God's Word demonstrates that living for Jesus often includes suffering for His purposes (Acts 9:16; Matthew 5:10).

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CONNECT:

- When was the last time you found out you were wrong about someone or something? How did you respond?

GROW:

- READ Acts 9:1-2. Damascus was 150 miles away from Jerusalem. Why might Saul have wanted to go there to bring followers of The Way back to Jerusalem?
- READ Acts 9:3-18. The Lord told Ananias to go to Saul - and he went. Why would he have been afraid to obey this command? Does fear ever hold you back from obeying God's commands? In what circumstances?
- In vs 4, Saul learns that persecuting Christians was equivalent to persecuting Jesus Himself. An offense against God's child is an offense against God. Does knowing this impact the way we treat our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ? Will it going forward? What changes need to be made in your heart to allow for this change?
- Saul gave up his vision of what life was going to look like to allow God to work in his life and direct his path. Have you ever experienced a change in plan based on God's direction?
- God has gifted every believer with one or more spiritual gifts to serve the church. What is your gift? Are you currently serving in this capacity?
- We are reminded that Christian life often includes suffering because it is made up of forgiveness, love, service and generosity - and sometimes these things bring suffering. Is this a new concept for you? How might these things be considered suffering?

GO

- What can you do this week to extend love, forgiveness, generosity and service to our brothers and sisters in Christ?