



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

ACTS 9:20-31 / November 11

Welcome! Thank you for joining us in studying through Acts! Today we're studying in chapter 9.

Review: What happened earlier in chapter 9? What important person were we introduced to?

On Sunday, we looked at the conversion of Saul while on his way to Damascus.

Let's begin today by reading 9:20-22. What is happening here?

- What is the second word used in this passage? (*Immediately.*) Is that surprising to you? If you were Saul, do you think you would have responded in this same way? Why or why not?
- Look back at the contrast of what Saul was originally traveling to Damascus for (9:1) and what he ended up doing there (9:20). How is this possible?

Read Acts 9:23-31. Summarize the story in these verses.

- Why are the Jews so angry at Saul?
- Why are the disciples so untrusting of Saul (verse 26)?
- Why do you think Barnabas decides to vouch for Saul (verse 27)? How would you describe Barnabas in this story? The Barnabas mentioned here is the same Barnabas in Acts 4:36-37. In what ways should Barnabas serve as an example to us today?

A study note: The Hellenists mentioned in verse 29 were likely to include some of the people who were responsible for the death of Stephen; the death that in Acts 8:1, "Saul approved of." A man once holding the coats of the people killing someone for proclaiming the Gospel is now witnessing to them — and now they want to kill him.

- What does this teach us about the Gospel's ability to transform lives? How has the Gospel transformed your life in similar ways?

Look again at verses 29-31. What is Paul being faced with at this point? How was Saul protected?

- What are we told the climate of the church is like in verse 31? How is that possible, considering the things that have just happened?
- In what ways can you "walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" today (verse 31)?
- How can these verses transform the way we view the church and the mission of the Gospel?

Pray.

KIDS FOCUS

Saul was an enemy of God who wanted to hurt anyone who believed that Jesus was God's Son who came to rescue sinners. But then God sent His Son, Jesus, to find Saul and give Saul a new life! That's what Acts 9:1-19 is about: The enemy of God (Saul) believed that Jesus died for His sin on a cross and rose to life — Saul believed in the Gospel — and his entire life was transformed! Saul began telling others about Jesus in the city of Damascus.

- But not everyone was glad that Saul now believed in Jesus.
- Read Acts 9:20-25. What did the Jews (those who did not believe in the Gospel of Jesus) in Damascus want to do to Paul?
- How was Paul rescued from the Jews in this story? How would you have felt if you were Saul? Why do you think the disciples helped Saul escape?

Even after Saul left Damascus, some people who believed in Jesus were afraid of him. Why?

- Read Acts 9:27. How did Barnabas help Saul? How can Barnabas be a good example to us for how we should treat other people?

Read Acts 9:31. What would it have been like to believe in Jesus (to be part of the church) during this time?

Pray.