

Review

The book of Acts depicts the *continuing* ministry of Jesus Christ. Though he has ascended, the witness of Jesus continues by the power of the Spirit through the spread of the gospel for the growth of the church. Those who hear and believe the witness of Jesus Christ can and should be confident following his way.

Ch. 1 Waiting for the Spirit—Confirming the Twelve Apostles

Ch. 2 Receiving of the Spirit—Birthing the Church

Ch. 3-8 Witnessing in Jerusalem

Ch. 8-12 Witnessing beyond Jerusalem

Witnessing beyond Jerusalem, pt. 3

9:1-31

Who is the witness of Jesus Christ *for*?

Who needs it? Who can receive it? Who should hear it? Who needs to respond to it?

(8:5-40) Philip takes the witness of Jesus Christ beyond the Jewish people

(8:5-25) It is for Samaritans

(8:26-40) It is for Ethiopians

(9:1-31) It is still for Jews, too! (An interlude of “*The Most Unlikely Convert*”)

Saul’s conversion may seem the most unlikely of any. But the power of God to save is not hindered by any. God’s plan and purposes move forward through the means that he has chosen...and he chose Saul!

^{ESV} **Acts 9:1** “But Saul...”

Who is Saul?

^{ESV} **Acts 7:58** “Then they cast him [Stephen] out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man names Saul.”

^{ESV} **Acts 8:3** “But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison.”

^{ESV} **Acts 22:3** “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem], educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God...”

^{ESV} **Philippians 3:5-6** “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.”

What is the 'Resume of a Convert'?

Condition

(9:1-2)

Confession

(9:20-22, 28-29)

"He is the Son of God."

Conflict

(9:23-25, 29-30)

Confrontation

(9:3-6)

Communion

(9:19b, 26-28, 31)

"Who are you, Lord?"

Cooperation

(9:7-17)

Conclusion:

If Saul's conversion provides a template for the 'Resume of a Convert', then we all must submit our own entries of being in a condition of need due to our sin and rebellion; having been confronted by the reality of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God; being convicted and converted by grace through faith; giving confession of his Name; and joining in community with those who belong to the Way.

Conversion

(9:*18-19a*)

"12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life." ~ 1 Timothy 1:12-16