

Lesson 11

The Conversion of St. Paul

Begin with the Invocation

Pray for family, friends, and church family

New Testament Terms:

Damascus: The city in Syria, northeast of Galilee, to which Saul was traveling at the time of his conversion.

Ananias the disciple: The disciple at Damascus who received a vision from the Lord to visit Saul, that Saul might receive his sight and be baptized.

St. Barnabas, Apostle: The disciple at Damascus who received a vision from the Lord to visit Saul, that Saul might receive his sight and be baptized.

Tabitha or Dorcas: The devout Christian woman from the city of Joppa who was known for her charity and raised from the dead by Peter.

Central Thoughts:

- + Sinners are "dead in trespasses and sins," enemies of God, "spiritually blind," and unable to save themselves or bring themselves to faith in Christ. (See Ephesians 2: 1, 8-9.)
- + Sinners are converted to faith in Christ by the call of the Word and the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.
- + The resurrected Lord Jesus called men directly to be His apostles.
- + By the laying on of Ananias's hands, Saul was ordained an apostle and given the gift of the Holy Spirit for that apostleship.
- + The Lord calls sinners to minister to sinners.

Bible Reading:

Acts 9: 1-43

Review (If you are stuck on a question, you can find the answer by reading the verse number after the question)

Who was Saul? V1

What were the disciples of Jesus called at this time? V2

What was Saul to do? V2

What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus? V3

Whom did the Lord send to Saul? V10

What was the purpose of laying on of hands? V 17 -18

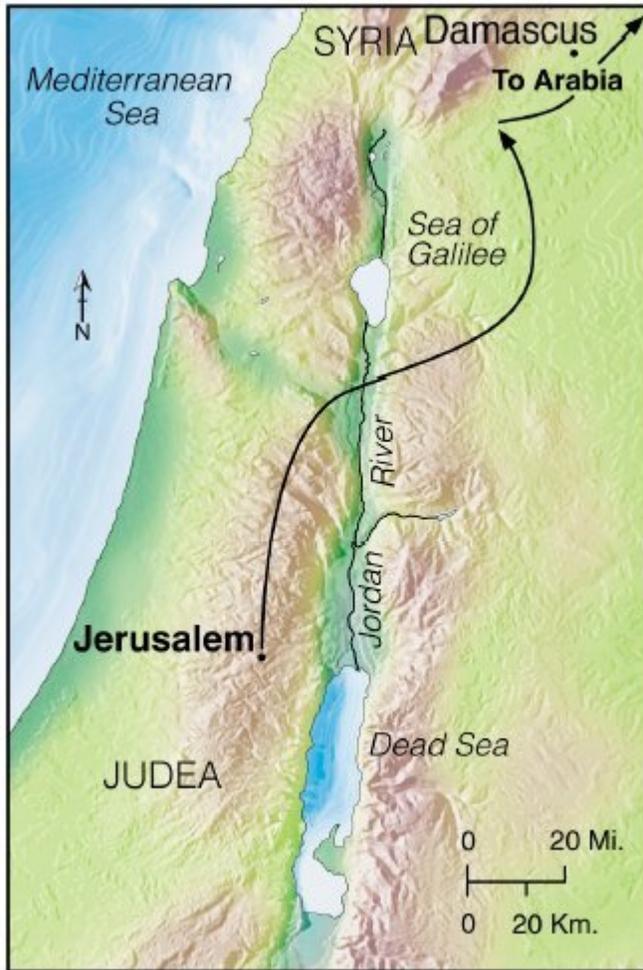
What did Saul immediately begin to do after his baptism? V 18-19

What did the unbelieving Jews immediately plot to do? V23

Where did Peter take the Gospel and perform miracles? V32

Whom did Peter resemble when he performed these miracles of healing and raising Tabitha from the dead? *Our Lord Jesus, whose Gospel he was called to preach. These "signs" designated Peter and the other apostles as the authoritative witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Church would forever be dependent upon their word-the apostolic doctrine.*

Why would God choose Saul, who persecuted Him so much, be used as His instrument? *God chose Saul, a sinner to show us it does not matter who you are, God will use you as His Apostle to spread the Word.*



Summary

The resurrected Lord Jesus appeared directly to Saul on the road to Damascus to call him not only to faith, but also to the office of apostle. By His appearance to Saul, Saul would become an eyewitness of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. The Savior and Lord whom he wanted to destroy stood before him in love, calling him to repentance and calling him into the office of apostle. By the laying on of Ananias's hands, Saul was ordained an apostle and given the gift of the Holy Spirit for that apostleship. To paraphrase language from the Catechism, it was not the laying on of hands, as such, that gave this gift to Saul, but the Word of God in and with the laying on of hands that bestowed the Holy Spirit and the apostolic office. The Word of God is always the means by which the Holy Spirit is conveyed by the Lord to "His chosen vessels" that they, by His Word, might be faithful in the preaching of the Gospel to others. The conversion of "Saul the persecutor" to

"Paul the Christian and apostle of Jesus Christ" became a powerful witness to the Gospel of God's undeserved love for sinners in Christ's death and resurrection. Saul's conversion, call, and ordination into the apostolic ministry is a miracle of God's grace that saved even the "chief of sinners," in order that he might proclaim the Gospel of Christ to other sinners.

Close with the Lord's Prayer