

## Welcome to *Faith Bible Church!*

July 5, 2020

### Order of Service:

Opening Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Invocation

Scripture Reading:

Announcements

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Message: *Ananias Passes the Test!* (Acts 9:10-19)

### Announcements:

**Yenni Sergott** needs letters of recommendation from loved ones to help her establish residency here in the U.S. If you'd like to write one, a sample letter is available on the bulletin table, or you can get one from her husband Dan.

**Bitely, Michigan conference:** Brochures for this July 31-August 2<sup>nd</sup> gathering are available on the bulletin table.

**Our church picnic** is on hold. We are waiting to hear about the availability of facilities at their forest preserves.

**Midweek Bible Study** postponed this Wednesday.

**Our offering box** is located just left of the kitchen door.

**Pick up** today's cross reference sheet & silence your phone

## Acts 9:1-9 *Saul's Threatenings and His Conversion*

Saul wasn't just *slaughtering* God's people and "threatening" to kill more of them. He was "breathing out" threatenings and slaughter (9:1). What's the difference? Breath is God's gift (Acts 17:25), a gift that gives life (Gen.2:7). But what you breathe *out* is what you *do* with the life God gives you. That means Saul *lived* to threaten and slaughter the Lord's disciples. But after he got saved, *he lived for the Lord* (Phil.1:21). You should use your breath to also! (Ps.150:6).

Of course, *Saul* thought he was living for the Lord *when murdering the saints* (Acts 23:1). He thought they were heretics who deserved to die (John 16:2). This is another thing that made him a type of the antichrist (Dan.8:24; Re.13:4,7).

He probably would have *become* the beast if God hadn't interrupted prophecy with the mystery. Psalm 27:12 talks about breathing out cruelty, which sounds like Saul, but we know *that's a passage about antichrist and his followers* because Psalm 27:10,11 matches the Lord's description of the Tribulation (Mark 13:12-14). This is kind of like how John the Baptist would have been Elijah if Israel had accepted the kingdom (Mal.4:5; Mt.11:12,14). They didn't, so another Elijah will rise in the Tribulation.

And Saul would have been the antichrist, but now another will arise. I say all that to assure you that Antichrist won't be doomed to be the Antichrist. It's like how the prophets predicted someone would betray the Lord, but it didn't have to be Judas. And the prophets *also* said there'd be an antichrist, but the man will likewise choose to be the antichrist.

Saul persecuted believers in Jerusalem so thoroughly they all left (Acts 8:1-3) so he got authorization to slay them in Damascus (9:1,2). That's *another* type of the antichrist. Saul got his authority from the high priest, antichrist will get his from Satan (Rev.13:2). Saul persecuted those of "that way" (9:2), i.e., followers of the Lord Jesus (John 14:6 cf. Acts 19:9,23).

The "light" Saul saw (9:3) was brighter than the sun (26:13). Saul knew *that could only be God* (cf.Ps.104:1,2). That

explains why he fell to the earth (9:4) like Ezekiel did (Ezek.1:28). As we'll see, the "voice" Saul heard belonged to the Lord Jesus, who didn't ask why Saul was persecuting *Him*, He asked why he was killing *His disciples* (9:4). That's because God takes it personally when you kill His people (Isa.63:9; Zech.2:8) and the Lord did too (Mt.25:40).

So Saul knows the light is God, and he knows he's been persecuting the followers of Christ, so he's figuring out that the "God" he's talking to is *Christ*. But he asks just to be sure (9:5). God told Moses His name was "I am" (Ex.3:14), and now 1500 years later He gave His full name: "I am *Jesus*."

"Pricks" (9:5) were the sharp *goads* (Jud.3:31) Jews used to prick oxen to get them to go where they wanted. Saul knew the prophets well enough to know that their description of Israel's Christ matched Jesus, and God used that to prick his conscience. But Saul didn't *want* to believe the lowly carpenter was his Christ so he kicked against the pricks.

Men always "trembled" (9:6) before God (Hab.3:2,4,16). But why was Saul also "astonished" (9:6) to learn Jesus was Christ if he'd suspected it all along? He was astonished *that the Lord had spoken to him tenderly instead of in wrath* as Psalm 2:5 said he would! The Lord revealed He was sending him to the Gentiles with a new message (Acts 22:15-18).

He told him to go to Damascus where Ananias would tell him what to do (9:6), but not *why*. Ananias told him to be baptized *for salvation* (22:16), but Saul was already saved on Damascus Road (Acts 9:6 cf. ICor.12:3). The Lord wanted him baptized *so the disciples would believe he was saved* (Acts 9:26,27). Saul wasn't saved under the kingdom gospel.

Saul's henchmen heard the *voice* (9:7) but not the *words* (22:9 cf. John 12:28,29) for the mystery was only given to Paul.

Saul was blinded by the light of the Lord's glory (9:8,9 cf. 22:11). But to save a blasphemer like Saul (ITim.2:12,13) God had to introduce *a whole new world* (Mt.12:31,32), a world the prophets knew nothing about—the world of *the dispensation of the grace of God*. The mystery (Eph.3:1-3).

# Faith Bible Church

[www.faithbiblechurch.weebly.com](http://www.faithbiblechurch.weebly.com)

July 5, 2020

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

*Thornton Harrison, Dave Stewart*

Morning Service: 10:45 a.m.

*Pastor Ricky Kurth*

Junior Church: 10:45 a.m.

*Myrtle Harrison*

Wednesday Night Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

*Assistant Pastor Steve Schwieger*

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