

Turning the Darkness into Light (Part 7)
Christians Have Pivotal Points in Their Lives
(Acts 9:1 - 22)

Introduction: Have you ever had a pivotal moment in your life? That moment that changed everything! I mean one minute life was just going along when suddenly, out of nowhere everything changed! Maybe you saw it coming, maybe you didn't. But you point to it (or them) and say, "that day, that moment, completely altered my life. As believers, we are not immune to those moments. Christians have pivotal points in their lives too. And it is what we do in and with these moments that can turn the darkness into light for us. Saul had one of those moments. Saul was a devout Jew – and one who was highly educated and respected He was passionate about what he believed which was his ancestors Judaism ...but he was passionately wrong. It was because of this passion Saul had such a hatred for Christians and the church. And it was so strong, that he sought to punish, persecute even stone (like Stephen (Acts 7) as many as he could find. Now Saul has obtained letters of extradition for any Christians he might find outside of his jurisdiction who had fled persecution to Damascus, some hundred and forty miles away. These letters were orders to arrest them and drag them back to Jerusalem for punishment, sentencing or worse. On Saul's way to Damascus, he would have what we would call a pivotal point in his life – something that would change him and his whole life forever. Notice this morning some things we can learn from Paul's pivotal moment that can help us with ours.

I. When they hit us: (vv 1-5)

For Saul it was just another day.

- A. Saul was a man on a mission** – (Acts 7:58; Acts 8:1, 3; 9:1, 2; 26:9) Today was no different, he was just expanding plan by going to Damascus
- B. Saul was a man with his mind made up** – when out of nowhere... (vv. 3-5)
 - 1. Put yourself on that dusty Damascus road with Saul and his army of men.**
 - 2. The Lord confronts Saul** (vv. 4-5).

3. Saul had to decide right then what to do.

He had options and so do we.

II. How they affect us: (vv. 6-9)

Can you imagine what it was like for Saul to be blind, waiting to hear from Jesus again?

- A. All that Saul thought he knew was right has now changed.**
- B. It is in these times our faith can be strengthened and encouraged through these difficult times.** (*The greatest question we can ask in a pivotal point in our lives is, "Lord what do You want me to do with this?"*)

III. Who else they affect besides us: (vv. 10-17)

- A. Saul learns our pivotal points often affect others too.** (vv. 10-12)
- B. Saul learned others can be instrumental in our pivoting points.** (v. 15) Is a good summary of Paul's life and ministry. It was all about grace,... (1 Tim 1:14; 2 tim. 2:20-21; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:12-13).

IV. How they change us: (vv 18-22)

Pivotal points definitely change us. The question is for the better or worse? And the answer is up to us.

- A. Saul's life demonstrates the new life that is possible in Jesus Christ.**
- B. What an amazing transformation took place in Saul because of this pivotal point in his life.** And the same Spirit that brought new life to Saul can do the same for you.

Saul was now a new creature, with a new life, a new purpose and new brothers and sisters and a new passion for Christ!

Conclusion: Everyone's life has pivotal points. And they're not all quite this dramatic as this was. But, they are life changing! We need to know how to handle them. We have seen what the Lord did for Saul, who would become the Apostle Paul. (Who would become a great missionary, plant churches spread the gospel far and wide and give us over a third of the New Testaments writings.) Just imagine what He wants to do for you if you will trust in Him today.