

# **Behold, the Works of God**

Acts 9:1-19

God has a plan. 15, 16

God's plan includes miraculously saving sinners. 1-9, 17-19

God uses people in accomplishing his plan. 10-14



**EMPOWERED**  
*WITNESSES*



## Acts 9:1-19

<sup>1</sup> But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. <sup>4</sup> And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" <sup>5</sup> And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." <sup>6</sup> But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." <sup>7</sup> The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. <sup>8</sup> Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." <sup>11</sup> And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, <sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."

<sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. <sup>16</sup> For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

<sup>17</sup> So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup> And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; <sup>19</sup> and taking food, he was strengthened. (ESV)

# Behold, the Works of God

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November 6, 2022

**Open:** When have you seen someone decide to follow Jesus whom you never expected would do so?

**Read & Discuss:** Acts 9:1-19

1. What do verses 1-2, 13-14 tell us about Saul's personality and his attitude toward Christians? Have you ever encountered someone who was hostile toward Christians? How did you react?
2. Based on verses 3-5, how would you say Jesus views the persecution of his followers? What various factors in this surprising event might have radically changed Saul's perspective? Why do you think God chose to use this approach with Saul?
3. How might the events surrounding his conversion have been in Saul's mind when he later wrote 2 Corinthians 4:6, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."? If this is how Saul describes his conversion, what words would you use to describe your conversion?
4. Given what he's heard about Saul, Ananias is clearly afraid of making contact with Saul (vv. 13-14). Have you experienced fear in approaching someone to whom God was leading you? What do we usually fear about sharing the Gospel with someone who might not receive it well?
5. How would you summarize God's plan for Saul in verses 15-16? How do you think these words from God might have helped Ananias to overcome his fears? What helps you to overcome your fears when God asks you to do something potentially risky?
6. What do you imagine Saul might have been thinking and feeling after this experience? What are some ways the decision to follow Jesus caused immediate change in yourself or in someone else you know?

**Apply:** How are you challenged or encouraged by what you observe in this chapter?

**Pray:** Share some names of people whom you particularly have trouble believing would ever decide to follow Jesus. Spend some time praying for the salvation of those people.

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