

# Acts 9

Occasionally, prominent people become Christians and very often when they do, the press pour scorn on their conversion and then go looking for things that they do or say that calls into question the genuineness of their coming to faith. It's as though someone is going to become totally perfect the moment they become a Christian! We have seen that with C. S. Lewis, Cliff Richard, Chuck Colson and so on. In some cases the person is a notorious criminal or some such thing and the question raised is - can they really be converted or is this some ruse to con people? Could they really sincerely come to Christ.

With Saul's conversion questions were asked and many doubts raised. Was this genuine or is this just a ploy to discover who was a Christian and where they were so that Saul could capture them and haul them off to prison? What are the signs that someone's conversion to faith is genuine? What would we look for, bearing in mind that none of us are perfect - especially when we have first come to faith and all the rough edges are still there?

Saul was out to attack the Christians because in his opinion they weren't Jewish enough - how ironic then that God is going to use him to reach people that are completely un-Jewish and bring them to faith. Ananias and Barnabas are key people in this chapter as they both in their own way are utterly vital in Saul being accepted and welcomed into the church. What they did took courage as it was quite risky to both them personally and to the whole early church.

## Read Acts 9.1-9

Why do you know about Saul? What was he like?

What can we learn from his conversion?

Compare your coming to faith with that of Saul. What similarities and differences are there?

Do you know anyone that has had a "Damascus Road" experience?

Why do most people not have this?

## Read Acts 9.10-19a

How do you think that Ananias felt when God spoke to him?

What does Ananias call Saul and why is this significant?

What do you learn about obedience and courage from this passage?

Are there people in your life that you have ever thought - 'they will never become a Christian'  
what does Saul's conversion say about that?

What is the sign of genuine conversion even if there are rough edges to be worked on?

## Read Acts 9.19b-31

What did Saul immediately begin to do and why was this important?

What was the reaction to this?

In Jerusalem something special happens that will bear fruit later - what is this?

Why do you think that Saul needed to get back to Tarsus?

## Read Acts 9.32-43

See how Peter has learnt from Jesus by comparing what he did with what Jesus did.

Read Luke 5.17-26 What similarities are there?

Read Luke 8.49-56. Again, what similarities are there?

How can we learn from Jesus and put what we have learnt into practice?

Reflect on the obedience and courage of Ananias and see where you could be used by God to bring someone into the faith and God's Church.