

Acts 9:3-6 – Who Are You, Lord?....Lord, What Do You Want Me To Do?

12/10/16 Sat Morn Prayer

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL – John Wade - sung Susan Boyle/Elvis Presley

*O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant, O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the King of angels; O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord.
Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens Of heaven above;
Glory to God, Glory in the highest; O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord.*

Act 9:3-6 *As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. [4] Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" [5] And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." [6] So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."*

Context/Biblical Background – Saul Is On the Road to Damascus – Acts 9:1-3

We were introduced to Saul in Acts chapter seven, as he was watching the clothes of those who were stoning Stephen. Again in chapter eight we find that he was voting for his death. He then began a personal crusade to wipe out Christianity.) [1] *Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest* Saul still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest Now he was wreaking havoc of the church in Jerusalem. He was one of the leaders and instigators of the persecution of the church in Jerusalem that caused the believers to escape from Jerusalem and spread throughout all of Judea wherever they went everywhere preaching the Word. Unwittingly, Paul was helping spread the gospel as he caused the Christians to flee. But he is still not satisfied. He wants now letters of authority from the high priest to go to Damascus. And there if he can find any people who are of this Way, following Jesus, that he might put them in prison. [2] *and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.* (He might bring them back in chains.) [3] *Act 9:3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.*

The Lord Meets Paul on the Damascus Road - Saul's Two Questions:

Act 9:4-6 *Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"*

- Notice how Jesus here so identifies Himself with His church, when He said, *why are you persecuting Me?*
- Paul was persecuting the church, but Jesus so identified with His church that any persecution of the church is persecution of Jesus.
- ***Why are you persecuting Me?*** We shouldn't only emphasize the "Me" in ***why are you persecuting Me***; we should also notice the "why" and see that Jesus is asking "***why are you persecuting Me?***" That is, "Saul, why are you doing such a futile thing?"

[5] And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

- ***Who are You, Lord?*** We must ask that question with a humble heart, and ask it to God. Jesus shows us exactly who God is, and He can answer this question. Paul spent the rest of his life wanting to know more completely the answer to this question ([Php 3:10](#)).
- ***I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It's hard for you to kick against the goads.*** I do believe that when Stephen preached that magnificent sermon before the counsel of which Paul was a part, though Paul tried to close his ears to the truth, that Stephen was declaring, that it was touching him, though he did not want it to do so. It raised questions in his mind. He was thoroughly schooled in the Hebrew scriptures. He recognized the things that Stephen was saying. Paul recognized them to be true from his knowledge of the scriptures, but he was fighting against it.
- It is interesting how that many times those people who seem to be the hardest people to reach, are the people who are actually the closest to receiving. The reason why they are so hard to reach is they are fighting a fierce inner battle. And so they react strongly against the truth because it's penetrating and they don't want it to.
- I believe that when Paul saw Stephen die and was participating in the stoning process in that he was watching the clothes of those who had stripped to throw the stones. That as he heard Stephen say, Lord, don't lay this sin to their charge. That that had an effect upon him. To hear Stephen, to see Stephen's death, I believe that God

had begun a work by the Holy Spirit that Paul was fighting against.

- This has been sadly true through history. Men who were convinced they were doing God a favor have done much of the worst persecution and torture ever practiced.

[6] So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

- **v. 5a What do You want me to do?** Few dare to really ask God this question, but when we ask it, we must ask it with submission and determined obedience.
- Saul's question was *personal*. He asked the question with a "me": "**Lord, what do You want me to do?**" We often are quite interested in what God wants others to do. But the surrendered heart asks, "Lord, what do You want *me* to do?"
- In Acts chapter 10 as we read of Peter being called to go to the Gentiles with the gospel, the house of Cornelius in Caesarea, as the Lord is preparing Peter, breaking down some of the prejudice that the Jew had against the Gentile. As the Lord had let down the sheet from heaven in the vision that Peter had, and the command of the Lord was, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." He said not so, Lord. That is an inconsistent statement. You can't really say, not so, Lord, can you? You can say not so, friend. Not so, to your spouse. But you can't say, not so, Lord. Paul has the correct response. What do You want me to do, Lord?
- If you call Jesus, Lord, that is correct. It isn't denying or refusing to do, but Lord, **what would You have me to do?**

SUMMARY:

- ❖ **What a wonderful conversion? One of the best conversion accounts in the Bible!**
- ❖ **Notice the two great questions – Who are You, Lord? What do You want me to do?**
- ❖ **Consider well, your answers to both questions.**
- ❖ **Lord, what do you want me to do today? And all the tomorrows!**
- ❖ **May we obediently emphasize the "me" in that question – What do You want ME to do?**

PRAY TODAY FOR: (Name persons, name things, take direct aim at the objective of your supplications)

- **Our Church, Nationally and locally; Our Nation: Our leaders; for kings and those in authority**
- **Police officers/military. Supreme Ct. Justices: John Roberts, Jr., Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and the one VACANCY**
- **Our President and Vice President: Donald & Melania Trump; Mike & Karen Pence.**
- **The new administration being formed! Positions filled so far: Interior – Cathy Rogers; Labor – Andrew Puzder; Homeland Security – Gen. John Kelly; EPA – Scott Pruitt; SBA – Linda McMahon; Defense Sec. – Gen. James Mattis; Treasury Sec. – Steven Mnuchin; Transportation Sec. – Elaine Chou; Health & Human Services Sec. – Tom Price; Commerce Sec. – Wilbur Ross; Education Sec. – Betsy DeVos; U.N. Ambassador – Nickey Haley; HUD Sec. (nearing announcement) – Ben Carson; C.I.A. Director – Mike Pompeo; Attorney General – Jeff Sessions; Nat'l Security Advisor – Michael Flynn; White House Chief of Staff – Reince Priebus; Chief Strategist – Stephen Bannon;**
- **Chairman - Vice President-elect and Indiana Gov. Mike Pence**

INTERCESSORY PRAYER FOR THE NATIONS:

ANGOLA - Republic of Angola, Africa - Pray for: *Those seeking to alleviate physical suffering; Healing of the invisible wounds; The Church, despite great growth, has not emerged unscathed from decades of conflict. Much prayer is needed, specifically for: Forgiveness and love in action; The right relationship between Church and state; Christ-like, holy living by followers of the Lord Jesus that commends the gospel to Unbelievers; Unity in the gospel; The challenge to biblical faith is great; Christian leadership is still the most critical challenge before the Church; Young people and children. Pray for: a) Primary and secondary schools; Ministry to students; Churches to increase their vision; Humanitarian ministries, such as WVI, Samaritan's Purse; Support ministries such as MAF; c) "Traditional" mission agencies; Media and support ministries: The Bible Society; GRN; Radio broadcasts, through TWR; Pray for more programs for these languages and a wider listening audience; The JESUS film*

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