

New Birth On Damascus Road

Acts 9:5-9



Rock Hill Baptist Church

605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Brother David Buffaloe
731-845-6104

bibleteacher.org

Acts 9:5-9 (KJV) "And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks¹. {6} "And he trembling² and astonished³ said, Lord⁴, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord³ said unto him, Arise⁵, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. {7} And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless⁶, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. {8} And Saul arose⁷ from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. {9} And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

Relationships, World views, and Activities

Everyone has a world view. World view is the way we

- 1 or NAS, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,"
- 2 tremo {pronounced trem'-o}, Present Active Participle, *kept on being filled with dread, terror, terrified, afraid*
- 3 thambeo {pronounced tham-beh'-o}, Present Active Participle, *being terrified and amazed*
- 4 kurios {pronounced koo'-ree-os}, the *One to whom a person or things belongs, King, God*
- 5 anistemi {pronounced an-is'-tay-mee}, Aorist Active Imperative, *cause to rise, get up, stand up. Same use in Acts 8:26 "... the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto ... Gaza, which is desert." and Acts 9:34 "... Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise..." and Acts 9:40 "... Peter ... kneeled down, and prayed; and ... said, Tabitha, arise ..." and Acts 12:7 "... the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. ..." See also Acts 14:10; 26:16; Ephesians 5:14*
- 6 enneos {pronounced en-neh-os'}, unable to speak *because of terror, dumbstruck, fear immobilization*
- 7 egeiro {pronounced eg-i'-ro}, Aorist Passive Indicative, *to arise from sleep or from death*

look at - and respond to - the world around us.

Young children even have a world view - usually a bit selfish! Children often put themselves first and all others second because, to them, they are *naturally* to be first. When my children were young my wife and I often had to watch the Christmas presents very carefully, lest our children sneak in and try to peak into the boxes.

Adults have world views - sometimes terrible world views. Hitler's world view was that the German people were superior to all others, especially superior to the Jews. He exercised his world view by designing and endorsing the German death camps. Much of Germany followed his same world view, for it is impossible to believe that the number of deaths attributed to the Holocaust were the work of one man. His sinful world view spread outward, like a cancer, and left a black mark on German history that will never fade away.

We all have world views, and our world view effects how we live our lives among others. We either support or don't support the Kingdom of God and His Church based on our world view. We support or don't support things like abortion, stem cell research, Darwinism, Yoga and Eastern Religious behavior, and the like based on our world view. Our world view either *leads* us to behave a certain way, or else leads us to *inactivity and apathy*.

1. We all have world views, and our world view effects _____ among others.
2. The *proper religious world view* is always rooted and grounded in a _____ with God, which in turn produces _____. Not that *mushy* kind of love that you see so often praised and elevated by humanists and romantics, but love that does the _____ toward the one it loves.
3. You *cannot* show the *highest good* toward others until you have a *living relationship* with the _____.

This man we read about today - Saul - had a world view, and it was a *religious* world view. A *religious* world view is perhaps the most dangerous world view a person can have. The Apostle tells us that **the *proper religious world view* is always rooted and grounded in a relationship with God, which produces love. Not that *mushy* kind of love that you see so often praised and elevated by humanists and romantics, but love that does the *highest good* toward the one it loves.** The proper religious world view requires that the Christian *show loving graciousness* to those in need - and that we love God enough to separate ourselves from worldliness and sin. The Bible says:

James 1:27 (KJV) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

and

1 John 4:8 (KJV) "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

You cannot show the *highest good* toward others until you have a *living relationship* with the *Highest Being*.

The only religion worth following is one that lifts up the downtrodden while it exalts and glorifies God. Saul's religion was not rooted and grounded in love nor in a loving relationship with God, but it was rooted and grounded in religion for religion's sake. This man would later write:

Philippians 3:5-6 (KJV) "[I was] ...circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; {6} Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless⁸."

Everyone has a world view, and your world view always *acts itself out in the things you do to others around you*. If your world view is rooted in God then your actions are rooted in Love. If your world view is rooted in *mere ritualism* then your actions are loveless, terrible, damaging. Saul was present at the stoning of the deacon Stephen (**Acts 7:58; 8:1**).

⁸ amemptos {pronounced am'-emp-tos}, free from fault or defect

Following this Saul went to the high priest, got permission to bring out more mayhem, and started back up the Damascus Road. You see, he's heard there were a number of Christians in Damascus - so he was headed that way to get more of them for Beth Israel - the Temple.

Born Again People Have Born Again World views

Born again people have a born again world view because they *know* the Savior Jesus. We are not merely religious for religion's sake, but we act the way we act because God - Who is love - is making us this way. A Christian knows God. It was obvious that Saul didn't know God,

4. Born again people have a born again world view because they *know* _____. We are not merely religious for religion's sake, but we act the way we act because God - Who is love - is _____ us this way. A Christian knows God.

because *his actions* were hate filled prior to Damascus Road. He was chasing down and dragging Christians to court to have them executed for preaching that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. When Saul was knocked down on Damascus Road the first thing he said to the Lord was:

Acts 9:5... "And he said, Who art thou, Lord?"

You see, he didn't know the Lord. It is possible to know all the terminology, to know all the phrases, to know all the words, to be able to define each theological nuance of Christianity but unless you know the Author and Finisher of our faith, know Him *personally*, then you're not saved.

Saul didn't know the Lord, so his question was honest - "Who are you, Lord?". Saul had been working hard for a *concept*, for an *ideal*, for a *system of religion*, but had never worked for the God Who is love.

Before we follow any man, we should look for the oil on his forehead. We are under no spiritual obligation to aid any man in any activity that has not upon it the marks of the Cross. (A.W. Tozer)

The moment a person meets Jesus Christ as Savior, the Lord enters our hearts. The God Who is love comes to live inside us, and we become what Jesus called *born again*. The Savior says:

John 3:6 (KJV) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

This is an absolute, a Truth that - regardless as to what evolutionists, scientists, and followers of that religion we call Darwinism may say. **That which is born of the flesh is flesh.** If one is born of the flesh, then that is all that person will ever be. That which is **born of fish is fish**, and it will never be anything besides fish. That which is **born of bird** is bird, and it will always be bird.

That which is **born of insect** is insect, and it will always be insect. That which is **born of vegetable** is vegetable, and will always be plant life. That which is **born of fruit** is fruit, and will always be plant life. That which is **born of animal** is animal, and will always be animal. Finally, that which is **born of man** is man, and will always be man. You cannot cross the species, nor can you take two creatures and naturally - through God's method of reproduction - bring forth a new species. That which is **born of flesh** is flesh, and will always be flesh. This is the first great truth our Savior gave to us. But the second great truth is this:

John 3:6 (KJV) "... that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Our Lord Jesus Christ made it very clear that *ye must be born again* if you expect to be entered into the Kingdom of God or expect to be adopted as a son of God. Being born *one time* is not enough to enter the family of God, for as Jesus said:

John 4:24 (KJV) "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and all that flesh will ever understand is the things of this world. Water *always seeks its own level*, that is, it will never go higher than the larger body of water. **Just as water will only**

seek its own level, that which is flesh will never be able to attain any higher than flesh. Saul was a *religious man* who was **born of the flesh but not of the spirit**. Just like water, he could never rise any higher than that top which he was born. Saul said:

5. Just as water will only seek its own level, that which is flesh will never be able to _____. Saul was a *religious man* who was born of the flesh but not of the Spirit. (**Philippians 3:5-6; John 3:6; 4:24**)

This man Saul *knew the Law* of God. He knew the Law perhaps better than anyone else in his day. He was zealous, hard working, a good member of Beth Israel, the Temple of God. By his own words he was **blameless**⁷, without error when it came to obeying the Law of God. When the Jewish rulers caught that *blasphemous deacon Stephen* and - according to their interpretation of the Law - they stoned him to death - the man Saul stood by and watched (**Acts 7:59; 8:1**). Saul was a man on a mission, a *fanatical* man who went from house to house finding Christians (**Acts 8:3**). Saul brought havoc **to the Church** as he worked to erase every trace of Christ from his view. Saul was **religious, righteous, really committed** - but he was a man who had no **relationship** with God prior to his Damascus Road experience.

**Born Again People Follow The Living God
Not A Mere Concept**

We read again:

Acts 9:1-2 (KJV) "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, {2} And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Saul was driven - empowered - motivated by power, rage, and misplaced self-righteousness. He went to the high priest to get permission to capture *Christians*. He was a man on a mission - but that mission did not have God's fingerprints on it. **Up to this point Saul served a concept or a principle, a person-less thing that we call the Mosaic Law. He, like the Scribes and Pharisees before him, had rejected Jesus Christ in favor of the Law.**

6. Up to this point Saul served a _____ or a _____, a person-less thing that we call the Mosaic Law. He, like the Scribes and Pharisees before him, had rejected Jesus Christ in favor of the Law. (**Acts 9:1-2**)

7. In the Bible the Creator is called _____ thirty times - fifteen times in the Old Testament, and fifteen times in the New Testament. *He* is not a *concept*, but He is a Person!

A *concept* has no power to save a person, for a *concept* has no ability to bring you to a state of *new birth*. Birth is something that only *living beings* are capable of doing. Things cannot *give birth* to anything but more things.

In the Bible the Creator is called *the Living God* thirty times - fifteen times in the Old Testament, and fifteen times in the New Testament. *The Living God* is not a *concept*, but He is a *Person* Who gave Israel the Law on Mount Sinai:

Deuteronomy 5:26 (KJV) "For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?"

It was not a *concept* that led Israel into the Promised Land, but it was our Living God. Because the Living God had a relationship with Israel, a personal relationship, Joshua knew that every battle they fought would be won (**Joshua 3:10**).

Psalms 42:2 (KJV) "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"

Psalms 84:2 (KJV) "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."

King David *hungered* to be in the presence of the Living God - as do all who are His Children. His Children, believers drawn by the cords of love in Christ Jesus, know the love of God now - but have not always known the love of God. You see, before we were saved, just like

it was with Saul, we only knew God as a *concept*, as *Someone* that was *perhaps* there, but never real to us. Perhaps before we were saved as unbelievers we took the name of God lightly, thinking little of whether our actions offended Him or not. You see, a *concept* cannot be offended. *The unbeliever takes the name of God lightly, perhaps using it as a curse, because to him God is no more than a concept - not an Immense Person!* But one day we who now believe came to a a terrible realization that God *is not, nor ever will be a concept ...* God is immense, awesome in His power, infinite in His eternity, as high above us as we are above the amoeba. A.W. Tozer stated:

"No one can know the true grace of God who has not first known the fear of God. ... The Law of God was given to a man trembling in terror amid fire and smoke ... When Zacharias [John the Baptists' father] tongue was loosened by the mysterious operation of God, 'fear came on all that dwelt round about'. Even 'On earth peace, good will toward men' was given to shepherds who were 'sore afraid' by reason of the sudden, overwhelming presence of the heavenly host.."

8. The unbeliever takes the name of God lightly, perhaps using it as a curse, because to him God is no more than a _____ - not an Immense Person! (**Ecclesiastes 12:13; 1 Peter 2:17; Psalms 111:10**)

Once we saw God as He is, we realized we fell far short of His standards. Like Isaiah we cried out:

Isaiah 6:5 (KJV) "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I

dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Loneliness cried out from my heart, and God answered. Fear cried out from my soul, and YHWH relied. Hurt cried out from my dwelling place, and Yeshua said "Here am I". We who are saved met Him, Jesus Christ, and were delighted at Who He is.

3. Born Again People Are Not Servants of Death, But Of Life and Love

Before he was saved Saul was a servant of wrath and death. Everywhere he walked he carried with him mayhem and destruction. After he was saved - born again of the Spirit - Paul passed from death to life through the saving hand of Christ Jesus:

Acts 9:6-9 (KJV) "... said, Lord⁹, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord³ said unto him, Arise¹⁰, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. {7} And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless¹¹, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. {8} And Saul arose¹² from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him

9 kurios {pronounced koo'-ree-os}, the *One to whom a person or things belongs, King, God*

10 anistemi {pronounced an-is'-tay-mee}, Aorist Active Imperative, *cause to rise, get up, stand up*.

11 enneos {pronounced en-neh-os'}, unable to speak *because of terror, dumbstruck, fear immobilization*

12 egeiro {pronounced eg-i'-ro}, Aorist Passive Indicative, *to arise from sleep or from death*

by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. {9} And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."

The Lord tells Paul to *arise*. This is a very interesting word in the original language of our Bible. This same word is used in Ephesians 5:14 where we read:

(Ephesians 5:14 KJV) Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

God told Paul to *rise up* from the Damascus Road - Paul uses the same word later in the Scripture that he would write under inspiration of the Holy Spirit when he says *rise* from the dead. Where else is the word used in Scripture? In Lystra the Apostle Peter addressed a certain man whose legs were *dead*, crippled, and unable to walk:

(Acts 14:8-10 KJV) And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked: {9} The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, {10} Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

to *Stand upright or rise up* on his feet. In other words, that which *was dead* was given life by the power of God. Get up! stand on your feet! In **Acts 9:40** we see that

Peter went to the house of a dead disciple called Tabitha and said:

(Acts 9:40 KJV) ... Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

Again, we see the word used for raising up someone who was dead to life. I say all this to reach this point, Beloved of God: Saul started down the Damascus Road certain that he was on a mission for a concept - the Law. Saul, though religious, though moral, though certain that he was right in his mind, was *dead* in his trespasses and sins. He was, as are all who are *born of flesh*:

9. Saul started down the Damascus Road on a mission for a concept - the Law. Saul, though religious, though moral, though certain that he was right in his mind, was _____.

(Colossians 2:13-14; Ephesians 2:1-9)

(Colossians 2:13-14 KJV) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; {14} Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

A Christian is a person who *met a Person* named God - Yeshua - Jesus Christ on their own Damascus Road. A Christian is not perfect by any means, but he is forgiven.

A Christian is a person who has had the *handwriting or ordinances* that was against him nailed to the Cross of Calvary. Our offenses were covered with the Blood of Christ. That same Blood brought us into the family of God so we can not only live in eternity with Him - but so we can *begin to live our lives in His kingdom family right now*. Before we were saved we were driven to follow *sin and*

10. That same Blood brought us into the family of God so we can not only live in eternity with Him - but so we can _____.

trespasses because - to us - God was no more than a concept. But now God is a *Real Person*, a *Living Person Who loves us*, a Person we hurt when we fail to live our lives for Him.

(Ephesians 2:1-9 NASB) And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, {2} in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. {3} Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. {4} But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, {5} even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), {6} and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, {7} in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches

**of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
{8} For by grace you have been saved through faith;
and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; {9} not
as a result of works, that no one should boast.**

If you are a Christian you are part of the Family of God, and are called to seek a place of *living and loving service* for God through His Church. God does His Work through the living organism we call the Church. He educates His disciples through the Church. He reaches out through missions through His Church. He tells others about the eternal life we have through Jesus through His Church.

1 John 5:11-12 (KJV) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. {12} He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

I encourage you - nay, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to draw close to His Church. We do not worship a concept, we worship a *living God* Who gave His life for us. Jesus is here among us, and watches all that we do. The Baby born of a Virgin was born a Person because God is a Person - and wants to know and work with you personally! He is alive!

Rock Hill Baptist Church is located between Parsons and Lexington, Tennessee, on Highway 412. Look for our sign! We have services on Wednesdays (Adult, Youth, and children's Bible studies) at 6:00 and 7:00 PM, Sundays at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.

