

April 19th, 2026

Sermon: ACTS: The Spirit and The Story | The Big Conversion

Main text: Acts 9:1-19

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION REFLECTIONS & QUESTIONS...

Key Reflections/Quotes:

The Identification of Jesus with His People:

"When Jesus asks, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' (Acts 9:4), he identifies so closely with his followers that their suffering is his own. The persecutor of the church is, in fact, the persecutor of Jesus"

The Erasure of Saul's 'Whiteboard':

"Saul was 'breathing out murderous threats', but his entire worldview was instantly erased and replaced by the truth of the resurrected Jesus. His conversion shows that no one is beyond the reach of God's grace"

The Role of Community:

"Ananias serves as a crucial bridge. Even though he initially wrestled with God's command to approach someone as dangerous as Saul, his obedience was essential for Saul to be filled with the Holy Spirit and gain his sight."

Key Quotes:

'When you have an encounter with the resurrected Christ, you have an encounter with what actually is... and it erases what doesn't need to actually be there.'

'The risen Jesus is so closely bound to his followers that their suffering is his own.'

Key Questions:

1. Jesus asks Saul, 'Why do you persecute me?' instead of 'Why do you persecute my people?' How does this shift in perspective change how you view suffering, both when you experience it and when you see others undergoing it?
2. We all have 'boxes' or constructs of who we believe God is based on our background and teachings. What are some ways your understanding of God has been matured, expanded, or even 'blown up' through your own personal encounters with him?
3. Ryan mentions that the Spirit is still calling, appointing, and anointing people today just as he did in the early church. Where do you sense the Holy Spirit leading you to be an 'instrument of grace' in your own context this week?
4. The message Ananias had to move past his fear and preconceived notions of Saul to fulfill his calling. Is there someone or a situation in your life that you are currently avoiding because of past perceptions? How can you seek the Spirit's guidance to respond as Ananias did?