

ACTS: To the Ends of the Earth

Study 21: The Apostle's Apprenticeship

READ Acts 9:19-31 and **LISTEN** to the [sermon](#) by Pastor Craig.

We often do not equate unfair and unjust suffering with being chosen as a child of God, but this is what was promised to Paul as he was confronted by the risen Saviour. Almost immediately after Paul's "surrender" to the Lord he begins to see this come to fruition, setting in place a life of continued fruitfulness born through persistent suffering.

Big idea: Being chosen in Christ and suffering for Christ are not antithetical to the Christian faith, rather they are complimentary.

Questions:

1. From Acts 9:19-31 and Gal 1:15-18 try to map a timeline of Paul's movements after he was born again.

Before Moses and the Lord Jesus commenced formal ministry they spent time alone with God in the desert. It is likely that Paul's time in Arabia (location of Mt Sinai, Gal 4:25) was for this same purpose. Why do you think these men did this? Share how you spend time with the Lord now and what benefits come from this.

2. Considering who Saul was before conversion, what was significant about Paul proclaiming Jesus as the "Son of God" (vv. 20 & 22)? What does this mean? Try to use other Scriptures to explain.

3. What was the initial reaction to Paul's message and why (v. 21)?
4. What initial response did Paul receive from the disciples in Jerusalem and why (v. 26)? What spiritual fruit might bloom in such situations? See 1 Tim 1:16.

How can we keep from growing bitter when we feel rejected by fellow Christians?

5. *Barnabas* was a nickname meaning "son of encouragement." Why is encouragement such a powerful force in relationships?
6. Read vv. 23-25, 29-30 and 2 Cor 12:9-10. What do you think Paul was learning as he immediately began to suffer for the sake of Christ? How might this be helpful to you at this time?
7. Looking at the example of Paul both in Damascus and Jerusalem, how can a new believer discover where God wants him or her to serve and how important is the local church for this?

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: God for His attentive ear and ever ready out-stretched arm to offer help

Thank: the Lord for His grace which is sufficient for every trial and difficulty he allows

Pray: for contentment in weakness, knowing that when you are weak, He is strong