

RCMI L-Path Teaching
May 14, 2023

TITLE: The Divine Turnaround [From Christ-Hater To Avid Gospel-Preacher]

TEXT: Galatians 1:11-24

Big Idea.: God caused the turnaround of one of the greatest Christ-haters to an avid Gospel preacher, leaving an impact for God's glory!

Introduction

- Acts 9 tells the story of one of the church's greatest enemies becoming one of its most passionate leaders. No one could have expected this complete turnaround to happen, especially not Saul of Tarsus who would later be known as the apostle Paul.
- Emboldened and seeing the evidence of the Holy Spirit in Saul's life, the Christians overcame Satan's barriers to see grace triumph over their enemies.
- Paul became a great leader in this movement of grace and good news through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. He was the anointed herald sent out by Jesus Christ to reach the gentile world.

I. God has a Divine Call for each one. [vv.11-15]

- God has called you through His grace.
- God loves you and wants you to live your best life. The only way to do that is to believe that He has a scheme, an arrangement, a purpose - a blueprint specifically for your life.

A. God's plan involves a DESIGN before you were born

- His call in Jeremiah 1: 5 says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." This is the same calling and plan of God for us today.
- Before you took your first breath, God had a plan designed for your life.
- This plan was the best of all alternatives for your existence. It is interesting to realize that God loved you so much that He took thought of you and made plans for you long before you were born.
- He made plans for each one so that life might be meaningful, beautiful, and filled with blessings.

B. God's plan was to overcome a DOWNFALL that took place before you were born

- Sin entered this world and it became a corrupt place long before any one of us in this room took our first breath.
- Sickness, sorrow, and death passed unto all mankind because of an initial sin in one human life. Part of this is the fault of Adam, the first man, for when he sinned he brought sin upon all who would follow; however, part of this is your fault and mine. You see, we were born in sin but we also have chosen of our own free will to rebel against God's plan. Whether through ignorance or open

rebellion, you have decided at times to do your own thing. That means that you and I are no better than Adam himself.

- No matter what you've been through, what has been done to you, or what you have done, God has a plan for you.

II. God has a Divine CHANNEL for each one. [v.16]

- It is amazing how people, or even one individual, can make such a wonderful difference in our life.
- However, more importantly, God ordained a Person who is the Divine Channel required for each one to ever discover the real purpose of life.

A. Jesus Christ is the divine channel REVEALED to us.

- Jesus is the only person who can redeem the desecration we have made of God's plan for our lives. He is God's divine channel for every life! Jesus is the only hope of the whole world.
- "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." -John 14:6

B. Jesus Christ is the divine channel RECEIVED in us.

- Jesus makes the difference when he is received into our hearts and lives, and when we determine to follow His will for our daily lives. Paul had Christ in His life.
- Paul found that he could truly serve God after Jesus took up residence in his life. It was not Paul serving God, but Christ living through Paul!

III. God has a Divine CHALLENGE for each one. [vv.17-22]

- When a person surrenders to Christ, what happens? He starts moving in the direction that is the best possible path for him.
- Life is filled with meaning and purpose when you are walking with Christ.
- Think of two things related to God's challenge for our lives...

A. His Challenge includes CHANGING us.

- Jesus doesn't come into our lives to merely get us to heaven, but rather He enters our lives to change us into God's image of who we are to be. He will not leave you the same.

B. His Challenge includes COMMISSIONING us.

- Once He, Jesus, enters our lives, He commissions us to serve Him. Every Christian is a servant of God. Every Christian is a priest unto God.
- We are merely servants of God. We may have a different effect upon the world, or be viewed as more important than other Christians, but simply faithfulness is what God calls for.
- We are not called to do what someone else does, but only to be faithful where we are, and that is where we will find joy.

CHALLENGE:

- The divine turnaround should result in praise to God from everyone!
- God is in the business of using our lives, no matter our past mistakes. Paul had persecuted the church and then he became one leading the church. God was using Paul and his past to be a witness of God's power and grace.
- God wants to do the same with you. God wants to use your life to be a light in a dark world. Share your testimony, love your enemy, give to the needy, or whatever else God may have you do.
- Use every moment for the Lord and you will find incredible joy in the adventure. Since we are only on Earth for a little while, we should do things that will shine forever.

DISCUSSION

1. What kind of divine turn around have you experienced in your life? Share.
2. What is it that gives you joy in your life today? Explain.
3. How will you respond to the challenge given in this message?
4. Can you give some names of people you want to evangelize?