

Our God is Mighty to Save

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[0:00] Visiting with us, that Bible in the chair in front of you, you can pull that out and go to page 99, go towards the back. Towards the back of that Bible, page 99. You'll find Acts chapter 9.

We're going to do the first 19 verses. Acts 9, 1 through 19 on page 99, that chair Bible. I'm going to read and then we'll dive in.

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus.

If he found any belonging to the way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And it came about that as he journeyed, he was approaching Damascus and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he said, who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

[1:07] But rise and enter the city and there shall be told you what you must do. And the men who traveled with him stood speechless hearing his voice, hearing the voice, but seeing no one.

And Saul got up from the ground and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing. And leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank.

Verse 10. Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias. And the Lord said to him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, behold, here am I. Here am I, Lord.

And the Lord said to him, arise and go to the street called Straight and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarshish. Named Saul. For behold, he is praying.

He has seen in a vision a man named Ananias. Come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight. But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to your saints at Jerusalem.

[2:07] And here he has authority from the chief priest to bind all who call upon your name. But the Lord said to him, go, for he is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.

For I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias departed and entered the house. And after laying his hands upon him, said, brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road, by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales. He regained his sight and he arose and was baptized and he took food and was strengthened. His diameter is 865,374 miles.

Am I supposed to baptize somebody with this? Just kidding. Thank you.

His diameter is 865,374 miles. It travels at 136 miles per hour. It puts out 386 billion megawatts of power.

[3:28] You know what it is? Anyone? Anyone? Yes, Cora. My brother.

No, not your brother. Me? No, not you. It's the sun. The sun. Temperature of 9,941 degrees Fahrenheit.

That's just a little hot. It's mass. I don't know how to read this. I did not know how to read it, so they put it like this. One million earths can fit inside the sun.

Light from the sun takes 8 minutes and 20 seconds to reach the earth. That's how powerful the sun is. But even with all that power, all that greatness, all that speed, all that grandeur, the sun cannot bring people to the place where they put their hope and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only God can do that. Acts. Just do it. Be who you are. Let God use you to proclaim, to fulfill His message, to proclaim His message to others.

[4:44] And what we are going to see in Acts chapter 9 is what we sang just a moment ago. Our God is mighty to save. Our God is mighty to save.

That's what we are going to see in Saul's life. God changed Saul, transformed him. God can do that to anybody.

Because God is mighty to save. Or in a statement, put in a statement for you. Our God is mighty to save. Through His powerful, unbelievable grace.

So don't underestimate the power of the gospel, or the opportunities He gives you to proclaim it. You never know what He's going to do. You never know if that person, your neighbor, who's just kind of weird, you give them the gospel, it just went in one ear and out the other.

Why am I even doing this? You never know. He's mighty to save. His grace is powerful. It's unbelievable grace. Don't underestimate the power of the gospel, or the power of God.

[6:00] Another statement. If God's powerful grace worked in Saul's life, and continues to work in our lives, He is powerful enough to work in anybody's life.

The same grace that transformed Saul, the same grace that transformed us, is the same grace that can transform anyone. He can do it.

Do you believe that? Because you see, with Saul, a major figure in the Bible, he wrote almost half of the New Testament books.

He was a part of two other books. He was given the most understanding of Christianity, what it means to be a follower of Jesus. He was the one who was part of extending the gospel to really the whole Roman world.

the known world at that time. And he was changed. Although yet, this is a conversion story, but it's not really a conversion story.

[7:06] It's a conversion story in the sense that Saul did a complete 180 degree turn, yes. But it's not a conversion story, in the sense that the person of worship didn't change.

Only the way he was understood. Because then Saul, it kind of clicked. Oh, Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Duh.

Yeah. And because Saul's understanding of the true God of Israel changed, he totally changed. He saw the resurrected, exalted Jesus, who is both Lord and Christ.

A more intense resurrection appearance than with the disciples, and then even with Stephen. A lot more intense. I mean, talk about the transforming power of God.

The most unlucky person became a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. It came through an unexpected opportunity in a surprising way. Stephen's death was not in vain.

[8:14] It wasn't. Saul of Tarsus, the one who presided over Stephen's death, who was on a ginormous campaign to destroy Jesus' church.

And God sovereignly and mercifully intervened in the life of this Jesus hater. He was just like his kin. He was just like Israel.

Stiff net. Resisting the Holy Spirit. Nothing like us, right? I mean, we're not like that. No way. And this is such a major, major event in Acts.

So major that the story is repeated two other times in the book of Acts. In Acts chapter 22 and then 26. Hmm, maybe this is important. Saul was on his way to Damascus to gather up some more Christians to knock them off.

Saw a bright light, voice asked him why he's persecuting him. Saul asked, who are you? Jesus revealed himself. I'm Jesus. That's the gist of it. Saul saw the full revelatory glory of Jesus and from this event, God by his grace transformed his life.

[9:25] a Christian persecutor turned into a Christian communicator. From persecutor to being the persecuted.

that's what happens. It's all of God's grace. Now let's be clear about something. There's no way that this guy would have ever embraced the Lord Jesus Christ.

There's no way. There's just no way. He was totally opposed to the gospel. God is the only one who opens hearts to his message so that a hero would run into the arms of Jesus.

This is what he does for everybody. He's the only one who opens hearts, who changes wills so that people go, oh, I need Jesus, I need to be saved.

He's the only, God's the only one who can do that. This is what we call in the Reformed camp, Reformed theology, irresistible grace.

[10:45] People resist the Holy Spirit all the time. That's what Stephen said. They resist God all the time in the gospel. I mean, you've experienced it, right? You tell someone in the gospel, they go, you tell that guy the gospel, they go, right?

But in the end, ultimately, isn't God stronger than a person's will? Cannot God transform a person's will so that that one willingly believes in Jesus?

They run to Jesus absolutely absolutely because our God is mighty to save. Yes, He is mighty to save.

Those of us who believe in Reformed theology, we understand, we believe that the Spirit of God takes the Word of God spoken by the man or woman of God to transform the heart of a hater of God into a heart of a lover of God.

That's how He can put it. That's what we believe. And the Bible teaches that. So let's rest on God preparing the hearts to hear His message of salvation and on Him changing the will of people to embrace His glorious eternal Son.

[12:07] And let us be faithful to keep proclaiming the good news of Jesus. I mean, the Lord saved you. Look at you. You think you're any better than Saul?

If you do it, you've got problems. You know, you're not any better than Saul. I mean, he was like the end all beat. He was like the coolest dude around as far as Jews were concerned. Let's be faithful. Keep proclaiming the gospel because God was mighty to save you. His grace is to save you. His grace is to save me. We're no better. Because there go I but the grace of God, right?

Well, let's get into that. That was all introduction. Well, alright, cool. Close in prayer. No, no, no. So our God is mighty to save. I'm going to give you a major statement and we're going to break it up into different parts, okay?

Our God is mighty to save even the hardest rebellious antagonists. Verse 1 and 2. Saul, awesome things are happening with Philip.

[13:15] Chapter 8, Smeritans, blah, blah, all these people come to Christ. The Lord says to Philip, go down and talk to Ethiopian eunuch. Blah, blah, he comes to Christ. Saul, he was still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.

And then he went to the high priest, asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus. So if he found any belonging to the way, both men and women might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Saul was still working against the believers. He had a highly hostile attitude against them, wanting them dead for their blasphemous belief in Jesus.

He wanted them arrested. And then to face death, so zealous was Paul, Saul, that he asked the high priest in Jerusalem for letters. He wanted the right to extradite these Christians in Damascus and send them to Jerusalem and then they can try them and kill them, hopefully.

I mean, look at this. Letters in the synagogues, maybe the Christians were still meeting there in the synagogues. Damascus was a commercial center. 135 miles north of Jerusalem, obtained the Christians, put them in jail, bring them back to stand trial, just like he did with Stephen.

[14:42] Oh, we know how that turned out. I mean, this guy was completely and totally opposed to anything that breathed Jesus. If he even said Jesus, he'd probably go nuts on you.

And notice, it says, any of those belonging to the way. The only way to salvation, to life, those who belong to the way. Christianity is not just one way to God.

It's the only way to God. Some people call themselves evangelicals. Some people call themselves Christians, they have a problem with that statement. Well, then you have a problem with the Bible. That's what the Bible says. And by the way, this is distinct from the cult. The cult of the way. Some of you know about the cult.

I think it came about in the 60s, 70s. They were the ones that didn't believe Jesus was God. They believe in work salvation. That's distinct from them. But friends, notice, God is mighty to save even the hardest rebellious antagonists.

[15:49] This completely describes us. We thought we were heading in the right direction. Saul thought he was doing what's right.

These are blasphemous words. They're blaspheming God. We thought we were heading in the right direction but we were fooling ourselves. Proverbs 14, 12.

There's a way which seems right to a man. But its end is the way of death. We thought we were doing the right thing. We thought we were going in the right direction.

But we were wrong and so was Saul. He was a hard rebellious sinner antagonistic to the gospel. But the power of God can save the most hardened, the most rebellious, the most antagonistic to Christianity.

He is mighty to save. God are you here this morning and you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ.

[16:57] Are you here this morning? You're not a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you responded to the truth of the gospel? Come.

Come to the Lord Jesus. I mean God has shown his graciousness, his love, and his kindness in Jesus. You deserve his judgment because you rebelled against God.

You're a rebellious sinner. There's nothing you can do to give God's acceptance. Nothing. Nothing you can do to give God's acceptance. Christianity is the only religion by which you cannot do it.

You cannot be good enough. Never. But Jesus was. He was perfect. And he also was a substitute for sinners. God's anger, his just wrath was poured out on Jesus.

For anyone who turns away from their sin and puts their trust in Jesus. Don't you want that? Come to Jesus this morning and he will save you. Just like he saved Saul.

[17:59] So, our God is mighty to save even the hardest rebellious antagonists transforming them. Verses 3-7. He transforms them.

Here the last major appearance of Jesus, Christophany in Acts. Notice, came about his journey to Damascus, he was approaching and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

A glorious epiphany similar to what happened at the transfiguration with the disciples. light. A light that outshone the sun.

Saul was seeing the exalted Lord Jesus Christ who through this bright light forced him to see how truly blind and how truly closed to the truth he was.

He fell to the ground and knocked him off his feet. He heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he said, who are you, Lord? Not because Lord Jesus, he's like, who are you, Lord, sir?

[19:10] I mean, who are you? I don't know, it's just kind of weird. Out of respect, not knowing who it was. I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

This is a huge statement. Because what Jesus is saying is to persecute those who belong to the way is to persecute Jesus.

Jesus has total solidarity with his followers. Because we are his body.

The body of Christ. So Saul was directed against Jesus himself. Which means he directed his efforts against the God of Abraham.

As one person puts it, those who are united to Christ by faith suffer as he did. And he identifies with them and their struggles. End quote. So Saul was against Jesus himself.

[20:15] Why? Because he was persecuting, he was going after Jesus' body, his followers, Christians. house.

So what Saul did against the church was really directed against the second person of the Trinity. The exalted Lord Jesus Christ.

So friends, when people mock you, make fun of you, tease you, slander you, persecute you, or hurt you, they're really doing this to Jesus himself.

just this past week, just yesterday, I talked with somebody who was there with us in Jerome.

And this guy was just being belligerent against me, and against Michael, my son, in Jerome. And so I was talking to him yesterday on the phone, and he said, didn't that bother you that he was saying all that stuff to you?

[21:11] Didn't it bother you he was saying all those mean things to you? I said, well, he was kind of annoying, yeah, but he wasn't really doing it against me. He was really doing it against Jesus. He went, oh.

And that's what they do. When they do that to you, understand, they're not really doing that to you. I mean, they are, but they're really doing it against Jesus. I mean, think about it.

Everything Saul stood against. Jesus and his resurrection, his disciples, teachings, miracles, proclamations, and even the sermon that he heard from Stephen a few days or weeks ago, all of it was being challenged.

But God is mighty to save transforming rebellious sinners, isn't he? He does. Notice what happens, verse 6. But rise, enter the city and it shall be told you what you must do.

Here's your instructions. Get up, go to the city. Saul at this point had truly changed. He'd receive a direct commission, he'd receive the direct commission from Jesus and he must now walk by faith, we find out later he's blind, ready to obey Jesus in all that he commands him.

[22:30] And notice verse 7 too. Saul. And the men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing his voice but seeing no one. Those traveling with Saul, they saw the light but they did not understand the voice or recognize anyone in the light.

So they would attest that something had truly had indeed happened. But they didn't see anyone. And this is important because Saul was just imagining something.

Oh yeah, Jesus kind of appeared to me. He did, really? Okay, sure he did. They thought he was nuts, right? No, these guys attested this was an historical event that really took place.

So, going back through our points, our God is mighty to save. Even the hardest rebellious antagonist, transforming them and humbling them.

Notice what happens in verse 8 and 9. Saul got up from the ground. He opened his eyes. He could see nothing. Seeing the great and glorious Jesus reduce Saul to a helpless person totally weak.

[23:53] I mean, imagine he's pompously, just a few moments ago, right into Damascus, that's right, you're going to take those Christians out. Now, what are they doing?

He's being led by the hand. He got humbled big time. Big time he got humbled. His blindness was an act of judgment, as well as showing him what he truly needed.

He needed grace. clueless. He didn't know. He was clueless. He thought he knew.

He thought he wasn't clueless. He thought he could see. He was totally blind to the truth. You run into that? Do you?

People say to you, oh yeah, I got a great relation with God. The Jesus thing, what did somebody tell me on drum? I believe in Jesus.

[24:59] He was a cool guy. Cool guy. I said he was the son of God. Hey, fish pump Jesus, alright.

What? What's that? These people, they think they can see, but they're blind. They don't realize it. I mean, that was you, right?

That was me. We thought we could see, but we're blind. The Lord humbled Saul to show how much he didn't know and what he needed.

And yet, though this was an act of judgment, yes, it was also time for reflection. He needed to process what just happened. I mean, wait a second, wait, wait.

Who is this Jesus and his relationship with Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ, so that he could truly see. And notice what happens.

[26:00] They led him by the hand, brought him into Damascus, verse 9, and he was three days without sight and neither ate nor drank. Three days he was blind. Three days no eating.

Three days no drinking. Now, this fasting is an act or a response, so to speak, of repentance. That's true. But not just repentance, friends, but also preparation.

He was preparing himself. And really thinking about and saying, what's really going on here?

What's really happening? And then sometime in those three days, the Lord gave him a vision that Ananias was going to come and he was going to regain his sight, he was going to baptize him.

He had this because we see it later. We're going to see it in just a moment. But this is what God does. He's mighty to save even the most rebellious person who's so antagonistic to him.

He transforms them. He humbles them. Oh yeah, did I have it up here? Oh yeah, bam, bam, bam.

Even the hardest rebellious antagonists, transforming them, humbling them, and desiring to restore them.

[27:14] Oh, is that good? God's mighty to save. He desires to restore people. He loves to do that.

Restore or deliver, save, whatever, whatever. I'm just trying to use different words for you here. This is verse 10 through 12. A certain disciple of Damascus named Ananias, Lord said to him, Ananias, here I am.

Or literally, behold I, Lord. He was called on a vision by the Lord Jesus Christ, so Ananias, he would be the means the Lord Jesus would use to restore Saul's sight, to fill him, baptize and introduce Saul into the body of Christ, the fellowship of believers.

believers. And notice his attitude of submission, obedient submission. Behold I, Lord, here I am.

And then notice what the Lord Jesus does.

Specific details, not just, yeah, go down the street, then there'll be some guy. You know, he doesn't do it like that. Arise, go to the street, this street's called straight, and go to the house of Judas, that's

the number.

[28:26] So 375 straight street, for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for behold he's praying, notice we find out what's going on, Saul's praying, and he's seen in a vision, verse 12, a man named Ananias come and lay his hands on him so he might regain his sight.

Saul's praying was an indication that he humbled himself, and he was seeking God's help, and notice the Lord reassured Saul that he heard his prayer and he'd be healed by one of his disciples. God was graciously desiring to restore Saul. That's his grace. He was going to show that in Ananias. Because the blindness was, it was a mark of the fact that what he needed, he was blind, and the physical blindness showed his blindness, and so he needed the Lord to restore him. He needed the Lord to show him that he doesn't see, and he needs to see, and the way he'll see is in Jesus. Jesus. And notice the phrase, lay his hands. Not just to heal, true, but more than that. This is going to be a commission. This was not only a story of a conversion, but this is really a story of a commission. We're going to see that in a moment.

[29:50] And notice how the focus is not on the healing. This is not the focus, but it's on meeting Saul, and what he would do, what Saul would do, and what God would do, and how he would restore Saul.

Friends, we see here, God loves to show grace, mercy, and compassion to sinners. He loves to show that. When you give someone the gospel, when you evangelize, make sure you say that. Make sure you tell people, you know, God loves to show grace, mercy, and compassion to sinners. He loves to do that. His arms are open wide to you. But you must admit that you don't have all the answers.

You must admit that he is the answer. You must admit that you're in rebellion against him, and that he had to live, he had to die for you, and he resurrected, and you repent, and you put your trust in him.

That's what he wants you to do. And he was like this. He did this with you, didn't he? Isn't he gracious and compassionate to you? Every time you sin, what must you remind yourself of?

[31:05] The gospel. You know what? I was so stupid that I treated my wife that way. I was so stupid that I treated my husband that way. I was so dumb that I treated my parents. I was so dumb that I treated my siblings that way. Allison, I treated my coworker that way.

I treated my neighbor that way. I was doing something when I was driving. Ward, we know. I was doing it when I was driving my car. Maybe not. But we remind ourselves of the gospel.

That's why Jesus had to die. So God, he is mighty to save even, oh wait, I have it up here, didn't I? Yeah, that's right. God is mighty to save even the hardest rebellious antagonists, transforming them, humbling them, desiring to restore them.

and converting, then commissioning them. So he, God's mighty to save, even these rebellious antagonists, he'll transform them, he'll humble them, he'll restore them, to the point where he converts them, and then he commissions them to go do his work.

That's amazing. What? Yeah, this is the kind of God that we serve. you go and tell people what God just did for you.

[32:20] You go and tell people how God was gracious to you. 13. 13. One writer puts this here in verse 13, how Saul, Ananias box.

He was ready and willing to be obedient until the Lord mentioned who was the person. Saul, Lord, I've heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to your saints at Jerusalem, and here he has authority from the chief priest to bind a whole call upon your name.

Lord, do you know who this guy is? I sure do. I've heard some stuff about him. He's done some evil stuff. Action on behalf of Jerusalem leadership now to bind all those who call upon your name.

Other Christians, those who call upon the name of Jesus, they're his followers, they're his disciples. Lord, I don't think you're privy to this information. Let me help you. This guy's done some bad stuff. He's a rough guy. Hey, persecute, imprison your people. Okay. Now we can sympathize with him, right? I mean, wouldn't you have a fear?

[33:38] The Lord says, hey, there's going to be some nutcase murder that's going to become a part of the church. Lord, I have a problem with that. Wouldn't you? Yeah, we can sympathize with him.

Verse 15. I think I kind of know what's going on in the night. I mean, call me stupid, but I kind of know what's happening here, says the Lord.

Notice the first word, go. And let me tell you why you have no need to fear this murderous nutcase is going to be part of the fellowship.

I've got a plan for him. Let me tell you about this plan. He is a vessel of election for me.

That's from the Greek. A vessel of election. I know what's going on here. Because see, I'm transforming him.

[34 : 42] I'm humbling him. I'm restoring him. I'm converting him. And guess what, Ananias? I'm going to commission him. he will bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.

We'll see all this later on in the book of Acts. Ananias, this murderous nutcase is going to play a huge role for me.

And not only was he chosen to proclaim Jesus' name to all, he will also suffer in bearing Jesus' name. As a matter of fact, notice it says, I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.

Guess what word Luke uses here that Jesus said? Day, D-E-I, Delta, Epsilon, Yoda. It is necessary for him to suffer.

This is my plan. He will suffer. It must happen. The irony, the irony in all this was that Saul would receive even more suffering than what he was previously dishing out.

[35 : 59] He would truly find out what it meant to suffer on behalf of the gospel. As one writer puts it, quote, the great antagonist of the gospel will become its outstanding protagonist.

And yet, as we will see, later on Acts, Saul would face rejection, persecution. See what's in 13 or 14.

They stoned him so bad, they dragged him out of the city, just knocked him out. They thought he was dead. And he got back up and walked back into the city.

That'd be kind of creepy, some bloody guy walking into the city. Friends, when we give others the gospels, when we give others the gospel, you never know what God's going to do.

That person would respond and end up giving countless others the gospel, bearing fruit for the truth in ways you would never have dreamed. Stephen's death was not in vain.

[37 : 09] We could have even titled the sermon that. Stephen's death was not in vain. God used Stephen. And you would say, Stephen, who knows how long he was a follower of Jesus.

Maybe it was only a few days, a few weeks. And bam, he was knocked off. And you go, what does God do stuff like that? Why did he kill Elizabeth Elliot's husband? I mean, he worked and worked and worked and those five men, they went down there and then they killed him.

They slaughtered them. Because God has a plan. And you never know what he's going to do. But our problem is this.

We often don't think God could do it. I know I don't. I'll sit there on my couch praying and I would just tell the Lord, I'll say, you know what, I really don't believe you're going to save anybody in Jerome.

I'll tell you this right now, I really just don't believe it. I struggle. Don't you? We doubt his power, mighty grace to work in the sinner's heart.

[38 : 27] What about that son who doesn't know Jesus? Your daughter, your neighbor, your relative, your friend, your co-worker? Do we really believe that God is mighty to save that person?

friends, we are commissioned to go and tell the good news of Jesus and may the Lord find us faithful to give the truth to our friends, our neighbors, that relative, that son, that daughter, the others that we know and care for.

May you find us faithful. And something else. What about your own life? Do you really believe he's changing you?

Do you really believe in the power of the gospel? Do you really believe that God is mighty to save mentally, psychologically, with your addictions of alcohol, drugs, pornography, money, eating, sex, do you really believe that?

I mean it's what we saying my savior savior. He can move the mountains. My God is mighty to save. He is mighty to save.

[39 : 47] Can he not transform that struggle that you're dealing with Christian? Can he not do that? Have you lost faith in the gospel that saved you?

That it's the gospel that changes you and sanctifies you Christian? Have you lost sight of that? I know I do. I know I do.

Praise God. He converts us and transforms us and changes us. Notice what happens verse 17. You got it chief.

Ananias got up entered the house laid his hands did exactly what he was told to do and laying his hands upon Saul express God's acceptance of him as well as Christian unity and brotherhood. Interesting. Ananias gives no word of reproach for persecution. You see that? The Lord says rebukes you for persecuting all these Christians.

[40 : 54] What's the first words out of his mouth? What's the first word out of his mouth? Brother. Brother Saul.

Guess what boy? Now you're one of us. You dishing it out now it's going to come back on you boy. That's right. Told him notice the Lord Jesus he's the one who appeared to you on the road when you were coming he sent me to you.

So you may regain your sight you'll be filled with the Holy Spirit. Which can only happen for Jesus followers as the Holy Spirit brought an understanding of the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ who saw he experienced water baptism as a way to show he was truly converted and really the fact that he would regain his sight was really he got sight of who Jesus really was.

So not only was this a physical healing but a physical healing that really described his spiritual healing that his eyes really were open now. And Ananias was the mediator to restore this sight to Saul that Jesus was the fulfillment of everything that the Old Testament talked about.

And then Ananias he sees the results of this is amazing who would have thunk Ananias he got to see this this nutcase become a Christian.

[42 : 26] Wow. And notice too by the way a non apostle mediates the spirit filling. The ministry of the church is expanding beyond the apostles which kills can I just give a note just a small note to this it kills the idea of some type of apostolic succession that comes from the apostles to that first person Peter and comes all the way down here.

It just kills that. Because who's Ananias? He's some dude in Damascus. Nobody knew who he was. He wasn't some apostle. The apostles didn't come and throw water at him and say okay you're good now you can start filling people with the Holy Spirit.

They didn't do that. There's no apostolic succession here. But God uses him because God uses all. I mean he God is the one who converts and then he commissions all of us all of you who follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has sovereign freedom to bring about faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and anyone he wants to because he's the one who can change the will of even the hardest hearts to serve love worship and proclaim him and proclaim him whether you're at home with your kids retired or there on the streets 5-0 watching over everything right notice what happens verse 18 immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales he regained his sight rose baptized took food was strengthened and remember laying the hands delineates commission and empowering for a particular task what Jesus described in 15 and 16 so you see this conversion he regained his sight oh yeah he got his sight and then he was baptized so it depicts that he truly came to Christ because baptism depicts that and he was empowered for witness he responded to the goodness of the gospel takes food he strengthened and we'll see next week he just goes to town he goes to town he was freed

Saul was freed prepared for his new mission of testifying to Jesus being both Lord and Christ friends God can soften even the hardest heart our most antagonistic unbeliever such she or he becomes a true disciple of his son I mean he softened your heart right he was gracious to you right I'm going to put this up on the screen for you I'm going to put the points that we look through our text again I'm going to change it up a little bit for us okay our God is mighty to save the hardest rebellious antagonist you transforming you humbling you designed to restore you converting and then commissioning you or change it a little bit more once you read that and then put me our

[45 : 58] God is mighty to save the hardest rebellious antagonist me transforming me humbling me desiring to restore me converting and then commissioning me let's read it together our God is mighty to save the hardest rebellious antagonist say me me transforming me humbling me desiring to restore me converting and then commissioning me amen that's what he does God's in the business of that remember how great God's compassion was upon you friends you were not any smarter than Saul you were not any better than Saul you were not stronger than Saul I mean what makes us so different from Saul nothing it's all God's grace all of

God's grace sovereignly being loving and merciful to you and to me to us and you know what the great part is what a perfect passage great songs to direct us to the passage a great passage to

direct us to the gospel songs to direct us to the gospel and then we're going to partake of the Lord's supper which directs us where to the gospel to the Lord Jesus Christ so take a few moments and have a few moments of silence where you can ponder and think what we've seen in God's word and then we'll sing one song we'll have our time of giving and then we'll sing one song together and prepare our hearts for the Lord's supper but first a few moments of silence for you to think and ponder what we've seen in God's word this morning Brasilia so people today we'll see you next season we'll see you next time we're ladies now wait to subscribe
I let you■■■■ our lateral national everybody and■■■