

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for June 2, 2013

The Conspiracy Against Saul in Damascus
Acts 9:19-25

Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19) was a dramatic event that forever changed his life. From this point forward, his changed life would have a lasting effect on the church and the world.

1. The Damascus Christians connected to Saul (9:19)

Saul remained in Damascus for a short time building relationships with the disciples there.

The natural result of belief is a change of those with whom we associate.

To believe in Christ without a close personal connection to believers in a local church is inconsistent with New Testament practice and teaching.

2. The Damascus Jews contend with Saul (9:20-22)

a. Saul proclaims Christ to the Jews (9:20-21)

As a Jewish person of high standing Saul was welcome to address the synagogues, and his words validated his encounter with Jesus and the ministry of the disciples in Damascus.

The statement "He is the Son of God" reflects Jesus' words in Luke 22:66-71 and Stephen's words in Acts 7:56.

The Greek tense that describes the amazement of the Jews in the synagogues serves to emphasize the change in Saul's life, as his goal was no longer persecution.

b. Saul proves Christ to the Jews (9:22)

Saul grew in his confidence and ability to prove that Jesus is the Christ. The Greek word translated "prove" (SYMBIBAZO) literally means "unite" in a sense of "putting together."

Saul confounded the Jews by connecting the Old Testament truths with their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. We find Saul later doing the same thing in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:27, 33-35).

People fail to put the truth of Christ together for a variety of reasons:

- Some do not have all the information (Romans 10:13-15)
- Some do not have any interest (Matthew 13:19)
- Some do not persevere (Matthew 13:20-21)
- Some get distracted (Matthew 13:22)
- Some do not have the ability (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- Some have a pre-conceived bias (Acts 9:22)

3. The Damascus Jews conspire against Saul (9:23-25)

“Many days” indicates that during this time is when Saul went to Arabia and returned (Galatians 1:15-17).

This plot by the Jews was coordinated with the help of the local governor (2 Corinthians 11:32-33).

The disciples are specifically described as belonging to Saul, indicating that he had led them to belief in Christ.

Ironically, Saul headed to Damascus with the purpose of arresting Christians, and Saul escaped Damascus with the help of those very same Christians.

May God give us the grace to stand firm in our commitment to Christ regardless of the obstacles that we may face.