



## Adult Life Groups & Care Groups

Shively Baptist Church | Louisville, KY

### Life Group Leaders Handout For Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014

#### Planned Schedule:

- 0900-0910 – Meet & Greet in Life Groups
- 0910-0915 – Focus (TBD)
- 0915-0930 – Teaching Time (Life Group Leaders)
- 0930-1015 – Care Group Time (Care Group Leaders)



### God's Church on the Move "God's Chosen Instruments"

Acts 9:1-19a

#### Message Outline

- I. God calls people to salvation (vv 1-9)
  - A. **God calls the spiritually blind (vv 1-7)**
  - B. The Spiritually blind receive sight through faith in Jesus (vv 8-9)
- II. God calls people to serve (vv 10-19a)
  - A. God's people are on God's mission (v 10a)
  - B. God speaks to His people and they know His voice (v 10b)
  - C. **God's call is to unique service (vv 11-17)**

#### Commentary

During our time together we are going to be emphasizing points I.A (God calls the spiritually blind) and II.C (God's call is to unique service).

#### GOD CALLS THE SPIRITUALLY BLIND (vv1-7)

We need to first dispel the notion that spiritual blindness is about naiveté or a lack of education.

- Saul was one of the most highly educated men of his day.
- Saul's mentor (Gamaliel) was and still is acknowledged for his wisdom and teaching methods.
- It wasn't a lack of information that caused Saul's blindness.

Saul is blinded by his own purposes – his own mission of devotion to a God of his own making.

- Saul was the ring leader of the persecution against the Church
- "I persecuted this Way even to the point of death, tying up both men and women and putting them in prison" (Acts 22:4).
- "And that is what I did in Jerusalem: Not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons by the authority I received from the chief priests, but I also cast my vote against them when they were sentenced to death" (Acts 26:10).



- It was his mentor Gamaliel that advised the Sanhedrin when considering killing the apostles advised that they should leave them alone, because they are either following men and will fail, or they are following God, meaning that killing them would be to oppose God. (Acts 5:38-39)
- I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to force them to blaspheme. Because I was so furiously enraged at them, I went to persecute them even in foreign cities (Acts 26:11).

Paul was traveling to Damascus when he was divinely intercepted.

- God interrupts Saul's purposes for purposes of His own.
- It was high noon, but he was smitten by a light far brighter than the sun (Acts 26:13).
- It drove Saul and his companions to their knees (Acts 26:14).
- All saw the light and heard the voice, but they did not understand it (Acts 22:9); only Saul understood.
- (Read Luke 26:13-14) - "About noon along the road, Your Majesty, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining everywhere around me and those traveling with me. 14 When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? You are hurting yourself by kicking against the goads'".

Two things are clear here:

- God was seeking to save Saul.
- God was not seeking to save anyone else.

How can I say that?

- All saw the light, but only Saul saw our Lord.
- All heard the voice, but only Saul understood it (Acts 9:7).
- What was said was addressed specifically to Saul, and not to the rest.

Saul has to refigure his whole reality because being confronted with the Gospel changes everything.

- In this account, Saul asked but one question: "Who are you, Lord?" (Acts 9:5)
- You can imagine the impact of the words spoken in answer to this question: "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting!" (Acts 9:5)
- He was taken to the house of Judas (see verse 11), where he neither ate nor drank (nor saw anything) for three days.
- I believe this was a very significant time for Saul.
  - He had been well trained in Judaism.
  - He knew the Old Testament well, and he thought he was serving God by persecuting the church.
  - Now he knew that the One whom he opposed, the One he thought to be dead, was alive.
  - Saul likewise learned that his persecution of the church was really persecuting Jesus.
  - Saul had a great deal of knowledge, but this encounter with Jesus changed everything.
  - Jesus was not a heretic or a revolutionary; Jesus was Israel's Messiah. This one fact forced him to rethink and to rearrange all of his theology.



## **GOD'S CALL IS TO UNIQUE SERVICE**

We won't get as detailed here, but please consider vv11-17.

These verses clearly indicate that:

- Ananias was specifically directed by God to a private ministry to Saul.
- Ananias is told that God has specifically chosen Saul for a costly public ministry to Jews, Gentiles and rulers.

Some ministries are public, some are private. (Reference I Corinthians 12:1-11)

- Given by God (vv 4-6, 11a)
- Given to all of Christ's disciples (v 7a, 11b)
- Given for common good (v 7b)

***“Consider how God used obedient & available individuals in “background ministries” to fulfill the purposes of God we see in Scripture.” (Examples: Ananias, Barnabas, The owner of the “triumphant entry” colt, the owner of the “last supper” upper room, the boy with 5 loaves and 2 fishes, etc.)***

***“How can this be an example and encouragement to us in simple obedience?”***