



Series: Unstoppable (Part 16)

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INTRODUCTION

The Apostle Paul is one of the most prolific authors of the New Testament in the Bible. We know from the book of Acts that he travelled widely. We also know from his epistles that Paul continued to counsel the churches of these lands.

But how did Saul the Pharisee become the Apostle Paul? In Part 15 of Unstoppable, we learnt about Saul's encounter with Jesus along the road to Damascus and how God sent Ananias to guide Saul in his conversion (Acts 9:1-19). In this part, we continue to track the "making of" the Apostle Paul (Acts 9:19-30).

After his encounter with Jesus, Paul was blinded and did not eat or drink for 3 days. We pick up after Ananias heeded the Lord's calling to restore Paul's sight and fill him with the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION

1. Let us take a look at how Paul reacted to the revelation of Christ and the reaction of other believers to Paul's conversion.

- a. Read Acts 9:15-16. What are the 2 points in the message that the Lord had for Paul through Ananias?
 - b. How would you have reacted to this message? Read Acts 9:18-20 for Paul's response. What can we learn from Paul's first response after his conversion?
 - c. Read Acts 9:23, 9:25 and 9:29. What was the reaction of Paul's former community (the Jews / Pharisees) and Paul's new community (the disciples in Jerusalem) to his conversion?
2. Read Galatians 1:11-20. Paul had all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, but needed God's revelation to put them together.
- a. What kind of knowledge did Paul already possess even though he was a new believer? Knowledge about the Old Testament? Read Galatians 1:14. Knowledge about the Gospel? Read Acts 5:27-32; Acts 9:19b.
 - b. Yet Paul still took 3 years to prepare himself before going to Jerusalem to meet other apostles. What did Paul do during this time? Read Galatians 1:12; 1:16-17; Acts 9:19-22.
 - c. How are you preparing yourself for your ministry? Consider your knowledge of the Word, practising your gifts, and seeking revelation from God.
3. Read Acts 9:27. Barnabas acted as the bridge between Paul and the disciples in Jerusalem, by believing in Paul and vouching for him before the apostles.
- a. Read Acts 4:36-37. What do we know about the kind of person Barnabas was? Why do you think the apostles believed him when Barnabas stood up for Paul?
 - b. Have you encountered a 'Barnabas' in your own journey of transformation? How did he/she help you?
 - c. Are there any opportunities for you to be the 'Barnabas' in someone else's life to encourage them?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO

Do you want to become an apostle?

Paul's calling was to become an Apostle to the Gentiles. A key part of Paul's ministry was ministering to the church in Antioch (located in modern-day Turkey). Antioch was one of the largest cities in the Roman world, and was an important commercial centre of trade.

In Antioch, the first Gentile church was founded. The believers there became the first to be called Christians (Acts 11:26). Antioch became Paul's home base for his missionary journeys. There, Paul and Barnabas "taught great numbers of people" (Acts 11:25).

Singapore has been prophesied to be the 'Antioch of Asia', most famously by the late Billy Graham in his crusade to Singapore in 1978. On this premise, what might this mean for you personally?

Further light reading:

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/christians-in-spore-pay-tribute-to-billy-graham>

<https://www.transform-world.net/newsletters/2008/08/Antioch.pdf>

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 9:15-16 (NIV)

"But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."