

THE BOOK OF ACTS

November 1, 2026

ACTS 9

SUNDAY REFRESHER

It is easy to believe someone would make a good Christian when their life already looks respectable. Saul's encounter with Jesus challenges that assumption. He was actively persecuting the church when Jesus met him on the road to Damascus. His transformation reminds us that salvation is never a reward for being good enough. Every one of us needs grace, and no one is beyond Jesus' reach.

Ananias and Barnabas had to respond to what Jesus had done in someone they had every reason to fear. Ananias called Saul "brother," and Barnabas helped the disciples recognize the evidence of his changed life. They did not ignore Saul's past, but they refused to let it have the final word. Their response challenges us to consider whether we are willing to welcome the people Jesus brings into his family, including those we once believed could never change.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

- *What did God say to you through this passage and teaching?*
- *Did God reveal anything new to you?*
- *How is this relevant in your journey to make disciples who Love God and Love people?*



QUESTIONS

- *When you think about someone becoming a Christian, who seems likely, and who seems unlikely? What do those assumptions reveal about how you understand your own need for grace?*

- *Ananias welcomed Saul as a brother, and Barnabas helped others recognize what Jesus had done in his life. What makes it difficult to see someone beyond their past, and how can we recognize genuine transformation without pretending their past never happened?*

- *Is there someone you have written off as too far from God or unlikely to change? What would it look like to trust Jesus with that person and take a practical step toward reflecting his grace?*

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 5:6–10

CONCLUSION

Saul's story should leave us amazed at the grace of Jesus. But that amazement should reach into our own story too. We may not have done what Saul did, but none of us earned a place in God's family. Jesus met us in our sin and offered reconciliation we could never accomplish ourselves. Our hope rests in his mercy, not in how favorably our lives compare with someone else's.

The grace we have received should shape how we respond to others. Welcoming someone does not require us to deny the harm they have caused or ignore the need for discernment. It does require us to remain open to what Jesus can do and willing to recognize his work when it happens. No one is too far for Jesus to reach or for his people to welcome.

Knowing that life transformation happens best through intentional, meaningful relationships, don't let this week's sermon remain as mere information. In the next few days, look for ways to teach, challenge, encourage and/or pray about what you're discovering!

