

# The Power of Regeneration

by Keith Malcomson

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*This sermon from Acts chapter nine focuses on the power of regeneration, highlighting the dramatic transformation of Saul (later Paul) from a persecutor of Christians to a willing and obedient follower of Christ. The sermon emphasizes the sudden divine revelation, the revelation of light and God's word, the revelation of sin leading to holy conviction, and the revelation of Christ in the life of a changed man. It portrays the journey of Saul from a zealous persecutor to a humble, surrendered, and prayerful believer after encountering Christ.*

**Scripture:** Acts 9:1, Acts 9:3, Acts 9:4, Acts 9:5, Acts 9:6, Acts 9:8, Acts 9:9, Acts 9:18, Acts 9:20

**Topics:** "Transformation", "Divine Revelation"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Acts chapter nine here this morning. And my message, the power of regeneration. Acts chapter nine, reading from verse one to verse nine this morning.

Acts chapter nine, verse one. And Saul, that is Paul, who wrote many of the letters in the New Testament. And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went on to the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues.

And if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound onto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth and he heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.

It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, wilt thou have me? What wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, arise, go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice and

seeing no man.

And Saul arose from the earth and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man, but they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight and neither did eat nor drink. Let's pray here this morning.

Father, we pray for the blessing of the Spirit of God upon your word. What is the blessing we ask for this morning? It is the genuine, mighty, powerful, nor God wholly convicting, wholly changing Spirit of God. We look for the blessing of the Holy Spirit of God.

We look for the moving and the power and the searching and the dealing. We believe that your Holy Spirit moving upon the word has power to do miracles, power to change lives, nor God power to forgive, power to regenerate. And Lord God make old men new men, nor God you have the power this morning right here in this gathering to forgive every sin, nor God to set men free, nor God to set us at liberty.

We do believe in the power of your Holy Spirit that breathes upon the word of God. And we ask for it right now. Will you breathe not only upon the word of God, but apply it to the hearts of every individual in this room this morning.

We bless you. We exalt Christ and we give Christ all the glory and all the praise and all the honor this morning. Amen.

Amen. My message here from Acts chapter nine is the power of regeneration. The word regeneration in our English version of the Bible is only used twice in our New Testament.

It's once used in Matthew chapter 19 and verse 28 for what is gonna happen to our world. It is a prophetic verse. And when it talks about regeneration, it is talking what's gonna happen to our entire world on that day when Christ comes on the clouds of heaven.

You know what he's saying? This world is gonna be regenerated. And that's what it says in Matthew 19 verse 28. But that's not the regeneration we're talking about.

That's gonna be a regeneration of our entire world when Christ returns again. And he is returning again. He is actually gonna come.

And I assure you, when Christ places his feet upon that mountain, this entire world is gonna utterly change. It will never be the same. The glory of the knowledge of the Lord is gonna cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

I mean, every nation is gonna be blanketed with the knowledge of who Christ is. All governments are gonna bow their knee. All thrones are gonna be thrown at his feet.

That is regeneration. What is gonna happen in the future on a global worldwide scale. But I'm not talking about that.

I am talking about regeneration, yes. But I'm not talking about that particular regeneration. I am talking about something that happens now to an individual.

One man, one woman, very personally. And it's like the world being regenerated, but it's on a personal individual basis. Listen to me very carefully.

Don't turn there, but I want you to listen. This is the second time the word is used in our Bible. In Titus chapter three and verse five, listen carefully what it says.

Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us. This verse is talking about salvation, getting saved, that God shows an individual mercy and he saves them. But listen to the next sentence.

How does he save you? How does he reveal his mercy to you? How does he reach down and show you mercy? Or how does he save you from your sin and from yourself and from the devil and from an eternity in hell? How does he do it? Well, he tells you by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. How does he save you? By regeneration or by renewing. In other words, this word regeneration is talking about getting saved or have an experience with Jesus Christ where you are radically changed.

And the next verse that goes on, which he shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our savior. Please notice here, this scripture that's talking about regeneration or the power of regeneration. It's the same as being saved or being renewed by the Holy Ghost.

Or in verse seven, it says that being justified by his grace, it is being justified or made righteous or put in a right relationship with God. Now hold this all for a second. I'm going somewhere.

I'm going to Acts chapter nine, but I've got to explain this. What is regeneration? It's an old fashioned term that we have used in every spiritual revival for 500 years, apart from our generation. In my lifetime, they threw it out.

They updated the language and don't talk about regeneration anymore. Do you know what regeneration is? It's the born again experience. It is being saved by the grace of God.

It is a divine encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ where all of your sins are forgiven and you are radically changed. Listen carefully here, as we just introduced this message. The word regeneration is the Greek word, palangesinia, get that Genesis in there.

Palangesinia, what does the word regeneration means? Do you know how they used this word in the first century and the days of Christ and the apostles? Listen, they used this word palangesia all across the Roman empire in the Greek language. Do you know how they used it when springtime came? In other words, it was the change that took place right across nature. When winter is left behind and spring begins, that is palangesia or that is regeneration.

When that season of death, of barrenness, of darkness, of coldness is left behind and a new season begins to break anew. What this word regeneration means is a breaking forth of new life. It means a new beginning or a new season or a time to begin to grow.

The Greek word regeneration means rebirth, restoration or a total renovation of everything. I mean, when it happens to an individual, your emotions are gonna be renovated, your choices, your will is gonna be renovated, your desires are renovated, how you think is renovated, your speech is renovated, your actions are renovated. This is regeneration.

Or we could also say to be born again of the spirit of God. Do you know Christ said, you must be born again. Do you know Peter the apostle talked about being reborn of the spirit of God.

John the apostle preached many times over to be born of God. There is a experience of being birthed of God or being born again. We know right across our cities and our nations and even in our families, most of you sitting before me were sprinkled as little babies.

Do you know what the priest or minister said over you as he sprinkled that little bit of water upon your blessed head, I can assure you. He actually said, this child is regenerated. This child is made new.

This child is now a member of the body of Christ. This child has a new nature. That's what the church out there says that a child sprinkled by water can become regenerate within him.

I wanna show you by good experience in Limerick city of the thousands I've met who have had water sprinkled on their head. They still blaspheme Christ. They still hate their neighbor.

They're filled with bitterness, anger, adultery, immorality, fornication. They curse like a trooper. I have never known a nation like Ireland for blasphemy amongst the older generation.

The little granny who's the most religious person on the whole street, she blasphemes more than British soldiers do. I promise you that is the truth. I have never heard a nation blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ more than this particular one.

Well, they're all regenerate, aren't they? Or are they? They're absolutely not. My friends, as I bring you to Acts chapter nine here this morning, what is regeneration? It is the new birth or an experience with Christ where he changes everything. Or regeneration is the life of God within your soul.

It is a resurrection from the dead. It is the spirit of God coming to live within you. It is the life of God coming to change your life in a radical and a simple way.

From Acts chapter nine, I have three points for you here this morning. And my first point in showing you what regeneration is and the conversion of soul of Tarsus, and this is my first point, a portrait of a sinner, a portrait of a sinner. I believe Acts chapter nine is painting a portrait of what it means for a sinner.

Or a portrait of a sinner is revealing what a sinner looks like, who's gonna be regenerate. Who was Saul who we find in Acts chapter nine experiencing regeneration? Let me tell you, he was a Jew. I mean, a Jew.

I mean, a religious man. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He was of the tribe of Benjamin.

And notice with me, he was called Saul of Tarsus. Do you realize King Saul was from his tribe? And there was only ever one King came out of Benjamin, and that was King Saul in the Old Testament. And here you have this little baby.

As a child, circumcised on the eighth day was called Saul after King Saul of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a son of a Pharisee, trained under Emilio, the greatest Bible teacher of that generation. He was very close to the Sanhedrin, the 70 religious leaders over all of Judaism.

He was more than that. He was not an atheist. He was not a law breaker.

He was a trained theologian. He devoured the Bible that we have in our hands, the Old Testament. He knew it inside out, back to front.

He believed it, he prayed it, he lived it. He was zealous over it. I mean, he was a trained theologian.

He could quote up entire books, if not entire chapters. He was a religious zealot. He was fanatical about the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

He was fanatical about keeping the 10 commandments. You're not to lie. You're not to commit adultery.

You must not steal. You must not envy a man's wife. He was utterly consumed with morality and righteousness.

He believed in God. He believed in a judgment day. He believed in heaven and hell.

He believed there was gonna be a reckoning with the real God. He believed in repentance. He believed in holiness.

But do you know who this sinner was in Acts chapter nine? He was more than that. Listen, he was a vicious persecutor of the real church of God. Do you know about two or three years ago, I was driving down a common street and I saw a sight that is engraved upon my mind this morning.

I've never forgotten that. I believe I saw a Saul of Tarsus who is yet to be regenerated. I believe he was a chief of sinners on this high street.

In fact, I believe he was one of the worst sinners this city has ever seen. And I can still see the picture of him in my mind. I'll never forget him.

I'll never forget seeing him just as he walked on that high street. It is written on my mind. You say, was he a drug seller? No.

You say, was he a murderer? Absolutely not. You say, was he a liar and a blasphemer? No. You say, was he an atheist? No.

Was he a Muslim? No. Do you know what he was? He was a young, I would say about a 19 year old Jesuit priest. And I'll never forget the look in his eye.

I wish you in this room had the look that he had in his eye. He was holding his rosary beads. And as he walked down that street, he didn't see any building, didn't see any car, didn't see any person.

And he is determinedly walking down with his black gown down to his feet. And he's marching down that street, praying, holding that rosary bead. I'll never forget the look in that eye of determination, of utter radical fanaticism, of utter dedication.

He is not a man playing a game. And you know what? As soon as I saw him, I didn't mock him. I'm not making fun of him this morning.

I said, that's a man I wanna see regenerate of the spirit of God. I believe there you have the chief of sinners and a man for whom Christ died by his good works, by his religion and by his morality. He may think that he is serving God and yet he doesn't realize how far away that he is from the God of the Bible.

You see, remember who this sinner is I'm telling you about. He is a man who eventually would write 14 books of the New Testament. He would be the apostle to the Gentiles.

He would raise up churches all the way from Israel through to the nation of Spain. He was the pioneer of the gospel. He saw the crippled healed instantly, the lame, the dead were raised.

He's seen multitudes born again of the spirit of God and the Holy Spirit being poured upon him. I wanna paint for you briefly a portrait, a picture of the true soul of Tarsus because you know what? You will never know the power of regeneration. You won't even believe me about the power of regeneration.

If I do not paint a picture for you of what sort of sinner, this religious theologian, this radical fanatical man who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If you don't see him for what he is, you'll never believe my message. You see, I believe regeneration isn't man's work to get to God.

I don't even believe it's talking about your responsibility of repenting and of believing and of seeking after Christ. Regeneration is God's work towards a man when he saves him. I believe in repentance, you know I do.

I preach it with all my heart. You know I believe to seek the Lord with all of your heart and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. But what I'm talking to you about is God's perspective on regeneration.

Listen to me as I paint a portrait of this sinner in Acts chapter 19. The first mention of soul of Tarsus is at the end of Acts chapter seven. And listen to me, I'm gonna briefly cover 26 different scriptures that describe a portrait of a sinner called Saul of Tarsus, 26 verses.

And in those 26 verses are 21 actions by the sinner against the church, against the truth and against Jesus Christ. You have this story repeated in Acts nine, chapter 22 and again in chapter 26. The first mention of Saul is at the end of Acts chapter seven and we see him assisting in the brutal murder of Stephen, one of the first Christian preachers of the church at Jerusalem.

Listen to what it says. And they cast Stephen out of the city and they stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

And they stoned Stephen. The first time you see Saul, what's he doing? He's standing with respect, with authority, with absolute radical religious determined venom. And he's 100% sincere.

Never you mock the sincerity of a Muslim or a Jesuit. I tell you, God takes note of sincerity, even in the heart of a sinner's heart. Those who sin against them ignorantly, he does see it.

But the first time we see Saul, he is there assisting the murder of Stephen. I mean, an on fire, Holy Ghost preacher, a man with the power of God upon him. And what do you see of Saul? He is assisting the murder of this great preacher of the gospel.

I mean, Stephen was an apostle Paul in the making. If he had not died, I believe he would have had a greater ministry than the apostle Paul. And yet we see him getting stoned to death for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Also, we see him consenting unto death. The word of God said, he consented unto the death of Stephen. Do you know the word consenting means with pleasure to approve of it.

He was applauding the death, let him die. In fact, it was according to the word of God. You see, Saul thought he was serving God.

He said, I've got scripture for this, Deuteronomy 17. Here are the witnesses. They heard him, they saw him, they're witnesses.

We are doing this biblically. And they are caught up with religious zeal. You know what they're doing? He is consenting unto the death of Saul.

Not only assisting, but he is consenting and saying, go to it guys, go to it guys. I'm totally behind you. And that's chapter eight, verse one.

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time, there was a great persecution against the church of Jerusalem. Do you know what this time was the beginning of a major citywide persecution of every gathering of Christians, of every preacher and of every individual Christian, man or woman, young or old.

Do you know who was behind it? Saul of Tarsus. He was the driving force behind this. It goes on there to say, and all the Christians were scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

This was a major scattering of all the Christians within a city. Who done it? Saul of Tarsus. I want you to see who he is because I'm gonna show you a man regenerate by the spirit of God.

Can God get a hold of such a man? I mean, can God break in on a sinner in this city? Absolutely. The Bible also said he voted. When they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

He was very vocal. He was audible. He was voting.

We talk about voting in these days. You ought to vote. Here is Saul saying, I'll vote for the death of a Christian preacher.

Let him die. Let him die. It says in chapter eight, verse eight, Saul, and notice it said Saul, not just one of many, Saul made havoc of the church.

It means to thoroughly destroy, to ravage, to utterly devastate, and to continue doing it day after day and week after week. It goes on to say that he entered into every house. He broke into homes.

He bust the door in. He walked in on a family meal and he hailed men and women away to prison. Do you know what that old word hailing away means? It means violently pulling, dragging to forcibly make them come with you.

Do you know that it actually says three times that he not only done it to men, he done it to women. Three times it said that he would grab the women and drag them out of the homes and drag them off to be punished. Do you realize Saul of Tarsus was so radical? He had no thought about femininity.

Men often read the letters of Paul later on as a Christian apostle. And they say, I think Paul had a problem with women. Oh, no, you don't know what this man got saved out of.

I assure you, he was no women's rights man before he got saved. You ladies would not have wanted to meet this man on a dark night down an alleyway, I can assure you. You see, it states that he did this on women as well.

He had no respect from women or for women. Do you know that that's religion? There is no respect. Show me real Christianity and I'll show you a remarkable respect for women.

And don't tell me the world out there respect women in this generation. They are destroying what a woman is. They hate femininity.

They're undermining it. So we don't know what a man and a woman is anymore. Do you know Paul could care less about women, the weaker sex.

He had no respect for them at all. And it says that he committed them to prison. Four times he said he threw men and women into prison.

He done it. He dragged them there. He voted against them.

He had them thrown in prison. Who were they? Husbands, wives, fathers, children, brothers, sisters. I mean the best Christians in Jerusalem.

You know what? They've been saved in revival. They've had outpourings of the Holy Spirit. And that church, they've had 12 apostles preaching to them every week for six years.

That's the church that these Christians come out of. They are born again. They are well-taught.

They are filled with the Holy Spirit. They've had revival after revival after revival and they're spreading everywhere. And do you know what he's doing? He is putting them in prison.

That's what this man is doing. And so yet breathing out threatenings. In Acts chapter nine, where we come to here this morning in verse one, so yet breathing out.

You know that word breathing, what it means in the Greek? It doesn't mean just to breathe out. It means your life breath to inhale. In other words, every breath, this is how you live.

You can't live without this. This is your breath life. This is what motivates you.

This is what makes you get up in the morning. This is what makes you put all your money and energy and effort. This is what it is.

Breathing out threatenings. Do you know what it's like for someone to threaten you? If you do that, I'm gonna do this to you. He actually breathed out and he inhaled and he lived by threats against Christians.

I'm gonna do this to you. Do you know if you sat down with Saul, all he ever talked about was threats. I'm gonna destroy that church.

I'm gonna put them in prison. I hate them. I'm gonna annihilate the name of Christ since I'm showing you the power of regeneration.

But you've gotta see a man who actually experienced real genuine regeneration. His breath life is to breathe out threats against real Christians and slaughter. In other words, he not only threatened, these weren't just words.

You know, I've had people before. One morning we ran a Bible school. We ran the school here in Limerick and we got back to Cork.

And early in the morning, I got up and I had about seven messages. Thank God I turned my mobile off at night. Always make sure you turn that thing off.

But I got up early before Candace was awake and I started listening to him. There's 40 of us and we're coming to get you. And the next school you're gonna run, we're gonna destroy you.

We're gonna attack. You're not gonna run that thing. The last thing I heard, he was thrown in a prison in Belfast for attacking a policeman.

This is a guy who said he was born again. He talked in tongues. He prophesied, cast out demons, healed the sick, but he was an absolute drunken rogue.

Be very careful. You see, Saul not only threatened, he breathed out slaughter. That means killing and murders.

Three times he's associated personally with killing Christians. He not only said it, he actually done it. He went to the high priest and desired letters for Damascus.

He wanted to travel to foreign cities, strange cities at a distance. I'll go 200 miles. I'll travel 100 miles.

I'll annihilate this gospel. I don't believe it. I don't believe a word of it.

I believe it's heresy. I utterly reject it. I'm utterly contrary to it.

This is the sort of man we're dealing with in Acts chapter nine. You know, most of us Christians, we hear Paul writing in his last letters, I'm the chief of sinners. And we sort of take that very lightly and we say, oh yes, I know what he said.

We all feel like I'm the chief of sinners. Isn't that right? We get born again and go, oh yes, I'm the chief of sinners. And we think he's saying the same.

Isn't Paul being humble? That great godly preacher, and he's being very humble saying, I'm the chief of sinners. I was the worst sinner. And we sort of go, he was a religious, nice, moral guy.

No, he wasn't. When he said, I don't deserve to be called an apostle. I am the least of all the apostles.

He wasn't being humble. He is saying, I ruined the church. I destroyed the church.

I have blood running off my hands. This is the sort of man that displayed and preached regeneration by the grace and the mercy of God. It actually says here that he bound men five times.

He says he bound them. In other words, he tied their hands and their feet with fetters, chains and ropes, including women. He put chains on women to drag them to prison in the hope that they would die for their belief in Jesus Christ.

He actually wanted to hinder them, restrict them, to stop them, to confine them, to shut their mouths and to shut them away from influence. 13 times it says he persecuted the church. This is the first mention that he persecuted the church.

What does it mean? He made them to fly away. He drove them away. He pursued them, harassed them, troubled them, molested them.

It says he done much evil against the saints of God. What is evil? To do badly to them. They are saints of God.

They will not retaliate. They will not take revenge. They don't break the law.

They won't take the law into their own hands. And he hated them. Do you know how many Christians he saw face to face before they died? Do you know how many homes he broke into? And as he separates husband from wife, he must've heard their prayers.

I'm praying for you, Saul. I'm praying for you. We love you, Saul.

God loves you. Jesus Christ died for you. Can you imagine the enraging of this man, the anger, the bitterness? I'm gonna stamp this thing out.

You know, it means that he abundantly done evil. He did not minimize. He did not water down his message.

I will destroy this. It says he punished them. Are you getting the picture here this morning? Am I painting the picture? He punished them.

It means to take vengeance. Hold on, what did they ever do to you? What did those Christians ever do to you? I'm gonna take vengeance on them. I hate them.

I'm gonna kill them. What did the Christian ever do to you? Do you see what happens with a sinner when the devil gets a hold of his heart and the flesh that fall in nature is motivating them and pushing them? They'll say, I'll take vengeance against you. I'll treat you like the worst criminal in Limerick City.

I love you. I'm praying for you. I care about your soul.

I hate you. I am showing you what the nature of a sinner can be. It says that he compelled them to blaspheme the name of Jesus.

He forced them. He used mental torture. He manipulated their emotions.

He tried to put pressure on them spiritually. And it says that he was exceedingly mad. He had a fierce rage or a fury.

Do you know this man blaspheme? You say he didn't believe in blaspheming. Oh yes, he blasphemed Christ because he didn't believe Christ was God. He didn't believe Christ was the Messiah.

He was abusive, evil speaking against Christ. He spoke against the Messiah, the Savior. He trampled over the blood of Christ.

You know one thing with regeneration, what it does, it improves the language. It improves the language. You see, I've got a full proof way of telling an Irishman.

I mean, in a split second, they're gonna lose an awful lot of their vocabulary. That's what happened to Saul of Tarsus. I believe he was a blasphemer, but that vocab went in the bin on the day that he experienced regeneration.

And it also says he was injurious, that through violence, he wanted to do permanent, I mean, permanent harm to individuals that you will never recover from. Do you realize that he was the main force behind the persecution in Jerusalem? He was the main persecutor. He dominated the city of Jerusalem.

He then spread out over entire regions to every city and his name was known all across the early church. All of them knew about him. All of them were praying for him, but very few believed he was gonna be converted.

You see, sometimes you catch a fish and you don't believe you've caught the fish because you say that could never happen. You throw the net out and it's always empty. All of a sudden, you try to pull that thing in and it's so full, I don't believe this can happen.

Since I tell you, God conceived the worst of sinners and you stand so shocked, so unbelieving, so skeptical. You say, how can this possibly be? Is this not regeneration that God will save those you're praying for who you least expect? A portrait of a sinner. Secondly, a portrait of a true conversion.

Let me explain here what regeneration is, what it looks like in the life of Paul. We've seen a portrait of a sinner. This is what a sinner looks like.

Oh, he was very moral. I'm telling you, see that Jesuit? I want him for the kingdom of God. See that look in his eye? That look in his eye, he believes what he believes.

That isn't some old priest playing around with kids. No, no, that's something altogether different. That isn't someone hypocritical standing down the road, going through the motions of religion.

That young 19-year-old Jesuit priest, he believes this radically. He will die for this. He will suffer for it.

My God save him by the grace and mercy of God. But a portrait of a true conversion. Three times we have Paul's conversion in the New Testament in Acts 9, Acts 22, and Acts 26.

And several other times he mentions it in his letters. Listen, this portrait of a true conversion in chapter nine, verse three. Let me give you several points of what is involved with regeneration.

When someone like Saul gets regenerate, you see, you may not have the conversion of Saul. I doubt if any of us have had a conversion quite like Saul. None of us would claim that.

And yet I believe that all the marks with his conversion is what every true Christian experiences when they're converted. All the same marks. Let's look at it here.

First of all, a sudden divine revelation, verse three. And as he journeyed, he came near to Damascus. Do you realize he's just traveled about 150 to 200 miles? I'm not sure the guy even slept at night.

Maybe it took six days to travel. He traveled through the heat of the sun every day. The other guys must've been saying, can we take a break? No, no, we're going to Damascus.

Paul, can we eat? No, there's no time to eat. I must get to Damascus. I've got to get there.

Since he was just outside the city of Damascus, look what it says in verse three. And suddenly, I believe this is one of the great marks of regeneration, is a sudden divine revelation. It says, as he was outside the city, just to break upon it with a fury and do what he'd done at Jerusalem.

I mean, he's burning. He's absolutely breathing out. Those guys are sick of hearing his threats.

But look at him. Outside the city, it says, suddenly there shined around about him. This isn't his work.

This is the work of the spirit of God. This is regeneration from heaven. This is God reaching down and saying, I'm going to save a man.

You know what it says? Suddenly there shined round about him, a light from heaven, and he fell to the earth. Solitarsus, this is your day of regeneration. You'll never be the same again after this.

A sudden divine revelation. Do you know what regeneration is? It comes suddenly. You're on the way to do evil.

You're on your way to sin. You're doing what you've always done every day, but not on that day, suddenly from heaven. There is a power let loose from heaven.

Since I'm tired of sinners' prayers, I'm tired of people saying, well, sure, just believe and that's you fine. I believe in the power of regeneration where there's a work from heaven suddenly, suddenly. Oh, well, I'm just growing into this.

No, suddenly from heaven, the heavens open. Second thing, a revelation of light. Note here it says, suddenly there shined around him a light from heaven.

A light shone on him. Not only suddenly from heaven, it was light, but this light wasn't any ordinary light. You see, in light, there's truth always.

There's truth. This is God's light that shines onto a man in a moment. It says that the light shone brighter and higher than the noonday sun.

It happened at noon in the middle of the day. Suddenly there was a light brighter than the sun. Do any of you know anything brighter than the sun? Do any of you know that there, is there anything that could blind you physically quicker and easier than stopping and looking into that sun? Your eyes will never be the same again.

No doctor will repair them, I assure you. The sun is the brightest thing. No, it's not.

No, it's not. The sun is as nothing compared to the light in regeneration. When God shines his light on an individual, you see it happens suddenly.

And a light comes from heaven, from Christ, and it shines on a sinner. I mean, he's a rebel, a murderer, a blasphemer. He hates Christians.

He hates Christ. He doesn't believe in this, but light shines down upon him suddenly. And that light is more intense than even the sun.

It's higher, it's brighter. It's the glory of God. It's the presence of God.

You know what this tells me? Saul traveled to kill Christians at noonday. That's only English men and mad dogs, and not the same. Mad dogs and English men only go out in the noonday sun.

That's what they say. English men are like mad dogs. They'll be out there working at noon when no other, all the Irish will be sleeping in the shade.

There's the English man out there working under the noonday sun. I wanna tell you that there is a light brighter than the noonday sun. It'll have a greater effect than the sun smiting you when you work too hard.

This is a light from heaven that brings you to a standstill. It exposes everything. It brings you to a standstill, and it begins to shine so bright that everything is gonna change.

Thirdly, a revelation of God's word. In the midst of that light shining, so I knew lots of people in the church. I had a vision, I had a dream.

I was called up to heaven. Where's the word of God in it? Do you realize in the midst of this light shining, there was a voice? I get worried about people who say they've had encounters with Christ who've never heard the voice. They've never heard the voice.

There's no voice in it. There's no message in it. You see, in the midst of this light shining, there was a revelation of God's word.

He heard a voice saying unto him, soul, soul. Do you realize in this regeneration, God speaks in every true conversion. God will speak to your soul.

It's not just like generally, but this is the word of God being revealed in the midst of the light to speak to you directly and personally. Then further, there's a revelation of sin. It's a revelation of sin.

This message calls reality to your sin. I hear all the time, we hear it in our generation. That's why I'm saying we've thrown regeneration out.

Do you realize in the real born again experience, when light comes and the message comes, that sin gets dealt with. We see people making decisions or saying, I've asked Jesus into my heart. Has your sin been confronted? Oh no, well, God's just forgiven me, but no sin dealt with, I believe at all.

There's no message, there's no light. There's no revelation of the word of God. They don't love the word of God.

They don't care about the word of God, but there's a revelation of sin. When you have a real regeneration, a real born again experience, if God doesn't deal with your sin, you're never born again. And I'm not talking about sinless perfection.

And I'm not talking about walking spotless. I'm talking about a real Christ dealing with your sin. You see, it was a revelation of your sin.

Saul, Saul, what's the first thing Christ says to Paul? To Saul, what's the very first thing? Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Oh, can't be the real Christ. He'd never point out my sin. He doesn't deal.

Jesus, you're a menace, I love you. I've come with a great plan for your life. Oh, Paul, you and me are gonna have such fun.

You're talking about real regeneration. There is light. There's a word from heaven.

There is a sudden intervention in your life and your sin is being exposed. Show me a Christ who doesn't deal with your sin. He is not the real Jesus.

Show me a testimony. Somebody says, oh, well, you know, I've never had my sin dealt with. Then you're not born again.

You're not born again. Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Just outside of Damascus, he's in the process of about to kill Christians and Christ says, you're persecuting me. You know, Christ takes sin personally.

Oh, but I'm just doing this. I just said this. You're doing it to him personally.

Christ takes sin. You know what? You haven't gone anywhere with God until you realize you're responsible for your sin. You're guilty of the things you said.

You did do them. You know, when you're dealing with the person and it's always, well, you've done this and you're just as bad as me after all. You're nowhere.

You're absolutely nowhere. I'm sure look at him. Oh, I know.

Isn't that the old saying? Isn't that the old saying? You're pointing away. You see, Christ dealt and said, you're persecuting. When did Christ intervene? On the 11th hour.

I believe the church in Damascus is praying, Lord, save him. But they're not gonna even believe that when it happens. I mean, he stops the persecution and then they're all saying, I don't believe this, Lord.

And then I ask, I want you to go talk to Saul. Not him, Lord. Not him, Lord.

I thought you were praying last night in the prayer meeting. I know, Lord, but let's just talk about this. Now, I want you to go pray for him.

Do you have any other options there, Lord? You see, there's a revelation of sin. Christ stopped Saul on the 11th hour. You know what? Christ came to him.

He could have come and said, you're the most wicked, evil man of this generation. You're the biggest scourge to my church. You have destroyed my church in Jerusalem and I'm gonna kill you.

Could have said that, couldn't he? Didn't he do that with Herod? Herod said, I'm a God. Smite him with worms. Send an angel, smite him with worms and he died.

Not right what he done. Here is the most wicked, evil opposer of the church. What does he do? Does he send fire to destroy him? He could have.

He could have. I'll just make sure a stray arrow hits you right in the chest. No, he didn't do that.

You know when he come, he didn't come to judge him. And I think at this point, when you hear the words, why are you persecuting me? And you go, I'm in serious trouble here. I mean, this is what a sinner goes through.

You suddenly realize in regeneration, what have I done? What have I done? I mean, I can't believe you suddenly realize and you go, I'm going to hell. I'm under the judgment of God. I'm in trouble here.

But at that point, God reaches down with his love and his mercy and says, I died for you. I love you. I've bled for you at Calvary.

There's also a revelation of Christ. Look at all the marks of this regeneration. In verse five, he said, and he said, who art thou Lord? He knows this is God.

He knows this is supernatural. He knows it's from heaven. And he's going, who are you? Does it tell you what the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I've been following and serving and praying to and worshiping and reading about.

You're not the same as him. There is something radically different here. I've always believed this, but who are you? Who are you? Notice he calls him Lord.

I know this is God. I know this thing is God. You see, I've seen people get regenerate.

They're evolutionists. I believe in millions of years. They'll drop off when you get regenerate.

I assure you. I personally have never met someone born again who I'm sure of who still believes in millions of years. Not possible.

Because you know what? The word of God comes in the midst of that. And life comes in the midst of that. I've seen people who are other atheists, radical revolutionary, and they suddenly get born again.

They go, you created everything. Who taught you that? Who told you that? You know what? A revelation of Christ comes. Who are thou Lord? And the Lord said, notice it's the Lord.

I am Jesus whom thou persecute us. You know, he makes it very personal. And all through regeneration, Christ is there.

Christ is revealed all across this world. Hey, do you know Jesus wants to heal you? And I believe in healing. I do believe in healing.

On the streets, all this evangelism you see in YouTube. Hey, God has a plan for your life. He wants to do something good.

Do you have a pain in your back? Hey, I'll pray for you. And they walk off. I've watched hundreds of those incidents.

They've never dealt with sin. There's no preaching of the word of God. Christ is not there.

Christ is not revealing himself. That person is not repenting of their sin. Do you realize in Saul's conversion and his regeneration, Christ takes center stage.

Not miracles, not lessons, not promises. I am Jesus who you've been sinning against. I am the one you've been fighting against.

I've come to save you by my mighty power. Since I'm telling you that every true regeneration has a revelation of Christ. If Christ isn't in it, it's not real.

The church is filled with people. They don't care about the word of God. They don't care about life.

They don't care about repentance. They don't care about their sin. They don't care about the person of Christ.

All of a sudden, Saul goes, you're alive. Do you know all those ones I threw in prison? They kept telling me this. Saul, do you know that you're fighting against Jesus who rose on the third day? I don't believe that.

I don't believe that. I don't believe he's alive. It's all in your mind.

It's a myth. It's a story. Not anymore.

You don't need to sit down and have a theological debate with Paul saying, I want to prove to you he's alive. I know he's alive. He changed my life.

I met with him. He was the center of my regeneration. And then lastly, a revelation of holy conviction.

At the end of verse five, it says, it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. You know, when you were stoning Stephen, I was trying to get to you. You know, when you broke into those homes, it was like a stick.

You know what a prick is? He's pricking him. It's a goat. And some of you that never grew up in farms, you wouldn't know about this, but you get a long stick with a pointy bit on the end.

And if you want that coat to go in a dress, you just keep poking it in the bum and trying to get it to go in a certain direction. You know what the Lord Jesus is saying here? You know what? All along the way, I've been trying to goad you in the right direction. I've been poking you and poking you and you've been kicking against it and hitting against it.

And I'm trying to say, I'm trying to get you saved. I'm trying to get you forgiven. I'm trying to get you to have new life and experience salvation.

You know what he experienced? Verse six, and he trembling and astonished fell to the ground. Oh, brother Keith, we don't believe in that. That's the problem of this hour.

There's no trembling in conversion anymore. Oh, God doesn't want you to tremble or be scared. You just need to know the Father's heart.

Really. Here's a real conversion. One of the greatest conversion of the New Testament.

What's he doing? He's trembling in the midst of regeneration taking place. It also says he's astonished. He's dumbfounded.

I'm struck. I can't even open my mouth anymore. And he fell to the ground.

Fell to the ground. You know what? We've got a lot of people falling in this generation. I was in a meeting in Germany once.

I told some of you about it. I met a man, I heard the noise. I went into a church.

It was so dead. I went, oh God, we walked in the wrong place. I heard a church upstairs.

Said to my friend, we looked at each other. He says, upstairs? I said, upstairs. We went upstairs.

We got in there. Boy, the life of God. But the pastor come running down all the aisles.

And I seen it coming. I go, I'm getting ready for this. One, two, three, four, pushing everyone down.

I got my feet ready. I stood there. I'm telling you, I know what it is for God to put you down when he wants to put you down.

I know what it is to be caught up in a trance where he shows you the souls of men going to hell. But I got ready for this pastor. I mean, he's making them go down.

He got to me and he pushed me and I bounced back. So he stopped in his tracks with his two henchmen. And I mean, he pushed me so hard.

I can still feel what I felt in that particular meeting. He made me go into that seat, whether I wanted it or not. Saints, I'm talking about a holy conviction of trembling, being astonished, falling to the ground under the fear of God.

You know, he went blind. He lost sight of man. He lost sight of things of this world.

And that happens in regeneration. You don't see this anymore, but you do see Christ. You do see the light of God.

What happened to his friends? Well, it says in verse seven, the men which journeyed with him stood speechless. Listen to this carefully before I close. The men who journeyed with him stood speechless.

They're speechless. They didn't get regenerate. They don't get saved.

They're in the same meeting, the same influences around them. They stood speechless because they did see the light. They do fall to the ground.

They hearing a voice, but seeing no man. Do you know this was a remarkable supernatural meeting, a supernatural experience, but they never saw Christ. Those with Paul, only Saul saw Christ.

They never saw Christ. They couldn't see Christ. And yet they trembled.

Their mouths were stopped. They fell to the ground, but they never really see Christ. Do you know, unless you see Christ, all spiritual manifestations are utterly empty, utterly vanity, unless Christ is revealed.

This is the reason why Christ does reveal himself is to reveal his mighty power. His friends were speechless, were afraid. You know, they were cruel, brutal men going to persecute the church.

They were stopped in their tracks, fell to the ground. They got up again, but they do not see Jesus. They hear a noise.

They do hear a voice, but they don't hear the message. They don't understand the message. They don't even hear the contents of the message, but they do hear words.

Isn't it like so many in the church that went, good meeting, yeah, yeah, been to church today. What did you hear? Don't know, don't have a clue. They never learn anything.

They're into experiences. They have religious experiences, but all they end up is confused. Yesterday, I listened to Miranda's testimony.

I didn't get a chance to listen to it. And I'm listening to a girl walking into this building week by week, sleeping with a boyfriend, loving her sin. And she loves it.

Nice people, nice preaching. I'm enjoying this until we get to a certain point and sin is dealt with. And she says, no, I hate being here.

I am terribly uncomfortable. I want to run for my life. And she starts taking extra hours at work so she doesn't have to be here.

I'll work on Sunday. I've just got to get away from that church. I can't stand it.

What, do you not like the people? Oh, no, they're lovely. Do you not like the preacher? Oh, no, he's really nice. He's really, do you not like the preaching? No, it's good.

It's definitely from the word of God. What's the issue then? I'm confused. Something I don't like about this.

What is it? What interpretation do they put upon it? Give me one minute to finish my third point. A portrait of a changed life. I really mean, make this quick.

A willing, obedient man. What do we have after this? Lord, what will thou have me to do? How do you know someone's regenerate? They become a willing, obedient man. Hold on, five minutes ago, you're going to kill Christians and destroy the name of Jesus.

Five minutes later, you say, what do you want me to do? Just tell me and I'll do it. I'm not going to kill Christians. Just speak to me.

Regeneration makes you willing and desires to know the will of God. You go, God, tell me your will for my life. Oh God, tell me what to do.

Oh God, show me in the Bible what I should be stopping or what I should be doing. That's not legalism. That's regeneration.

Regeneration, I'm not doing that to be saved. I am saved. Because I'm saved, I go, what does the word of God say to me? That's the first thing in a portrait of a changed life.

How do I know you're regenerate? You become willingly obedient. No one has to force you. Also, you become a fully surrendered man or woman.

He went there to Damascus to imprison people and confine them. And Christ takes him as a prisoner. Can you imagine that? I'm going to put all these people in prison.

No, he put you in prison. He made you a prisoner. You become a fully surrendered man.

You also become a weak and a humble man. And Saul rose from the earth. And when his eyes were open, he saw no man.

And they led him by the hand, brought him into Damascus. I've never seen Saul like this. Humbly, meekly, broken with tears in his eyes.

The ravenous wolf has become a meek lamb. And then for three days, you see him waiting, listening carefully to the word of God. He's blind for three days.

What does he do? Doesn't eat or drink water for three days. Oh, give us some of those converts. Ian, when you get saved, I pray that you're so disturbed, so affected.

I say, sorry, Mead, I can't eat. Put that in the bin. I've got to go seek the Lord.

You don't realize what's just happened to me. I can't, that food's lost all interest to me. Something happened to this man.

And a little later, he says he's a praying man. I'm talking about the power of regeneration. Very simple, isn't it? The portrait of a sinner, the portrait of a man being regenerate, and a portrait of a changed life.

All in Acts chapter nine, instantly, from heaven, a changed man. What happened to you? I don't know, I don't know. You're not the same person.

I know, I can hardly, I need three days in the dark. And then he went three years into Arabia. If ever a man's going to sort through this, I've got to sort through this.

Do you realize what this means? Yes, yes, yes, I do. Nothing's going to be the same ever again. I had a friend in Germany, married to a German lady.

He got born again, went to a meeting, was crippled from his waist down. Didn't put his socks on. She washed him, put his socks on.

Went to that meeting to heal. And he walks in, born again, being radically born again. And he walks back in, said, I'm born again, I'm saved.

You need to believe in Christ. Says, I give it seven days. You know why she knew him? She knew him better than anybody on the face of the earth.

Says, I know, I know you. I've seen all of these phases every single year. I've watched you go through all of these.

I give you seven days. And this will be through now, like all the other things. Seven days later, she gets born again.

She is in utter shock, going, this isn't the same man. And I want to meet this Jesus. Because what he's got, I need to have.

I do need to have. Please stand with me. Lord Jesus.

Lord Jesus.

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