

January 9, 2011

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Monday

Gal. 1:23 Only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy."

You should never lose sight of the radical change that God worked in the life of Saul the Pharisee. It was not a small change or a gradual change or a minor change or a simple change. God grabbed hold of Saul and shook his world! It was a radical -- God only could -- change in his life. God still is doing that kind of work in the lives of people. So don't give up. Don't give up on yourself and the work of God in your life. Don't give up on that lost loved one, the worst one, and don't cease to pray for his/her salvation. Don't give up on your wayward Christian friend. God changed Saul, the persecutor of Christians, turning him into Paul a testimony of grace.

Tuesday

Eph. 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

I wish that I could adequately express the truth of your calling. You have been called to salvation, called to sanctification, called to glorification, and called to service. Your call and mine may be different in vocation, emphasis, and position, BUT NOT DIFFERENT IN IMPORTANCE, POWER, AND MEANING! You are called of God! Such is not the spark of boastful pride or power, but of meaningful service, usefulness, and joy. 'Called' a teacher. 'Called' a parent. 'Called' a friend. 'Called' a co-laborer. 'Called' to your place and to your purpose. CALLED OF GOD! Walk out your calling with joy, confidence, mission, and grace.

Wednesday

Acts 1:8 And you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea ad Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Read it aloud. "YOU will be my witnesses." Catch the wording. It does not say 'they will be my witnesses', or 'she shall be my witness', or 'the preacher will be my witness'. No. NO! Read it aloud again. "YOU will be my witnesses." You say that God has not called you to the 'uttermost part'? Perhaps not, but He has surely called you to Jerusalem — your Jerusalem. Concentrate on where God has placed you today. Look at your place of business, your place in family, your place in your neighborhood. Then read it aloud again. "YOU will be my witness." See it not as a burden. Accept it as a privilege. Don't let fear paralyze you. God knew you when HE CALLED YOU. Do you believe in Jesus? HE BELIEVES IN YOU! :-)

Thursday

Heb. 12:7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Salvation is easy. Grace is free. Growth in your Christian walk — neither easy nor free. That is, like physical growth and physical life, health and growth of the Spirit comes with purposeful discipline and exercise, deep and meaningful correction, and spiritual self-nourishment (not just fed by others). Would you expect anything less? Revel in grace, sure! But willingly walk in the correction and discipline of the Lord too. Strive to be more open to correction than to correcting. Be more sensitive to Spirit's instruction for you, than to the habits of others. Grow in the Lord.

Friday

Heb. 4:7 He again fixes a certain day, "Today."

Focus on today! Not tomorrow or next year or next week, but today! What has God called you to be about today? Today, notice God's work in you. What is He revealing or emphasizing in His word for you today? Today, be sensitive to His desire to make use of you. Ask yourself, 'Is this person in my path someone whom God has purposely placed before me for ministry, witness, or prayer?' Take care of your calling today. Certainly you should be open to God's changes for tomorrow, but focus on God's call and place, today. "This is the day the Lord has made."