

Encouragement By Extending Friendship

Dublin Baptist Church

August 7, 2022

Acts 9:22-27

²² But Saul increased all the more in strength and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

²³ When many days had passed, the Jews^[a] plotted to kill him, ²⁴ but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night in order to kill him, ²⁵ but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall,^[b] lowering him in a basket.

²⁶ And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.

Our Need For Community: He attempted to join them

The Greek word for join here is “kallow” and it means to tie oneself to, cement or bond, or be indebted to. It is the word for cleave in Matther.

“And said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?” Matthew 19:5

Saul sought out other believers and wanted to be a part of the church.

And taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus”

Acts 9:19

You do not have to join a church to be a believer in Jesus, but a believer in Jesus wants to be a part of the work and body of Jesus. Not necessarily religious ritual, but the support, encouragement, and growth a connection to other believers brings.

New members class on 14

Serving together is fellowship and builds connection

Discipleship groups build connection

An extremely small group 2-4 people builds some great deep encouragement and accountability

Our Fear Of Relationship: They were afraid of him

Fear is a form of phobia, but it is in an imperfect tense indicating a past action with ongoing results. The way Saul had treated followers of Jesus in the past was repeating itself in the minds of the disciples and keeping them from believing Saul had changed and was a follower of Jesus now also.

The disciples in Damascus were convinced, but Annas had a special instruction from the Lord concerning Saul.

“But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name” Acts 9:13-16

We are afraid of people knowing our flaws and then being hurt or controlled by that knowledge.

Know that Jesus knows you better than you know yourself and He still loves you

Know that others have flaws they are afraid of you knowing also

Know that the way to real relationship is a loving and trusting bond that encourages both of us to be who God wants us to be.

A Person Of Peace: Took him and brought him

Barnabas took Saul: an aorist past tense verb that indicates the Barnabas understood the situation and took time to hear Paul’s story and his conversion (AT Robertson)

Declared is the Greek word “diagasato” and it literally means through the way of leading. We would understand it better as leading someone through something. A journey of making the details clear.

Saul had received the Holy Spirit (a sign of his salvation)

“So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 9:17

Saul was growing spiritually (a sign of sanctification)

“But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.” Acts 9:22

You need to be able to tell your spiritual journey

You need to hear others spiritual journey

Nothing will bond you like knowing each of you are on similar paths and struggle with similar things.