

# **Roads of Passion**

## **#3 - The Damascus Road**

### **Acts 9:1-22**

**Intro:** [Personal travel story?]

There are several famous roads in the world. Some of them are very familiar, like the Las Vegas strip, Abbey Road, The Champs-Élysées in Paris, Route 66, Germany's autobahn, and Manhattan's Broadway.

The Most Dangerous Road in the World is Yungas Road in Bolivia. It is so dangerous it is known as "Death Road," with 200-300 fatalities a year. Much of it is slick wet mud, carved out of the side of mountains, with half mile drops, and no guard rails.

The Longest Road in the World, starting in Deadhorse, Alaska on the Arctic Sea and running down to Argentina, by the Strait of Magellan, the Pan-American Highway stretches 30,000 miles and rolls through 14 countries. Three of them, Canada, the United States, and Argentina.

The Widest Road in the World in the eastern portions of Interstate 10 in Texas are affectionately known as the Katy Freeway. Running from Houston suburb Katy through to downtown, its widest point is 26 lanes wide, with 12 main lanes, another 8 lanes of access roads to the sides, and six lanes for high-capacity vehicles in the center.

The Karakoram Highway is the highest paved international road in the world. It is the only significant road linking China and Pakistan. It tops out at an oxygen-thin 15,397 feet above sea level, nearly twice the altitude where altitude sickness becomes a concern.

In contrast to that, the Lowest Road in the World is Israel's Highway 90, also known as the Dead Sea Highway. Running the length of Israel in a north-south direction, it skirts the western bank of the Dead Sea. In doing so it drops to 1,400 feet below sea level; allowing people to travel in cars at depths usually reserved for submarines.

One metaphor for life is that it is like an uncharted journey. We can go it alone or we can use the three things that God has given us:

He's given us a **compass**, that's the Bible. Lamp to my feet, light to my path.

He's given us **companions** – our church family; the Body of Christ, because we'll need encouragement, prayer, and help along the way.

He's given us a **coach**, who is the Holy Spirit...also known as the Helper, Guide, Teacher, and Comforter. When you're lost or don't know the way, it helps not to just have a compass, and some companions but it's beneficial that we have a personal guide. That's the role of the Holy Spirit.

We began a series a couple weeks ago called **Roads of Passion**. Passion, in a broad sense, refers to an intense enthusiasm or compelling emotion toward someone or something. The word "passion" holds a profound significance in the bible, often embracing deep emotions, desires, and a commitment to God and His purposes, that can lead individuals toward righteous living, devotion, and a fervent faith.

So far in the series, we've looked at the Jerusalem Road and the Road to Emmaus. **Today, I want to talk about the Road to Damascus in Acts 9:1-22.**

The story we find here is the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. No conversion is more known, more read, and more dramatic than that of Saul. Let me share a little about him before we read this story.

## **The Life of Saul**

Whatever God's plan was for Saul - it did not begin at his conversion on the road to Damascus. But rather - it had been ongoing throughout his life. Even when Paul did not know Christ, he was under the providential care and guidance of Christ being prepared for something bigger than life.

I say that because Paul says of himself in Galatians 1:15 ***'But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace.'***

[NASB]

In Saul there were three significant cultural experiences that he had. Saul was the product of Greek, Roman, and Jewish influences. He was raised in the Greek city of Tarsus, He was a Roman citizen, and He was ethnically a Jew.

Philippians 3:5 details his natural and spiritual roots. ***'Circumcised the eighth day of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;'*** Each phrase quoted by Paul has distinct implications:

1. Tribe of Benjamin was considered the most Jewish of all the tribes. In the territory of Benjamin, we find the holy city Jerusalem and the temple of God. The most outstanding Benjaminite was Saul the first king of Israel. It is certain that many young boys were named Saul after their great ancestor.

2. Hebrew of Hebrews - This is a technical expression that was more specific than the word Jew. A Hebrew spoke Aramaic and worshiped God in Hebrew. Interestingly, when the Lord appeared to Saul on the Damascus Road he spoke to him in Aramaic his native tongue.

3. A Pharisee - More than just a Pharisee, Saul was born into a lineage of Pharisees as he made clear in Acts 23:6 when he said, ***"Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees..."***

Paul must have shown tremendous promise as a boy because his parents sent him to Jerusalem to train under the great teacher Gamaliel. This was easily the most prominent rabbi of that time and one of the greatest of all antiquity.

In Galatians 1:14 Paul writes, ***'and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.'*** [NASB]

So, you can see how, "From his birth" God had prepared this man for the mission he was to fulfill, which we will see in a few minutes. Who else could better be prepared to take the Gospel which was birthed in a Jewish context into the Greco Roman World, better than Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle, Paul.

[God's preparation examples]

When we meet Saul in the book of Acts, he is a menace to the early church. He was the man who watched over the coats of the men who stoned Stephen in Acts, chapter 7. In chapter 8, we read; ***“But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.”*** Saul was passionate about stopping the church.

He was convinced Jesus Christ was not the Messiah and in fact was dead. He was convinced those like Stephen were false prophets, leading others astray, and he wanted them imprisoned or dead.

But ... while the church understandably feared Saul ... God did not. While the church endured Saul's wrath ... God was about to save Saul from wrath. While Saul was the chief persecutor of Christ followers, Saul was soon to become one of the most persecuted Christ followers. While Saul was trying to stop the mission of the church, God was about to transform Him into a missionary.

As we open Acts, chapter 9, we are met with these words [NIV]; ***“Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”***

***5“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. 6“Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”***

***7The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.***

***9For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.***

***10In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered.***

**11**The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. **12**In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.”

**13**“Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. **14**And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

**15**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. **16**I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

**17**Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” **18**Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, **19**and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. **20**At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. **21**All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” **22**Yet Saul grew more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

## **LETS’ PRAY**

**STORY:** I heard a story about an old farmer who claimed that he could command his mule with nothing more than a few soft words, no whips, or prods necessary. She would respond, he claimed, with nothing more than gently spoken commands. So, his buddy down at the feed store asked for a demonstration. “Prove to me that your old mule will respond with nothing more than gentle language.” So out in the field they went, the farmer, his buddy, and the mule. As the friend watched, the farmer took a two-by-four about six feet long, and swung it with all his might, hitting the mule upside of the head!

When the animal stopped braying and bellowing and prancing around, the farmer then said, quietly, “Come here” and the mule came. “Sit” and the whimpering creature sat. “Back up”, and she backed into the harnesses of a waiting plow and waited calmly for him to hook up. “You see? She’ll respond to a simple voice command”. But his friend objected, “What are you talking about? You said all you had to do was talk to her, but you hit her with a two-by-four! What do you mean, you just command her with words! That’s not what I saw!” **“Oh, that,” said the farmer. “Well, first I have to get her attention!”**

### **On the Road to Damascus, God got Saul’s attention.**

***Verse 5 in the KJV says, “And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”***

***“Kicking against the pricks” is a phrase that is not included in newer translations because it is not something we hear today!***

“It is hard for you to kick against the pricks” was a Greek proverb, but it was also familiar to the Jews and anyone who made a living in agriculture. An ox goad was a stick with a pointed piece of iron on its tip used to prod the oxen when plowing. The farmer would prick the animal to steer it in the right direction. Sometimes the animal would rebel by kicking out at the prick, and this would result in the prick being driven even further into its flesh. In essence, the more an ox rebelled, the more it suffered. Thus, Jesus’ words to Saul on the road to Damascus: “It is hard for you to kick against the pricks.”

Jesus was telling the proud Pharisee that he was only hurting himself in resisting the truth and teaching of Christ. The more he resisted the more he suffered. The harder he kicked the deeper the pricks drove into his flesh. A modern equivalent might be, “Don’t bite the hand that feeds you!”

### **What were a few of the ox goads for Paul?**

#### **1. First, there was the goad of JESUS' life and words.**

Saul had heard Jesus teach and preach in public places. After all, they were about the same age. This zealous young Pharisee would have been one of the first to go investigating this popular Teacher and Healer from Galilee. I think the words and

works of Jesus haunted Saul. He knew in his heart that they were true, but he fought that because it didn't line up with all his learning.

**2. Second, we see the goad of Stephen's peaceful DEATH.** Saul never forgot Stephen. It wasn't the fact that Stephen died as much as it was the WAY he died. No screaming; no pitiful cries for mercy; no cursing; no recanting his faith. Instead, Stephen prayed for his executioners just as Jesus had done. I imagine Saul wondered, how could someone die like that?

**3. And third, we see the goad of other Christians' courageous FAITH.**

Surely Saul could not have escaped noticing the courage of his prisoners. The believers he viciously apprehended bravely endured the torture. They stood in firm allegiance to Jesus and their undaunted courage in the face of certain death must have made Saul question his actions. So, God sought Saul.

**What was wrong with Saul's life that God would say he was kicking against the goad?**

***1. First, there was a problem with Saul's faith. You see, Saul had religion –without a relationship.***

Saul was a Jew. In fact, he was a teacher of Judaism. In Acts 23:6, we read – Paul began crying out in the Council, “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!”

Later, in Philippians 3, Paul would describe himself this way; “circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless”.

The religion of Saul was inherited. He grew up in a Pharisee's home. As he got older, he sat under the teaching of Gamaliel, the most influential Jewish teacher of his day. Saul knew Judaism, but he didn't know Jesus.

A quick lesson here for parents and grandparents. It is important that we teach our children the tenets of Christianity. It is important that we help them

understand the morals and ethics that go with our faith. But it is far more important that we introduce our children to Jesus.

If our children grow up and all they believe is that Christianity means going to church, learning the right songs, praying the right prayers and standing for the right things, they might equate Christianity with being what we're **against**.

**We don't want our children to inherit our religion; we want our children to meet our Savior.**

**2. Saul was kicking against the goad of doing God's business – but not God's will.**

Because Saul didn't know God, he was doing what he thought he should do for God.

To protect his religion, he would have to destroy Christianity. So, Saul sought permission from the High Priest to continue his policy of persecution. If the High Priest gave him permission, surely it must be what God wants.

That is why, when Saul encountered Him on the road to Damascus, Jesus asked, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

Can you imagine what a shock it must have been for Saul? He believes that he is doing God's business, only to discover that he is completely out of God's will. The very thing that he's fighting – the goad that he is kicking against – is Christ himself.

Some of you may know how Saul felt. God has been urging you, prompting you, calling you to come to him. You have taken on the form of religion but have resisted his invitation for salvation and a relationship with Him. You are doing the business of church but are missing the will of God. Let me urge you, to step into the Grip of God's Grace.

In his desire to do God's business, Saul had been blinded. He was

- **blinded by his zeal**
- **blinded by his hate**
- **blinded by his anger**

Now, instead of being blinded by his own character flaws, Saul would be blinded by the light of Jesus Christ. The best Paul could do was say, "***I saw on the way a***

*light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.”*

**STORY:** There was a woman who took a vacation to visit family back in Ireland. While she was there, she visited an uncle who was a shepherd. While visiting with him, she walked into a barn and saw a young lamb with its leg in a splint. “Awwww, what happened?” she wanted to know. “Oh,” said the old shepherd, “he had a bad habit of running off, so yesterday, I broke his leg.”

She was appalled. “Why on earth would you do that”, she asked. “Well”, he said, “the little guy had a bad habit of running off. Every time he would do that, he would be in danger. He could fall off the edge of a cliff, or a wolf or some other predator could find him, kill him and eat him.

Every time he ran off, I would have to go find him. Then, I would set him with the rest of the flock only to have him run off again. But that’s not the end of it. After I broke his leg, I also mended it. I put a splint on it, all the while, I was talking to him, comforting him, consoling him. Now, I must carry water in to him every day. Not only that, I must feed him by hand. As I do, I continue to talk to him and comfort him. By the time his leg heals, he will know my voice. He will know that it is I who takes care of him. He will come when I call him. He will stay with me, no matter what. Now, I will be able to lead him, and the rest of the sheep will follow him. This lamb will one day be the best sheep of the flock – because in order to break its will, I had to break its leg.”

**Often, for God to be able to use us, He must first break us.** That is exactly what God did to Saul. He broke him, then He restored him, and he was one of the early church believers who was said to have turned the world upside down.

Being blinded and knocked down by God sent Saul from “kicking against the goads” to being in the “Grip of Grace.” And, when we find ourselves in the Grip of Grace, hopefully, we will take the next steps that Saul took.

He asks two questions. They are probably the two most important questions we can ever ask God. They are: **Who are you? What do you want me to do?**

**A. The first question Saul asks is, “Who are you?”**

This is a personal question. Suddenly, Saul realized that this was not the God he knew. This was not the God that he had been serving. So, he cries out, “who are you?” All his years of training under his father and then Gamaliel and in one brilliant second, Saul realizes that he doesn’t know God at all.

***Not only is Saul’s question a personal question, it’s also a relational question.***

Who are you? Who are you to me? Saul wasn’t seeking just information when he asked Jesus that question. Paul wanted to know what this meant for his life. Jesus’ response was, ‘I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.’

We need to understand the meaning of this answer. Saul understood immediately. He had been persecuting Jesus for quite some time. He had stood watch over the coats while Stephen gave his defense before he was murdered. Saul had heard the testimony of who this Jesus was. Time and again, as he had arrested and persecuted the followers of “The Way,” they had witnessed to him about Jesus.

Suddenly he understood what Stephen had said – that Jesus had died on the cross – that he had died for his sins. He understood that he had been resurrected three days later. I believe that it was at this time that Saul surrendered his life to Jesus Christ, because of the next question he asks Jesus.

## **B. What do you want me to do?**

Immediately, Saul goes from a Pharisee and a persecutor to a disciple and passionate follower of Jesus Christ. We see in his question a man who has surrendered his will to Jesus. What do you want me to do, is a question of Lordship.

Later, in writing to the Corinthians, Paul would say, “for we walk by faith, not by sight.” Whenever I read that, I wonder if that isn’t something that he learned immediately on the road to Damascus. The Lord took away his sight for three days. In those three days, all Saul could do was walk by faith. And it is what he would do for the rest of his life.

Jesus tells him, “‘Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do.’ And even though he must be led by the

hand, he goes into Damascus, where he would take three missionary journeys, start an untold number of churches, lead literally thousands to a faith in Jesus Christ and eventually end up in Rome, where he would die for the faith that he discovered on that Road to Damascus.

**Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus shows us that not only can God use a KNOWN SINNER...but He also can use an UN-KNOWN SAINT...**

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias that Jesus gave the assignment of going to visit Saul to lead him to faith.

I don't know about you-but this doesn't make sense to me. I would have thought Jesus would have called for one of the "big guns," like Peter, James or John, but God picked a relatively unknown Christian.

In fact, this is the only time we read anything about this Ananias in the Bible. Ananias had not heard of Saul's Damascus Road experience. But he knew that Saul, the Persecutor, was on the way to arrest Christians like him.

It would be like asking a Jew living in Austria in the 1940's to pay a personal visit to Adolph Hitler.

Ananias obediently went in the power of the Spirit of God

- led Saul out of the darkness-both physical and spiritual,
- Guided him to faith in Jesus and baptized him.

There are countless numbers of faithful unknown people serving Christ behind the scenes all over the world. In fact, the great majority of Christians are "Ananias's"-serving God in powerful ways-doing essential ministry. These unknowns keep the Church-the Body of Christ-functioning and in good health. Think of it. Saul would never have become Paul without Ananias.

**Ananias's entrance in the Scripture is precipitated by the predicament of Saul.**

***See, first, the preparation:*** "Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, 'Ananias.' And he said, 'Here I am, Lord.' The Lord said to him, 'Rise and go to the street called Straight, and enquire in the

house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold he's praying, and he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.' But Ananias answered, 'Lord, I've heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to thy saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon thy name.'

Saul is prepared by a dramatic confrontation with the Lord. Ananias is prepared—by the Holy Spirit. Peter was perfectly prepared for his meeting with Cornelius, in the same way that Philip was so perfectly prepared for his meeting with the Ethiopian eunuch. Minds were being opened. Consciences were being freed. Inhibitions and fears were overcome by purpose.

Verse 15: "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 sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.' While Ananias expresses reluctance about the task at hand, the Lord helped him put things *into perspective*:

"Ananias, you see a man filled with hate who threatens you. You feel at risk, that he will violate or harm your family, your friends, and members of the church. But I want you to see that I, God, see him as a chosen instrument. Ananias, I see a man who's willing to suffer for my sake. See with my eyes."

What do you see when you view the world around you that is outside Jesus Christ? Do you see rebels and renegades, worthless or worth; or do you see people desperately in need of a Savior? We must begin to see the lost and the hurt through the eyes of the Spirit.

Verse 17: "***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 that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized and took food and was strengthened.***" "***He entered the house and laying his hands upon him, he said, 'Brother Saul!' "***

**CONCLUSION: What are the Takeaways from the Damascus Road?**

## 1. God Passionately Pursues Us.

He will never give up on us, but at the same time, he won't force Himself on us. We must choose. No matter how far we run from Him. He pursues us. Saul's experience on the Damascus Road was not a sudden CONVERSION as much as it was a sudden SURRENDER.

\* God had been pursuing a relationship with Saul all his life, but Saul had resisted Him. This is what Saul was referring to later in Acts when he shared his testimony with Agrippa and said that for years, he had been "kicking against the goads."

- Day after day Saul kicked against these goads, until finally on that Damascus Road he got the message and surrendered his life to the Lord.

**Are you kicking against the goads or are you in the Grip of God's Grace? Are you stumbling along in religion, or walking in relationship with Jesus?**

**And Christian, ask yourself. "Am I kicking against the goads? Am I resisting God?"** Paul would say to Christian and non-Christian alike, "Stop running. Stop resisting.

2. **CONVERSION IS A WORK OF GOD.** It is a MIRACLE. It is something God does. There is no one He can't save.

Everyone has a life before Christ. Everyone has plans, dreams, and agendas ... and we don't schedule our conversion. God graciously, and miraculously interrupts our lives by His grace, for His glory, and our good.

Saul had a plan. His life was devoted to stopping the church. He was committed. He had a reputation. - Then suddenly ... Saul was interrupted right in the middle of his plan. Notice ... it didn't happen at a church or synagogue. It was on the road.

When God wants to interrupt your life...He will. Salvation is of the Lord, and it involves Him interrupting our journey, our story ... our lives ... for our good and His will.

1 Cor. 15:8-9 – *'Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.'*

His conversion is an example of a timeless gospel truth: **There is no person who is so bad they cannot be saved and there is no person who is so good they need not be saved.**

The record of Paul's salvation is a bold-faced reminder that all that is necessary for a sinner to be saved is for that sinner to respond by grace through faith to the proclamation of the gospel and the invitation of Jesus.

*"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Yet for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might demonstrate His patience as a pattern to all those who would hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." [1 Timothy 1:15-16]*

The picture that Paul paints...the pattern he presents is simple: "If God can save me, God can save anyone." Paul says, "To prove He can save anyone, God mercifully chose to save me...the worst sinner that ever lived."

One old gospel song put it this way, "It is no secret what God can do. What He's done for others He'll do for you. With arms wide open He'll pardon you. It is no secret what God can do."

### **3. Salvation leads to Transformation**

Saul of Tarsus was transformed and continued to be transformed from that day forward. God transformed Saul into Paul the Apostle who wrote half the NT.

Saul had been filled with ANGER & RAGE at Christians. He would now be filled with the Holy Spirit. Just as he had been physically blinded since encountering the risen Christ, he had been spiritually blind; but now he shall see. This man who had persecuted Christ and His church, would now be baptized in obedience to Christ and become a part of His church. When someone experiences the transformation of conversion ... they are baptized.

This is a reminder: God TRANSFORMS sinners. He not only forgives, He changes us, and makes us a new creation with new desires.

Saul had a brand-new identity. He's now God's chosen instrument. He belongs to Jesus now. Paul, in Ephesians 2, says in salvation we go from spiritual death to spiritual life. We were dead in our sins, and God made us alive.

Salvation is not of man. It's of the Lord ... transformation is God's work. It's a miracle. God changed Saul ... He can change you or them.

If Saul can go from RAGE FILLED to SPIRIT-FILLED, so can anyone. Why? Our sin separates us from God ... but His grace is greater than all our sin!

#### **4. God Wants to Use YOU, just like He did Ananias and Paul.**

-Edward Kimball was a Sunday School teacher and lived in Oak Park, IL, at the time of his death in 1901. He had led Dwight L. Moody to the Lord.

- Dwight L. Moody was an evangelist who founded Moody Church in Chicago as well as other institutions. He died in 1899, in Northfield, MA. Under Moody's ministry John Wilbur Chapman was led to the Lord.

- John Wilbur Chapman became a Presbyterian evangelist in the late 19th century. He died in 1918, in New York City. Under Chapman's preaching Billy Sunday was led to the Lord.

- Billy Sunday was a popular outfielder in the baseball's National League. After coming to the Lord, he became the most celebrated and influential evangelist in the beginning of the 20th century. He died in 1935, in Chicago, IL. Under Sunday's preaching, he had led Mordecai Ham to the Lord.

- Mordecai Ham was an American Independent Baptist evangelist and had radio broadcasts throughout seven southern states. He Died in 1961, in Louisville, KY. It was in one of Ham's crusades that Billy Graham was led to the Lord.

- Billy Graham became a Southern Baptist evangelist and held crusades throughout the world. Through Graham's ministry multi-millions have heard the Gospel.

**You don't need an official title or be in full-time ministry for the Lord to use you. You just need to be in love with Jesus and sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.**

**Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus shows us that not only can God save, transform, and use a KNOWN SINNER...but He also can use in a mighty way an UNKNOWN SAINT...**