



# CAPITOL COMMISSION®

## From Persecutor to Proclaimer-The Light of Christ

FEBRUARY 6, 2020

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**Acts 22:6-16** *“Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. 7) And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ 8) So I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.’ 9) And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10) So I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.’ 11) And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. 12) Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, 13) came to me; and he stood and said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight.’ And at that same hour I looked up at him. 14) Then he said, ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15) For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. 16) And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’” (NKJV)*

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HAVING SHOWN THE ABSURDITY OF THE CHARGE THAT HE WAS MOTIVATED BY ENMITY AGAINST THE JEWISH PEOPLE, PAUL THEN DEFENDED HIS ACTIONS. THE GOD OF ISRAEL HAD SOVEREIGNLY, POWERFULLY INTERVENED IN HIS LIFE AND TURNED HIM FROM BEING CHRISTIANITY’S FOREMOST PERSECUTOR TO BEING ITS FOREMOST PROPOGENT. PAUL HAD ACTED IN SUBMISSION TO HIM.  
JOHN MACARTHUR

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Do Paul’s traveling companions also become witness of his meeting with the Risen Lord? Had Paul’s work been appointed for him prior by God Himself? Will Paul later refer to this “light” as being “the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ?” How is a person transformed by Jesus Christ? What had Paul been chosen to do? To whom does the “all men” refer? Can the ordinance of baptism wash away your sins?

#### FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- FEBRUARY 13: ACTS 22:17-23 **ANCIENT RACISM: DEATH FOR MINISTERING TO GENTILES!**
- FEBRUARY 13: ACTS 22:24-30 **BARBARIC MEANS TO DISCERN THE TRUTH**

Paul stood on the steps of the Fortress of Antonia likely chained between two soldiers before the violent mob of Jews who had just tried to kill him by beating him to death. He had been falsely accused but had overthrown the accusations by his description of his previous life as a persecutor, now he tells them how he was transformed.

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“HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME, BELIEVES NOT IN ME, BUT IN HIM WHO SENT ME. AND HE WHO SEES ME SEES HIM WHO SENT ME. I HAVE COME AS A LIGHT INTO THE WORLD, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME SHOULD NOT ABIDE IN DARKNESS.” JESUS CHRIST (JOHN 12:44-46)

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### BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR ROOM 300B

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR ROOM 300B

# Virginia

## From Persecutor to Proclaimer-The Light of Christ

### I. A DIVINE CONFRONTATION ACTS 22:6-8

His hands dripping with the innocent blood mercilessly shed in Jerusalem, Saul had even viciously sought their life in Damascus. As he and his companions approached the city, suddenly at noonday a light far exceeding the sun in its glory flashed upon Saul, forcing him to the ground as he heard the voice of the Son of God from heaven (continually) saying to him, "*Saul, Saul, why are you (continually) persecuting Me?*" The cruel arrestor was now being mercifully arrested by the Risen Lord! Saul had been included in Stephen's dying prayer as the Sanhedrin had stoned him to death, "*Lord, do not charge them with this sin*" (Acts 7:60). Shocked, petrified, and blinded, the subdued Saul could only answer, "*Who are you Lord?*" The colossal weight of the abomination he had been to God hit him in the reply that confronted him with his most heinous sin, "*I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are (continually) persecuting.*" Saul, stunned to his core, realized by attacking Christians, he was merciless to his Maker!

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"IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE APOSTLE CONSIDERED HIS EXTRAORDINARY CONVERSION AS A MOST COMPLETE DEMONSTRATION OF THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY; AND WHEN ALL THE PARTICULARS OF HIS EDUCATION, HIS PREVIOUS RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES, HIS ZEAL, HIS ENMITY AGAINST CHRISTIANS, AND HIS PROSPECTS OF SECULAR HONORS AND PREFERMENTS BY PERSECUTING THEM, ARE COMPARED WITH THE SUBSEQUENT PART OF HIS LIFE, AND THE SUDDEN TRANSITION FROM A FURIOUS PERSECUTOR TO A ZEALOUS PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL, IN WHICH HE LABORED AND SUFFERED TO THE END OF HIS LIFE, AND FOR WHICH HE DIED AS A MARTYR, IT MUST CONVINCING EVERY CANDID AND IMPARTIAL PERSON THAT NO RATIONAL ACCOUNT CAN BE GIVEN OF THIS CHANGE, EXCEPT WHAT HE HIMSELF ASSIGNS; AND CONSEQUENTLY, IF THAT BE TRUE, THAT CHRISTIANITY IS DIVINE."

SAMUEL BAGSTER, (1772-1851) TREASURY OF SCRIPTURAL KNOWLEDGE, ACTS 22:6

### II. A DELAYED CALLING ACTS 22:9-11

Paul includes his traveling companions as witness to his life-changing confrontation by the Risen Savior. They saw the light, but not the Lord, heard a voice (Acts 9:7), without hearing it in understanding what Jesus had said. Believing the words of his Exalted Messiah, Saul has one final question: "*What shall I do, Lord?*" The Sovereign Jesus Christ then lets Saul know that He will be told in Damascus "*all things which are appointed*" for him to do. His physical eyes representing his former spiritual sight, Saul, unable to see, is led by the hand into Damascus by his traveling companions, and he will spend three days fasting and praying in blindness before anyone comes.

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"THIS LIGHT, AS IT REACHES THE BOTTOM OF THE HEART, AND CHANGES THE NATURE, SO IT WILL EFFECTUALLY DISPOSE TO A UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE. IT SHOWS GOD AS WORTHY TO BE OBEYED AND SERVED. IT DRAWS FORTH THE HEART IN A SINCERE LOVE TO GOD, WHICH IS THE ONLY PRINCIPLE OF A TRUE, GRACIOUS, AND UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE, AND IT CONVINCES OF THE REALITY OF THOSE GLORIOUS REWARDS THAT GOD HAS PROMISED TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM." (LAST LINE - DIVINE AND SUPERNATURAL LIGHT) JONATHAN EDWARDS

### III. A DEMANDING COMMISSION ACTS 22:12-16

When Ananias, the Jew respected by all the Jews in Damascus for his devotion to the law, came to Saul, his first words were, "*Brother Saul, receive your sight.*" The last person he had seen was his Risen Messiah King, and the first person he saw when miraculously healed, was Christ's representative to give him his Divine Commission! The first account is strategically specific, "*bear My name before Gentiles, kings and the children of Israel*" (Acts 9:15), and this second is universally specific "*to all men.*" Baptism, in immediate obedience, is a picture of our sins being washed away by our calling upon the Lord.

#### Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Have you responded to the light of the Risen Lord and obeyed his Word, calling upon Him as your Lord and Savior?
- 2) Has the light of Christ confronted your sin and have you repented and turned from your sin to receive Him?
- 3) Are you doing what God has called you to do through His messenger and His eternal Word?