



DEVOTIONAL TIME

12-04-2014 @ 0900

“Obedience Can Change a Life!”

Acts 9:15-20

JOY TO THE WORLD!

Joy to the world! The Lord is come! Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And Heaven and nature sing, and Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven... and Heaven and nature sing!



Acts 9:15-20

The Lord said to him, “Go, because I have chosen him to serve Me, to make My Name known to Gentiles and kings, and to the people of Israel. And I Myself will show him all that he must suffer for My sake.” So Ananias went, entered the house where Saul was, and placed his hands on him. “Brother Saul,” he said, “the Lord has sent me – Jesus Himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” At once, something like fish scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptized, and after he had eaten, his strength came back. Saul stayed for a few days with the believers in Damascus. He went straight to the synagogues and began to preach that Jesus was the Son of God!

QUESTIONS FOR TODAY

- Have you ever known a “Moment of Truth”, an earth-shattering, life-changing Event that completely transformed your view of “life”, “religion”, “God”, and even your very *self*?
- Have you ever met an old friend or acquaintance, only to realize they had changed so completely you no longer knew them? Did it leave you wondering *what happened*?
- Did you ever find “obedience” a “tough pill to take” at the time, but found yourself profoundly glad later, as “things worked out” so much better than you ever hoped, dreamed, or imagined?

Any “new assignment” comes with a certain amount of apprehension, because we have so often had to face the “unplanned” and/or “unexpected”. This is even truer when *God* is the One sending us on that “New Assignment”! Ananias of Damascus wasn’t at all sure of what to expect when he met Saul of Tarsus, because all he had to go on was what he had heard from others. Even in our own lives, it’s been “easy” to “pre-judge” a person, place, thing, or time, often long before ever actually meeting, going, trying, or otherwise experiencing them. Fear, pride, anger, (among others,) can shut down a “vision of true possibilities”, and keep us from ever “stepping out” in hope, or “going forth” in faith. Ananias lays out his fears and concerns to the Lord honestly, but humbly; when God says, “Go!” he goes, an act of obedience that leads to the conversion and calling of the Apostle Saul, a conversion so total he needed a name change, becoming known in the Roman world as “Paul”. With that “new name”, Paul embraced a “missionary assignment”, spreading the Good News from Antioch in Asia Minor to the very center of the Empire...Rome itself! Imagine what might have happened if Ananias had said “No! NO! I can’t do it, Lord! I won’t go! It’s too risky!” What would have happened to Saul then? Someone had to go; what if God had called *us*? Would the world have had an Apostle Paul, or would we have chosen to stay in our “comfort zone”? Ananias chose obedience, and changed his life forever...but that was just the beginning! He changed Saul’s life, too, and what a change *that was*! With a “new vision”, and the Grace of God to endorse it, Saul went on to change the lives of countless others. God, grant us the Grace of Humble Obedience. When we’d rather stay in a “safe” condition, bless us with a “dangerous trust” until we finally surrender our fears and set aside our hesitations. As You say “Go!” make us willing to venture eagerly into “crisis situations” and “perilous places” You can use to reveal Your Glory and Wisdom! Teach us to OBEY with an “all-in” attitude!