

4. Paul had great certainty that he had heard from God and been commissioned by him. He didn't have to appeal to human wisdom for authentication and God's name was blessed because of Paul's ministry. In John 17:6-26, Jesus prays for his disciples, and not just for them, but for us as well. Concentrate on verses 13-19. Each time you see the word "they" or "them," substitute your name. Jot down the challenges that Jesus gives you through his word.

5. Jot down some ways that you (or people in general) might be believing a "gospel" tainted by the world's wisdom and making compromises with the simple truth of God's word.

Prayer Requests:

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS Galatians 1:11-24

"All my achievements meant nothing in God's economy. The real legacy of my life was my biggest failure – that I was an ex-convict. My greatest humiliation – being sent to prison – was the beginning of God's greatest use of my life; He chose the one thing in which I could not glory for His glory."

Charles Colson

Only God could give such a gospel (Galatians 1:11-12) Matthew 7:24, 28-29; Matthew 21:23-27

The value of the gospel is immeasurable: we know that because of where it comes from.

It's all about the gospel's authority.

The striking parallel – Jesus

Only God could save such a man (Galatians 1:13-20)

Acts 8; Acts 26:15-18

Saul was climbing the ladder of success but it was leaning against the wrong building.

Saul's persecution was exclusive - only against the Jesus movement.

Saul couldn't imagine God's divine appointments.

Only God could change hearts so dramatically (Galatians 1:21-14)

Real godliness doesn't come from the "do's" of the boxes we check; it comes from the "done" of the work of Christ.

The man who brought fear, instead brought blessing.

Getting to know you

This week we saw the incredible power of God as he turned Saul into Paul on a road to Damascus. Are you a "Damascus Road" convert, or do you know one? Tell the story (be discrete).

Digging deeper

1. Read Paul's commission in Acts 26:15-18. Why didn't Paul feel the need to confirm the message he had heard with the Apostles?
2. Read the following passages and jot down any concepts that would confirm Paul's decision. (Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 3:15-16)
3. Review carefully: what was Paul's basis for his relationship with God before his Road to Damascus encounter with Christ? (Gal 1:13-14)

See if you can rewrite those concepts you just listed in language that your irreligious neighbor might understand.