**Destiny in Damascus**

Acts 9:10-18 NKJV

**Introduction**

The number of people baptized after a major evangelistic series in Rwanda has reached 97,344 and is expected to top 100,000 this weekend, a church leader said.

“We are witnessing the largest baptism in the history of the denomination said Duane McKey, a key coordinator of the May 13-28 meetings. McKey noted that the goal of local church leaders had been 60,000 baptisms, or 30 people at each of the roughly 2,200 meeting sites across the African country. “The prayer goal, however, was 100,000, and it is expected that goal will be reached by this weekend,” he said. “Praise God!” Local church leaders had counted 95,890 baptisms by the end of the meetings on May 28, a figure that already dwarfed the previous record of 30,000 baptisms after a countrywide evangelistic series in Zimbabwe in May 2015. (Written in June 2016). Peter only Baptized 3,000 in Acts 2:41.

**Text**

Vs. 10 Ananias- Whom Jehovah has graciously given (Think about those in early Christian life)

Vs. 11 Street called Straight (To a man who once had a wicked life)

**A.** You need somebody to take you down the straight road

**B.** You need preaching that steps on your toes and tells you right from wrong

**C.** Matthew 7:14 **4**Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Vs. 12 That he receive his sight

**A.** Physically & Spiritually

**B.** **Helen Keller**- The only thing worse than being born blind is having sight and no vision.

Vs. 13 Paul needed Ananias and Ananias needed Paul (Ananias reminds us that we need to see new salvations) Ananias I have heard his reputation

Vs. 15 Chosen Vessel (My Vessel not yours) We love our kids no matter what anybody else believes about them or has said about them.

**Name Change**

Vs. 15 Name Change (I preached a sermon on what’s in a name)

1. Roman Citizen had three names

**A.** Forename

**B.** Family Name

**C.** Personal Name

A slave would often change his name by the Master he was following.

Saul- Desired (Acts 9) (God never changed his name)

Paul- Small (Acts 13:9)

1. Jacob to Israel (God changed his name)

2. Abram to Abraham

3. Simon to Peter (Rock)

Vs. 17 No longer **Saul of Tarsus** now he is called **Brother Saul**.

**Paul’s Pedigree**

1. Pharisee,

2. Tent Maker

3. Evangelist

4. Missionary

5. Scripture Writer

6. Mentor Rabbi Gamaliel

7. 13 New Testament Letters

8. 60-80 Churches

9. Lead thousands to Christ

Philippians 3:4-6 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: **5**circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; **6**concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. (If anybody can be a Narcissist it’s me)

**Illustration**

Mosab Hassan Yousef was the son of a Hamas Terrorist and his father was the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. A young man who grew up in Ramallah, Israel, which is near Bethlehem. He had 5 brothers and three sisters and he was the oldest. He was taught Jews and Christians were the enemy’s. Genesis 6:11 the earth was corrupt before God and the earth was filled with violence (Hamas) He was invited by a cab driver in Israel to come to church even when he didn’t speak good English and they gave him a Bible in Arabic and English. He eventually became a believer in Jesus Christ and he is the equivalent of the Apostle Paul. He wrote a book the Son of Hamas. He says Christians didn’t believe him when he came around and often told him to stay away.

**Baptism**

Romans 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Death**- Death to Sin (Sin Dies & Spirit Lives)

Romans 6:1-2 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? **2**Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

**Burial**- Bury the Old life (What’s your Old Life)

Colossians 2:12 **12**buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

**Resurrection**- Raised to his life, Victorious Life

Colossians 3:1-3 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things, which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2**Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. **3**For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Father**

**Son**

**Holy Spirit**

**Paul’s Suffering**

2 Corinthians 11:24-27 **24**From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. **25**Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; **26***in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; **27**in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting’s often, in cold and nakedness.

* Whipped with 39 lashes (5 different times)
* Beaten with rods (3 different times)
* Pummeled with stones (1 time)
* Shipwrecked (3 times)
* Adrift at sea (one night, one day)
* Sleepless nights (many)
* Hungry and thirsty (often)
* Cold and exposed

Almost everything he did to the church came back to him. (He consented to the stoning of Stephen)

**Illustration**

The story is told about the baptism of King Aengus by St. Patrick in the middle of the fifth century. Sometime during the ceremony, St. Patrick leaned on his sharp-pointed staff and inadvertently stabbed the king's foot. After the baptism was over, St. Patrick looked down at all the blood, realized what he had done, and begged the king's forgiveness. Why did you suffer this pain in silence, the Saint wanted to know. The king replied, "I thought it was part of the ritual."

**A.** Baptism basically means a life of obedience to Christ John 3:19 **19**And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

**Paul’s eyes are opened**

Vs. 17-18 (Something like Scales) Strip off, peel away

**A.** Satan blinds our eyes

2 Corinthians 4:4 **4**whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

**A.** Man will judge Paul before Damascus, God will judge Paul after it.

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners whom I am chief. (Paul started in humility and ended in humility) (They excused Paul of too much grace)

Acts 9:20 immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

**A**. He persecuted Christ now he is preaching Christ. (He wasted no time)

**B**. Maybe when Paul wrote 1 Cor 1:27 The foolish things of the world to confound the wise (Maybe he was speaking from experience.)

**Close**

2 Timothy 4:6-8 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only but also to all who have love his appearing. (It’s about finishing the race and keeping the faith)

**Four Major Accomplishments**

**1**. Fought the Good Fight (Spiritual War)

**2.** Finished the Race (Ran my own course)

**3.** Kept the Faith (I kept my trust in God)

**4.** Gained the Crown of Righteousness (I made it to heaven)