



Daily Reflections

May 5, 2017

Scripture

Acts 9: 1-20

Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, that, if he should find any men or women who belonged to the Way, he might bring them back to Jerusalem in chains.

On his journey, as he was nearing Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed around him.

He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

He said, "Who are you, sir?"

The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

Now get up and go into the city and you will be told what you must do."

The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, for they heard the voice but could see no one.

Saul got up from the ground,

but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing;

so they led him by the hand and brought him to Damascus.

For three days he was unable to see, and he neither ate nor drank.

There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias,

and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias."
He answered, "Here I am, Lord."
The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight
and ask at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul.
He is there praying,
and in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias
come in and lay his hands on him,
that he may regain his sight."
But Ananias replied,
"Lord, I have heard from many sources about this man,
what evil things he has done to your holy ones in Jerusalem.
And here he has authority from the chief priests
to imprison all who call upon your name."
But the Lord said to him,
"Go, for this man is a chosen instrument of mine
to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and children of Israel,
and I will show him what he will have to suffer for my name."
So Ananias went and entered the house;
laying his hands on him, he said,
"Saul, my brother, the Lord has sent me,
Jesus who appeared to you on the way by which you came,
that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."
Immediately things like scales fell from his eyes
and he regained his sight.
He got up and was baptized,
and when he had eaten, he recovered his strength.
He stayed some days with the disciples in Damascus,
and he began at once to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues,
that he is the Son of God.

Our Scripture Reflection

The statement that we have all heard said about another person, "He (or she) will NEVER change", is simply not true in light of today's text from Acts. Severe mental illness, notwithstanding, all people can change with the help

of God's Grace. Just look at Paul: Murderer of Christians became a great maker of Christians. That's why they call God's Grace amazing!

Food for your Journey

It's interesting that Michener's decision to become a writer emerged from a severe personal crisis — a near-death experience, in fact. Michener had dreamed of becoming a novelist for years, but had dragged his feet — not fully confident of his potential nor wanting to take the risks involved.

Then a plane he was on crashed, after making three attempts to land on the South Pacific Island of New Caledonia. Michener, a military correspondent with the Navy at the time, went immediately to his quarters, sat down and wrote, "I'm going to live the rest of my life as if I were a great man I'm going to concentrate my life on the biggest ideals and ideas I can handle."

He began work the next day on South Pacific.

—M. Blaine Smith, "Hearing God in a time of crisis: defining visions for our life sometimes come when our foundations are shaken," <http://nehemiah.gospelcom.net/crisis2.htm>. Retrieved 5 October 2006.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Pour forth Your Grace upon me so that I can become the person I was created to be. Amen.