

**He is One of the  
Greatest Proofs  
Christianity is True**

# Background Leading Up to Acts 9

- Jesus ascends to His throne and believers (known as “The Way”) follow the Holy Spirit’s lead as they grow.
- The apostles preached, performed miracles and were arrested several times.
- Stephen was arrested and martyred as Saul rose to the position of the #1 persecutor of believers.
- Philip brings the gospel to Samaria and to an Ethiopian official on the desert road before the Spirit lifted him.

**Acts 9:1-5 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound

to Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. <sup>4</sup> Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

<sup>5</sup> And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. **It is hard for you to kick against the goads.**"

*Saul went to the WRONG high priest for support.*

*From this text, Jesus clearly had been prompting Saul, but he was rejecting the pull of the Holy Spirit. Do you recognize the voice of the Spirit?*

*In this case, Jesus hits him between the eyes about who He is.*

**Are you in the habit of resisting the Spirit's voice?**

**Acts 9:6-11 (NIV<sub>2011</sub>)** <sup>6</sup> "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." <sup>7</sup> The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. <sup>8</sup> Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. <sup>9</sup> For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything. <sup>10</sup> In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. <sup>11</sup> The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying."

*Finally, Saul is obedient to God's voice and his blindness is symbolic of where he had been.*

*Though Jesus took the lead in audibly speaking to Saul, note that He delights in using faithful believers to be obedient in leading in the welcoming and discipling efforts.*

**In what ways is the Lord calling you to serve in His Kingdom?**

**Acts 9:12-17 (ESV)** <sup>12</sup> and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."

<sup>13</sup> But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name."

<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

<sup>16</sup> For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my

name." <sup>17</sup> So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Will you be obedient and pray for the 'impossibly' lost?