

Paul's Mirror

Acts 8: 1 And Saul approved of their killing him. On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. 3 But Saul began to **destroy the church**. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

Acts 9: 1 Meanwhile, Saul was **still breathing out murderous threats** against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

1 Timothy 1: 13 Even though I was once a
blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man...

Galatians 1: 14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Paul (Saul) was...

Angry

Wrathful

Violent

Competitive

Narcissistic

Never Wrong

Hypocrite

2 Corinthians 5: 16 So from now on we regard no one from a **worldly** point of view. Though we once **regarded Christ in this way**, we do so no longer.

Acts 9: 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

5 “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.

6 “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

Acts 9: 7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. 8 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. 9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

On the road to Damascus, Paul
realized two things:

(1). All of Jesus' claims were true.

On the road to Damascus, Paul
realized two things:

(2). Jesus hung on a cursed tree
for someone else's sins.

Philippians 2: 8 And being found in appearance as
a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

For Paul, the more his life and ministry resembled a dying corpse on a Roman cross, the more powerfully God would work in and through his ministry.

2 Corinthians 4: 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. 12 So then, death is at work in us, **but life is at work in you.**

The treasure of the gospel
should be proclaimed
by weak and unimpressive
ministers.

For Paul, the more impressive
the minister
the less God's power is at
work.

The true calling of the church is to
be a sign

of God's victory over the powers of
this age i.e. Satan, flesh, sin, and
death.

Paul's mirror shows us that the
only way for a church to foster
new creation life
is to have cruciform leaders
leading a cruciform
congregation.

2 Corinthians 12: 5 I will not boast about myself, except about my weaknesses. 6 Even if I should choose to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say, 7 or because of these surpassingly great revelations....

2 Corinthians 12: 9 But God said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. **For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

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