

## Small Group Discussion Guide

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**Series:** Hello My Name Is

**Week 3:** Acts 9:1-19

**Main Idea:** Jesus meets Saul in power and grace, turning a violent enemy into a surrendered witness and calling His church to release control, obey courageously, identify fully with Christ, and commit fully to His mission.

### Reference Texts Mentioned in Pastor Seth

Acts 9:1-19, Acts 7, John 14:6, Psalm 104:1-2, Isaiah 9:2, John 8:12, John 12:46

### **Context**

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Acts 9 comes after Stephen's martyrdom and the scattering of the church. Saul is introduced as a dangerous enemy who approved Stephen's death and violently pursued followers of "the Way." But on the road to Damascus, the risen Jesus interrupts Saul's mission of destruction with the light of His glory. Saul is humbled, blinded, and led by the hand into the city. At the same time, Jesus calls Ananias to obey Him by going to the very man the Church feared. The passage shows both the power of Christ to save His enemies and the call for His people to trust His rule, love their enemies, and join His mission without fear.

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### **Key Takeaways**

- No one is beyond the saving reach of Christ's grace.
  - Jesus is deeply united to His people; to harm the church is to oppose Christ Himself.
  - Surrender to Jesus means releasing control and obeying even when obedience feels costly.
  - A transformed life identifies with Christ and joins His mission.
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1. Read Acts 9:1-2. Saul is described as "still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord."

***What does this language reveal about the depth of Saul's opposition to Jesus and His people?***

2. Pastor Seth emphasized that Saul pursued both men and women who belonged to "the Way."

**What does this show about how seriously Saul viewed the followers of Jesus? How does it also remind us that every believer, men and women together, is part of Christ's mission?**

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3. Read Acts 9:3-6. Saul is stopped by a light from heaven and hears Jesus call his name.

**What does this encounter reveal about the power and authority of the risen Jesus?**

4. Saul asks, "Who are you, Lord?"

**Why is this such an important question for every person to answer? How would you honestly describe the way you are answering that question with your life right now?**

5. Jesus says, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting."

**What does this teach us about Jesus' relationship to His people? How should this encourage believers who feel wounded, afraid, rejected, or opposed because of their faith?**

6. Read Acts 9:7-9. Saul came toward Damascus with authority and control, but he entered the city blind and led by the hand.

**Where do you see the Lord stripping away Saul's control? Why is releasing control often necessary for true surrender?**

7. Read Acts 9:10-16. Ananias hears the Lord's command but also knows Saul's reputation.

**What do you notice about Ananias' honesty before the Lord? How can we bring our fears to Jesus without using them as an excuse for disobedience?**

8. Pastor Seth described Ananias as an example of Jesus' command to love our enemies.

**What stands out to you about the way Ananias approaches Saul? Who is someone you find difficult to love, bless, forgive, or move toward in obedience to Christ?**

9. Read Acts 9:17-19. Ananias calls Saul "Brother Saul," lays hands on him, and Saul is baptized.

**What does Saul's baptism show about his new identity in Christ? Why does identifying with Christ publicly matter for a believer?**

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10. Pastor Seth ended with four responses: fully release control, fully surrender to Jesus, fully identify with Christ, and fully commit to Christ's mission.

**Which of these four responses is the Lord pressing on your heart most clearly right now? What is one concrete step of obedience you need to take this week?**