

Newsletter June 2022

From Heaven's Heart

"When Jesus Shows Up"

Among the Jews who hated Jesus' followers, there was a man named Saul, and Saul really hated Jesus' followers. Saul grew up in Tarsus, but his parents, being very good Jews, sent him to Jerusalem to study under a Jewish teacher, Gamaliel, perhaps the greatest of all teachers of the Law of Moses. While studying under Gamaliel, he felt a calling to find the followers of Jesus and do whatever it took to stop them from spreading the gospel...jail...even death included.

Saul began breaking up churches, arresting Christ followers and putting them in prison. Surely this would stop the madness?

While traveling to Damascus around noon, to locate and arrest more Christians, suddenly a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, flashed upon Saul. It was so blinding that Saul fell to the ground, unable to see. Then he heard a voice from heaven calling, "Saul, Saul, why do you work against me?"

"Who is speaking?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are fighting."

What a surprise when Jesus shows up! Saul thought that Jesus was a false teacher who was dead. But now he knew that he was not dead. He was speaking to Saul from heaven. He really was God's Son, as He had claimed. There was no other explanation.

Saul did what we are to do when Jesus shows up. Saul asked, "What do you want me to do?"

"Go to the city and there you will be told what to do," Jesus answered. And Saul went.

What do we do when Jesus shows up? We ask, Lord, what do you want me to do?...then we do it.

Jesus was in the grave for three days before God raised Him back to life. Saul remained blind in his own grave so to speak for three days. Can you imagine laying there in a foreign city, blinded by a light from heaven, hearing Jesus speak to you, a Jesus you believed was a liar, a fake; but now knowing He is really the Son of God but not knowing what He's about to do with you. Surely He is going to punish him for all the harm he has

caused to Christ followers. Surely he's going to get what he deserves. He deserved to die.

When Jesus shows up, what do you expect? Do you expect an angry Jesus, a disappointed Jesus, a Jesus who will hand out the punishment you deserve for the way you have mistreated His ministry. "Well, I haven't done anything to bring harm to Christ ministry?" Well, what are you doing to bring good to His ministry, to build His ministry, to support His ministry, to grow His church, to feed the hungry, to provide clothing and shelter for the poor, to comfort the broken hearted, to encourage the one who has fallen?

By not doing, maybe we are actually doing harm? What do you think? What does Jesus think? What does His word teach us?

When Jesus showed up to Saul, everything changed for Saul. Even his name was changed to Paul.

What good, positive changes have you personally experienced since Jesus showed up...in your life? Did you respond like Saul? What do you want me to do Lord? If you asked, and like Saul, you did what Christ asked you to do, then all is well. You have what He promised. You discovered the peace He promises. You are on a Jesus directed mission...You have a personal relationship with God. It may be very close, it may not be very close. None of this depends on God. It all depends on you. How much have you invested in your relationship...your very own.

If you have invested wisely, asked and done what Jesus asked of you, then your life is filled up with peace, joy, power, and grace...no matter the difficulties you face, He promises all this and more. You know it's real because you have it. If you don't have it...peace, joy, power, grace, deep, deep love...go back to your own Damascus Road experience and ask, "What do you want Lord?" He'll tell you and it will be a life-changer. Just do it! Don't hesitate! You are burning daylight! Just do it!

Welcome Home...When Jesus shows up, you'll discover Home and it is eternal.

Love you dearly,

Pastor Steve