

Saul, later known as Paul, was a man who killed Christians because he felt it was his duty to do so. The gory movies, published by Hollywood these days, are no greater than the real-life story of arenas full of people watching Christians being torn to shreds by lions in Saul's day.

From his Jewish and religious teachings, there was no way Jesus could have been the Messiah. Therefore because he had the power to do something about it, he must act. This was murder. There must have been a lot of hatred in his heart for these people, in order to commit such a vile act and call it justice.

That is something to really consider. Man has a form of righteousness and justice. It is not always the same as God's righteousness and justice. When we are considering what is right and just in our own lives, we must consider whether it is right and just according to us and what we have been taught, or is it right and just in the heart of God. There is a difference.

When Saul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was faced with the difference between man's justice and God's justice, man's righteousness and God's righteousness. It was such an overwhelming revelation that he had to change his name to reflect the dramatic change in his heart and life.

Paul had come face to face with Jesus and that changed him drastically. When we see Jesus for who He really is, it should change us drastically, as well. We should see things from God's perspective, not our own. Our spirits are reborn, and through Holy Spirit communing with our spirit, we change. Our carnal nature loses control as we submit to the One whose love we just discovered.

Finding Jesus is not about mouthing words. Too many people are led in a sinner's prayer with no understanding and no face-to-face encounter with Jesus. Not emotions, not intellect, but a realization deep within us that who we are grows really dim, in the light of His glory, the light of who Jesus really is. Just as the old song says. "Turn your eyes upon Jesus." When we do, everything else becomes dim in His light.

Paul was a very influential man, but he left everything to follow Jesus. He had status, a good job, highly respected as both Jew and Roman. He did an about-face, which is really what repentance means. When we meet Jesus, it should have that dramatic of an effect on us.

No one satisfied like Jesus. Paul wanted Jesus to teach him. He didn't go to the apostles in Jerusalem to learn about Jesus, even though they had walked and talked with Him. He went to the desert where Jesus taught him through Holy Spirit. We need more of this. Is it God teaching us what we know, or is it man teaching us? Is it pure, holy, and sacred, or is it religious and tickles our flesh?

Paul did not walk the earth with Jesus when Jesus walked the earth in human form, yet Paul became one of the greatest apostles of all time. Why? Because of his heart and his devotion to Jesus. David was called a man after God's own heart, even though he had done horrible things. Paul had done horrible things, yet there came a point in his life that nothing else mattered except the King of heaven. His life meant nothing to him, because he surrendered to allow Jesus to live His life through him.

If we want to see success in this lifetime, measured by the righteous and just standard of heaven, we must daily die to self, as Paul did, and let Jesus live in us and through us. If we die to self, we are not seeking what our gift is, or what our calling is, or what our anointing is. That is childish and self-centered. We are seeking the Father's heart for those we come in contact with who need to be free from the tactics of the enemy. The enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy. Do we recognize and discern where that might be happening in the people we meet every day? Do we recognize when the enemy is trying to destroy our businesses, our schools, our media?

Do we realize we have in us the fulness of Jesus and whatever is needed at the time of an encounter with enemy devices, we have it? Jesus is ALWAYS the answer, not our gift, our calling, our anointing. It is always JESUS. We only recognize that as we become less centered on who we are, and more centered on who He is. The enemy has tricked us into becoming focused on self, rather than on Jesus. Babylon, the false kingdom, was based on MAN and what man could do. It was started on the basis of SELF.

But you ask, if we have it in us, why does scripture tell us when we are sick to call the elders? The elders were not some great leaders. They were not just those of greater age. They were those who had matured in the things of Christ. We all should mature to the point of knowing who Jesus is and who He is in us. We all mature in different areas at different speeds and different ways. We need each other in this process to help us mature, especially leaders who have submitted wholeheartedly to Jesus and His ways and have died to self. A mature saint should be able to discern what is needed and know Jesus can provide the answer.

When we are focused on self, we are focused on who we are and what we can do. When we are focused on Jesus and on what is in the heart of the Father, it is about what He can do through us. It is the difference of DOING versus BEING.

We must learn to be and stop being so intent on doing. When we are in the state of being in Jesus, we do what He does, we say what He says. It is no longer about us, but the one who has our heart.

That is the place where miracles happen! In II Corinthians chapter 12, Paul wrote about his supernatural experiences. He couldn't tell for sure whether it happened with his physical body or if his spirit separated from his body to experience it. It didn't matter. It happened and it was very real. Paul describes it, according to the New Living Translation in verse 4, he **"heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell."**

So-called "prophets" today are promoting themselves constantly. They are reminding people they said this or that two months ago, ten months ago, two years ago and now it is coming to pass. They are really busy promoting themselves and their "ministries". They even argue over who was the first to bring forth a truth that hadn't been talked about before. I have a hard time finding Jesus in that mess! Is it man or is it God? That is a question we need to constantly be asking. So much of what we see today is self, not Jesus. I want to see Jesus!

Paul saw things he could not put in words! Wow! Stop and think about that statement! What do you do with seeing things that you cannot put into words? The Greek word implies that what Paul heard was too sacred, too holy to mention. Are these experiences available to us today? I believe there are. God still reveals things to His people, both those who are prophets and those who are a prophetic people.

There is a message in this to all those who claim to speak for Jesus. We must treat what He says as holy and sacred. Every dream, every word, every revelation should be treated like we should treat Jesus. He has our attention. We can so easily defile the things of God if we are not careful. We cannot add to or embellish what He says. We cannot put our own spin on it to make ourselves look good. We must continue to die everyday to our desires and wants, and live for Jesus. He is the answer to everything, and He will provide that answer through us, if we understand the process.

We must be a people who love righteousness and justice and hate wickedness. According to Hebrews 1:9 that is who our God is. If He lives in us, that same spirit dwells in us. It is what pulls the anointing from us.

But to the Son *He says*: “Your throne, O God, *is* forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness *is* the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” Hebrews 1:8,9 (NKJV)

Again, the question is, whose righteousness, whose justice? God always sets the standard for what is right and what is wrong. What man thinks, means nothing. Only God can say what is just and what is unjust in any given situation. It cannot come from man. In order to be a people who walk in this anointing, we must be able to discern the heart of God in every situation we face daily. It is only by living in the Father’s heart that we readily recognize what is wrong in a situation and what God would have us do, if anything, to bring justice to the situation.

When we are obedient to the Father’s desires, we are treating His words as sacred and holy. We are treating Him as sacred and holy. His voice is precious to us and another we will not follow. When He gives us revelation, when He speaks to us, when He gives us dreams and visions, these things are precious treasures and not to be treated lightly. We can indeed be guilty of throwing pearls to swine. Sometimes people embellish what they see to make it seem more appealing. In doing so, the pure word is treated as a cheap object in need of more glamor. This must stop.

We need an encounter with our Lord, like the one Paul had. We need an about-face. Most saints do not trust that they hear the Lord’s voice clearly for themselves. They delegate that responsibility to others. It might be the pastor of their “church”. It might be television self-promoting “prophets” or “apostles”. If we want to make a difference in the world, we have no choice but to go to the desert until we hear and understand His voice clearly. Are we willing? I hope so. The world needs a people who will.

