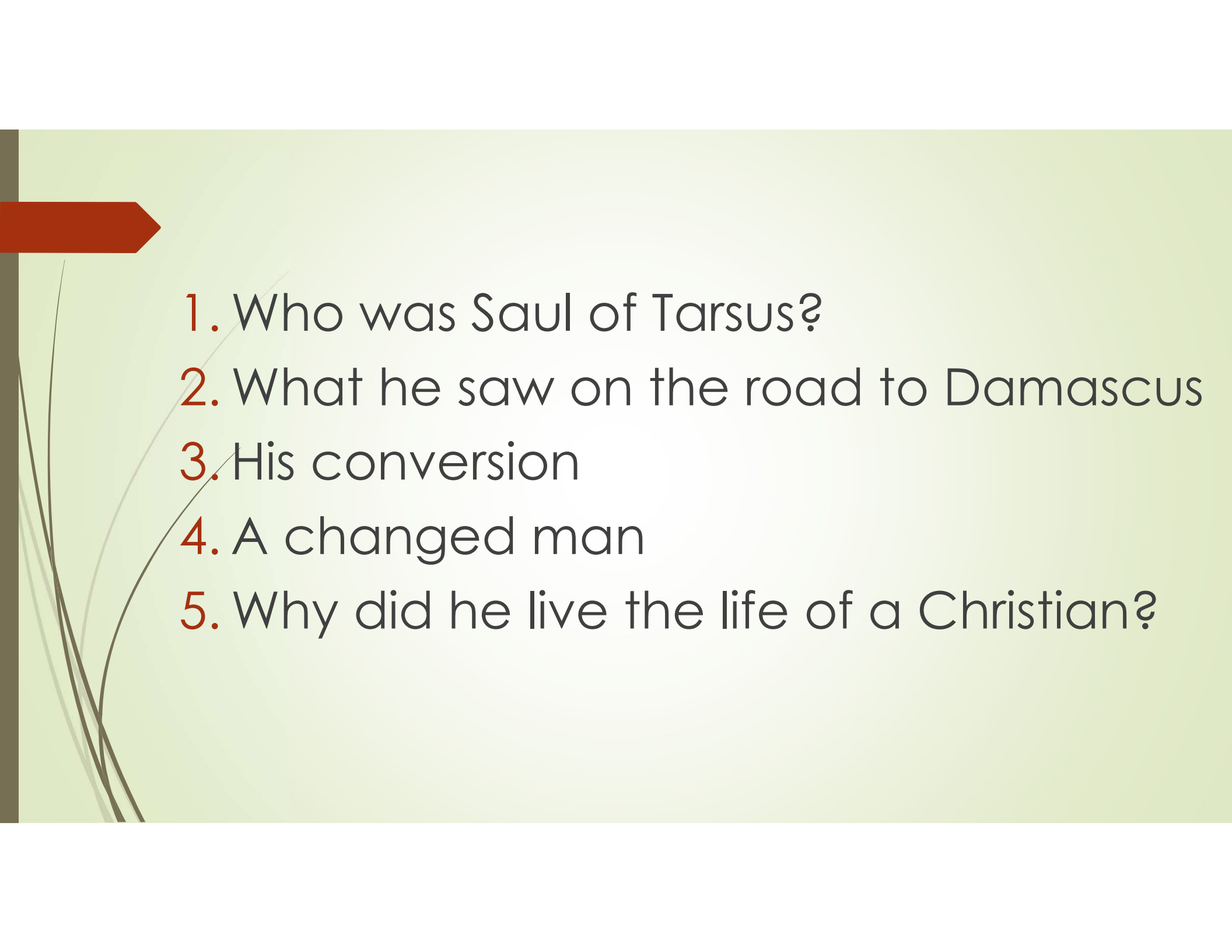


The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-21; 26:12-18

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1. Who was Saul of Tarsus?
 2. What he saw on the road to Damascus
 3. His conversion
 4. A changed man
 5. Why did he live the life of a Christian?

1. Who was Saul of Tarsus?

- ▶ Acts 22:3, 8; 21:39; Philippians 3:5
 - ▶ Born a Roman citizen
 - ▶ Of Tarsus, no insignificant city
 - ▶ Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin – Romans 3:1-2
 - ▶ Educated in Jerusalem
 - ▶ Pharisee by belief and training; oral traditions
- ▶ Acts 26:4-5; Philippians 3:6; Galatians 1:4
 - ▶ Religious from youth
 - ▶ Zealous

1. Who was Saul of Tarsus?

- ▶ 1 Timothy 1:13 – Formerly:
 - ▶ A blasphemer
 - ▶ Luke 10:16 – “He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”
 - ▶ Acts 26:11
 - ▶ Compelled Christians to blaspheme
 - ▶ A persecutor
 - ▶ Galatians 1:13
 - ▶ Tried to destroy the church
 - ▶ Acts 8:3
 - ▶ Entered houses to drag off and imprison Christians
 - ▶ Acts 7:58 - 8:1; 22:20; 26:10
 - ▶ Voted to murder Christians
 - ▶ Acts 22:4
 - ▶ Persecuted to the death

1. Who was Saul of Tarsus?

- ▶ 1 Timothy 1:13 – Formerly:
 - ▶ A persecutor
 - ▶ Acts 9:1-2; 26:11
 - ▶ Went even to foreign cities to persecute
 - ▶ An insolent man
 - ▶ Violently arrogant; violent aggressor
- ▶ Acts 23:1; 24:16; 26:9
 - ▶ Conscientious but wrong
 - ▶ God does not judge a man on his conscience
 - ▶ Your conscience does not determine what is right and wrong, what is truth and error
 - ▶ A good conscience does not make you right with God
 - ▶ We need to draw the conclusion from that

2. What Saul saw on the road to Damascus

- ▶ Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-21; 26:12-18
- ▶ Why did the Lord Jesus appear to Saul?
 - ▶ Acts 22:14-15
 - ▶ Acts 26:16-18
 - ▶ “I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you”
 - ▶ “For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard”
 - ▶ Jesus appeared to him to make him an apostle
 - ▶ Saw the risen Lord
 - ▶ Acts 1:22
 - ▶ Acts 9:27; 1 Corinthians 9:1
 - ▶ Jesus did not appear to him to save him
 - ▶ Romans 10:16-17

3. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

- Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-21; 26:12-18
- Convinced that Jesus is Lord – 9:4-6; 22:10
 - Note that when you persecute Christians, you persecute Christ
- But Christ spoke no peace to him there on the road
 - Why not?
 - He needed to hear the gospel! He needed to hear God's way for him to be justified
- Preacher sent to him
 - Acts 9:10-17
 - Why?
 - To be taught what he "must do" – 9:6

3. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

- Acts 9:1-19; 22:1-21; 26:12-18
- Spent 3 days blind and fasting; prayed to God
 - Evidence of repentance
- Preacher came
- He was taught what he must do
 - Acts 22:16
- He did that
 - Acts 9:18
- And upon doing that,
 - His sins remitted
 - Acts 22:16
 - Relief
 - Acts 9:19

3. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

- ▶ When then was Paul saved?
 - ▶ Not in unbelief, when he was a devout Jew
 - ▶ Acts 22:3
 - ▶ Won't be saved just being religious and devout
 - ▶ Not in unbelief when he was a man of good morals
 - ▶ Philippians 3:4-6
 - ▶ Good morals alone will not save you
 - ▶ Not in unbelief when he was zealous
 - ▶ Galatians 1:13-14
 - ▶ Won't be saved with zeal apart from knowledge – Romans 10:2
 - ▶ Not in unbelief when living in sincerity of heart
 - ▶ Acts 26:9
 - ▶ Sincerity alone will not save you or keep you saved
 - ▶ Not in unbelief when living in clear conscience
 - ▶ Acts 23:1
 - ▶ Clear conscience not an indication of being saved

3. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus

- ▶ When then was Paul saved?
 - ▶ Not when he saw the vision, for there was something he MUST do
 - ▶ Not when he acknowledged Jesus was Lord
 - ▶ Not when he was fasting in penitence
 - ▶ Not when he was praying
 - ▶ There's a time to stop praying and start doing
 - ▶ Not at any of these points, because he still needed his sins washed away as is evident from Acts 22:16
- ▶ Paul was saved when he was baptized
 - ▶ Acts 22:16
 - ▶ Romans 6:3-8
 - ▶ 1 Peter 3:21

4. A changed man

- ▶ Having become a Christian, Saul was a changed man
 - ▶ Acts 9:19-22
- ▶ And he taught others the same
 - ▶ Acts 26:19
 - ▶ Romans 6:16-18
- ▶ Those who are converted live a changed life
 - ▶ Galatians 2:20
 - ▶ Galatians 5:24-25
- ▶ Saul's example teaches us that we can be forgiven and we can change

4. A changed man

- He was now an humble man
 - 1 Corinthians 15:9
 - 1 Timothy 1:12-17
- He had a changed rule of life
 - The gospel of Jesus Christ
 - Galatians 3:1-2
 - 1 Timothy 1:3, 6:3
 - Everyone who obeys the gospel must change their rule of life to be the gospel, whether from...
 - Tradition
 - Custom
 - Way you were raised
 - What you like, what you think, what you want
- He lived a surrendered life
 - Single purpose – Philippians 3:13
 - Ever faithful – Acts 20:26-27

5. Why did he live the life of a Christian?

- Not coerced
- Not for wealth
 - 1 Corinthians 4:11-12; Acts 20:33-34
 - The gospel of “health and wealth” is the devil’s gospel
- Not to please others
 - Galatians 1:10; Acts 22:17-21
 - Some will not be happy with your conversion
- Not for power
 - 2 Corinthians 4:5-11; 1 Corinthians 9:19
- Not because he was deceived
 - Acts 9:7-8
- Not to follow a fraud or to defraud others
 - 1 Corinthians 15:19
- Not for a life of ease
 - 2 Corinthians 11:23-28
 - Diligence NOT OPTIONAL – 2 Peter 1:8-10

5. Why did he live the life of a Christian?

- ▶ Then why did he live the life of a Christian?
 - ▶ Because of what he KNEW and thus BELIEVED
 - ▶ 2 Timothy 1:12
- ▶ Conviction of the truth!
 - ▶ He came face to face with the truth!
- ▶ The truth calls for a choice to believe and obey or to disbelieve and disobey
 - ▶ You will live with the consequences of your choice, and you will live with it for eternity
 - ▶ “Ok with me, I can live with that” you say. But in truth:
 - ▶ God says, “Thou fool” – Luke 12:20
 - ▶ You will say, “Lord, Lord, open for us” – Luke 13:23-28; Matthew 25:11