

Paul's Calling – Acts 22:6-11

We hear the story of Paul's calling three times in Acts alone. It is a vision of the risen Jesus that profoundly shaped his life and ministry.

The story is simple; Paul is in the middle of persecuting Christians in what he thinks is service to God. He sees a blazingly bright light and hears Jesus' voice, saying two things:

- You are persecuting *me* (when you persecute my followers).
- Go to Damascus and you will be told what I have assigned for you to do.

There are three exciting implications:

1. First, Jesus cares so much about his followers that he takes personally what they suffer and feel. He cares enough to step in, enough to say **twice** that Paul is persecuting *him*.
2. Second, Jesus is powerful. Paul is left blind and helpless at even this merciful appearance of the gloriously powerful Jesus. How great Jesus is that a mere glimpse of him could do that!
3. Third, Jesus doesn't punish Paul, but gives him a part in God's plan to see more and more people come to know Jesus. That's a plan that we also have a part in; Jesus said to his followers: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8).

Questions

1. What sort of things could leave us discouraged as Christians?
2. Why is it important that Jesus is both loving and powerful? When is it particularly important that we know that Jesus cares for us? When would we become discouraged if we were not convinced that Jesus is in control of the world and our lives?
3. What particularly excites you about God's plan to see 'all the ends of the earth' hear about Jesus? Is there a part of the world, or a city or a street or a house that you wish could hear more about Jesus?
4. What do you think your part in God's plan might be? How do you think the rest of the church family could help you? How could you help the rest of the church family carry out God's plan?