

FOLLOW-THROUGH

“Testify from Brokenness” (Acts 9:1-22)

Sermon 4 in a Series Titled, “Testify”

May 6, 2007



Introduction

Share a time in your life when pride and self-focus stopped you from succeeding. In other words, when did a lack of humility cost you something? When was your own ego your worst enemy?

Putting the Passage to Work

Underneath the story of Saul's conversion is God's hard work (grace!) in humbling Saul and opening him to God's strength.

1. Read Acts 9:1-22 aloud. Try to answer the following:
 - Where in these verses do you see God “breaking” Saul in His conversion so that he can be truly changed and useful for the Lord's mission. In other words, how did God humble Saul so that He could “lose himself” and live for Christ?
 - Note in these verses where Paul became dependent. Where did he have to lean on God or others to know what happened next?
2. Read Galatians 1:13-24. What more do you learn about Paul's conversion and early “training” from these verses?
3. Now read the other two times the story of Saul's conversion is told in the book of Acts. Read Acts 22:1-21 and Acts 26:1-23. Answer these questions:
 - In each case to whom does Paul tell the story?
 - Any additional details of his conversion you pick up as he tells it each time?
 - Why do you think Paul wanted to retell this story, every chance he got?

Digging Deeper

1. How does Paul understand the hard times he endured in each of these passages?
 - 2 Corinthians 1:8-9
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10
2. Discuss this quote from Peter Marshall. Do you agree or disagree with it.

“It is a fact of Christian experience that life is a series of troughs and peaks. In his efforts to get permanent possession of a soul, God relies on the troughs more than the peaks. And some of his special favorites have gone through longer and deeper troughs than anyone else.” PETER MARSHALL

3. Share one story from your life telling how God used a real trough in your life to shape you and equip you for witness.
4. When has God broken you and then put you together even stronger? Share that time with your group.
5. Close with a prayer that God will use our brokenness for His purposes.