

Unshackled: The Road to Revival- Acts 9:1–9

One encounter with Jesus can completely change the direction of your life.

Introduction

In this new series called **Unshackled**, we are learning how ordinary people experienced the extraordinary power, grace, and love of Jesus in the **Book of Acts**. Their faith could not be stopped because they encountered God personally. Today's message, **The Road to Revival**, focuses on Saul's life-changing encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus.

Saul believed he was doing the right thing, but he was actually hurting Christians and fighting against God's people. He was angry, prideful, and spiritually blind. **Yet Jesus still loved Saul enough to stop him and redirect his life.** This story reminds us that nobody is too far away from the grace of God. **Jesus still changes lives, heals hearts, and gives people a new purpose.**

Personal revival happens when Jesus wakes up our hearts and changes us from the inside out. Revival is not just emotion or excitement at church. **Revival is when Jesus changes our hearts, attitudes, priorities, and direction.** Saul's life became completely different after meeting Jesus, and the same can happen for us today.

Revival Starts When Jesus Gets Our Attention

Acts 9 tells us that suddenly a bright light from heaven surrounded Saul. **He was not searching for Jesus, but Jesus came searching for him.** Saul thought he understood everything, but God interrupted his journey to show him a better way.

Sometimes God interrupts our lives because He loves us too much to leave us the same. God may speak to us through difficult moments, loving correction, church services, wise people, or the Holy Spirit speaking to our hearts. What feels like an interruption can actually become the beginning of revival.

Jesus often gets our attention before He changes our direction. Revival begins when we stop long enough to hear His voice and recognize our need for Him.

Revival Opens Our Eyes to Truth

As Jesus spoke to Saul, He asked, **“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”** Saul suddenly realized that he was not only hurting Christians, but he was fighting against Jesus Himself. Although Saul believed he was right, he was spiritually blind.

This part of the story teaches us that revival happens when God reveals the truth about our hearts. A person can know about religion, attend church, or appear fine outwardly and still be far from God inwardly. Jesus lovingly exposes pride, sin, anger, fear, or wrong attitudes so He can heal and transform us.

God does not reveal our weaknesses to shame us. He reveals them because He loves us and wants to lead us into freedom and change. Revival begins when we allow God's truth to change us from the inside out.

Revival Requires Surrender and Trust

After Saul encountered Jesus, he became blind and had to be led by the hand into the city. For three days he waited, prayed, and allowed God to work on his heart privately. ***The man who once depended on his own strength now had to fully depend on God.***

Sometimes God slows us down so we can hear His voice more clearly. Revival requires humility and surrender. It means letting go of pride, self-control, and our own way so Jesus can lead us.

Before God used Saul publicly, He first transformed him privately. God still works the same way today. He cares more about changing our hearts than simply changing our outward behavior.

Revival Produces a New Life

Saul's encounter with Jesus completely transformed his life. The man who once persecuted Christians became a preacher of the Gospel. His purpose changed, his priorities changed, and his identity changed.

This is the true power of revival. Jesus does not simply improve lives a little bit; He transforms them completely. When someone truly encounters Jesus, they begin living differently because their heart has been changed.

The story of Saul reminds us that no one is beyond the reach of God's grace. Jesus still forgives, restores, heals, and gives people a brand-new beginning. One real encounter with Jesus can change a person's life forever.

Closing Challenge

Jesus is still calling people closer to Him today. If we want revival, we must allow Jesus to work in our hearts personally. We cannot leave the same way we came.

Maybe there are areas in our lives where we need healing, forgiveness, courage, or change. Jesus invites us to trust Him, surrender to Him, and let Him lead us into a new direction.

One moment with Jesus can truly change everything