

The Joy of Restoration

Pt. 1: You're Not A Lost Cause

Acts 7:57-8:3; 9:1-22

Introduction:

- A. One of the joys of restoration is watching something that seems impossible to fix be fixed.
- B. When it comes to people, there's no such thing as a lost cause.
- C. One of the world's greatest preachers was also one of the world's greatest persecutors.

Saul's Regrettable Past

- A. Saul had a bad reputation among those who were followers of Jesus and for good reason (Acts 9:10-14).
 - 1. Stood - Acts 7:57-58 – we are first introduced to Saul while he is attending the stoning of Stephen.
 - 2. Approved - Acts 8:1 – Saul approved of the execution of Stephen.
 - 3. Participated - Acts 8:3 – Saul ravaged (destroyed) the church by dragging people off to prison.
 - 4. Consumed by it - Acts 9:1-2 – Saul is still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord. This is the very air he breathes.
- B. Saul described himself as the worst of sinners (I Tim. 1:12-15).
 - 1. He wanted to bring Christians back to Jerusalem in chains (Acts 9:1-2).
 - 2. He went out of his way to track down Christians.
- C. Saul was the kind of person no one expected to change. He seemed like a lost cause.

Saul's Remarkable Future

- A. The Lord chose Saul long before Saul chose the Lord (Acts 9:6; Gal. 1:15).
- B. Jesus chose Saul to be His instrument (Acts 9:15).
- C. Jesus chose Saul for our sake (I Tim. 1:15-16).

Conclusion:

- A. The most unlikely and undeserving people we know can change.
- B. If the Lord can change and save even the worst of sinners like Saul, the Lord can change and save anyone.
- C. As long as we have air to breathe, we are never a lost cause in the eyes of the Lord