

*Galatians: 1:13-24*

You have heard, I know, the story of my former way of life in Judaism. You know that I went to extremes in persecuting the church of God and tried to destroy it; I went far beyond most of my contemporaries regarding Jewish observances because of my great zeal to live out all the traditions of my ancestors.

But the time came when God, who had set me apart before I was born, called me by divine grace choosing to reveal Christ through me, that I might spread Christ among the Gentiles.

Immediately, without seeking human advisors or even going to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, I went off to Arabia; later I returned to Damascus.

Three years after that, I went up to Jerusalem to get information from Peter, with whom I stayed for fifteen days. I didn't meet any other apostle except James, the brother of Jesus. I declare before God that what I have just written is true.

After that I visited the regions of Syria and Cilicia. The communities of Christ in Judea had no idea what I looked like; they had only heard that "the one who was formerly persecuting us is now preaching the faith he tried to destroy," and they gave glory to God because of me.

*Galatians: 3: 26-27*

Each one of you is a child of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus.

All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed ourselves with Christ.

In Christ there is no Jew or Greek, slave or citizen, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus.

*Book of Acts: 9:1-20*

Meanwhile Saul continued to breathe murderous threats against the disciples of Jesus. He had gone up to the high priest and asked for letters, addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, that would authorize him to arrest and take to Jerusalem any followers of the Way that he could find, both women and men.

As he traveled along and was approaching Damascus, a light from the sky suddenly flashed about him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

"Who are you?" Saul asked.

The voice answered, "I am Jesus, and you are persecuting me. Get up now and go into the city, where you will be told what to do."

Those traveling with him were speechless. They heard the voice, but could see no one.

Saul got up from the ground unable to see, even though his eyes were open. They had to take him by the hand and lead him into Damascus. For three days he continued to be blind, during which time he ate and drank nothing.

There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias, Christ appeared to him in a vision saying, "Ananias."

Ananias said, "Here I am."

Then Christ said to him, "Go at once to Straight Street, and at the house of Judah ask for a certain Saul of Tarsus. He is there praying. Saul had a vision that a man named Ananias will come and lay hands on him so that he would recover his sight."

But Ananias protested, "I have heard from many sources about Saul and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. He is here now with authorization from the chief priests to arrest everybody who calls on your name."

Christ said to Ananias, "Go anyway. Saul is the instrument I have chosen to bring my Name to Gentiles, to rulers, and to the people of Israel.

I myself will show him how much he will have to suffer for my name."

With that Ananias left. When he entered the house, he laid his hands on Saul, saying, "Saul, my brother, I have been sent by Jesus Christ, who appeared to you on the way here, to help you recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight.

He got up and was baptized, and his strength returned after he had eaten some food.