

SAVED LIKE THE PERSECUTOR

INTRODUCTION

A. Acts 9:1-18

We thrill to read of the salvation of one called Saul of Tarsus!

B. Acts 13:9

We will use the names “Saul” and “Paul” interchangeably.

I. THE PERSECUTOR WAS SAVED ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN THE WORST OF SINNERS

A. Acts 7:57-8:3

Saul oversaw the execution of Stephen, the first Christian to suffer martyrdom, and then aggressively pursued other disciples.

B. 1st Timothy 1:12-16

Later, he identified himself as the chief of sinners.

C. Mark 2:15-17

This is exactly why Jesus came to earth – to save the worst offenders.

D. 1st Corinthians 6:9-11

Souls are excluded from heaven because of their sins, but they can be forgiven!

II. THE PERSECUTOR FORSOOK RENOWN

A. Acts 22:3; 5:34

He was educated by Gamaliel, a most reputable teacher.

B. Acts 26:9-10

He had a “vote” when it came to executing Christians, which put him in a position of some authority because Judea was no democracy, so he might have been on the Council.

C. Philippians 3:2-8

Paul had enjoyed great prominence among the Jews, but came to regard his fame as trash.

D. 1st Corinthians 1:26-29

To be respectable in God's sight requires one to be willing to be foolish in the sight of peers.

III. THE PERSECUTOR WAS NOT SAVED ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

A. Acts 9:3, 6; 22:6, 10

Despite what so many say, the persecutor was **not** saved on the road to Damascus! While on that road, he asked what he needed to do and was told to enter the city and await further instruction.

B. Acts 22:16; 9:18

In Damascus, Saul was told to be baptized! He obeyed that command "*immediately.*"

C. 1st Peter 3:21

Baptism does, in fact, save!

IV. THE PERSECUTOR WAS NOT SAVED WHEN HE PRAYED

A. Acts 9:11, 9

In Damascus, Saul spent his time, probably all of the three days he was waiting, in prayer.

B. Proverbs 28:9; Isaiah 1:15

He knew the former covenant. He had literally shut his ears to the law of Christ and his hands were covered in blood, so his prayers were not being heard!

C. 1st Peter 3:12

The principle persists into the present covenant. God ignores the prayers of sinners. Therefore, a sinner's prayer cannot be the means whereby one is saved.

V. **THE PERSECUTOR GOT TO PREACHING ONCE HE WAS SAVED**

A. **Acts 26:12-19; 9:18-22**

Saul had a specific calling from the Lord to preach and he did not hesitate to do as he was told.

B. **Romans 10:9-10**

He taught that belief and confession are necessary.

C. **Acts 17:30; 2nd Corinthians 7:10**

He preached about repentance and wrote about it, too.

D. **Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 4:4-6**

When Paul penned letters, he wrote about the importance of baptism.

E. **Acts 16:14-15; 18:5-8; 19:4-5**

When Paul preached, his hearers were baptized.