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CONVERSION OF A PERSECUTOR OF CHRIST

Sometime between 31-36 AD. It was an extraordinary mid-day in the life of a young man, a sworn enemy and persecutor of Christ and the infant Christian Church called "The Way". This young man was on his way to Damascus with his companions for arresting the Christians and committing them to prison. He had the authority of the Chief Priests for the purpose. This young man was none but Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee, well versed in the Hebrew Old Testament sacred Scriptures. But he made havoc on the infant Church, entering into every house and haling men and women committing them to prison.

As Saul and his men were about to reach the city of Damascus, all of a sudden behold, a bright light from heaven, brighter than the sun surrounded Saul. Immediately, he fell to the ground and heard a voice, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" Saul was overtaken by helplessness and panic and said, "Who are you, Lord?" Saul instantly received the reply, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the pricks". In that breathtaking moment, Saul saw the risen Saviour, and something extraordinary happened in his heart. The result was amazing! Saul surrendered his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ and followed His instructions.

The risen Saviour said to Saul, "I have appeared to you, for this reason, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you... to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me (Acts

26:12-18), that by the work of the Spirit, the eyes of the understanding of those who are blinded by Satan are enlightened; through the preaching of the Gospel.

Saul's encounter with Jesus Christ transformed his life altogether. He received forgiveness of his sins and experienced the joy of salvation by trusting in the expiatory work of Christ on the cross. Saul was no longer a persecutor of the Church. He became a transformed man of God, known as Apostle Paul, the greatest missionary ever known in the history of the Church. He was chosen by God for turning many from darkness to light and to deliver them that are under the power and control of Satan. God used the transformed Paul for delivering millions of souls from the stronghold of Satan and leading them to Christ. Besides, out of twenty-seven books of the New Testament, thirteen came to be written by Apostle Paul alone, which stands as an eloquent testimony to the transforming power of God.

Dear reader, God is willing to transform you too if you commit your life to Jesus. God says, "Come now and let us reason together, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. God has permitted a man to reason with Him (Genesis 18:23-32; Exodus 4:1-17; Job 23:3-7; Micah 6:2). The loving God does not desire any to perish in the coming judgment, but all to repent their sins and experience the joy of salvation (2 Peter 3:9).

Dear reader, if you have not yet received the assurance of salvation, repent your sins and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour right now.

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