

Acts 9:20-43 TIMING!

I want to begin our study this morning by having you look at the Gravestones on the Screens!

A) Center one is for a group of Soldiers who were all from the same town.

**B) Memorial day weekend – remember those who gave their lives –
STAND – PRAY**

C) Look at each one of these grave markers – some of Stone others of Bronze

1) Some simple – others more of a design

D) But they all have one thing in common – if you look close you will see it!

1) DASH -

That little line in between when you are born and when you die – that is your life!

A) You don't determine when you are born – and you don't determine when you die!

B) But that little line – represents everything in between - You have a huge part to play in that!

C) I would think that all of us would like to make some impact while we are here

1) Especially for the Lord!

D) Been said that effective service happens when you have the Right Person, at the Right Place, doing the Right Thing, at the Right Time!

E) Timing is important!

But here is what I have also discovered – is that God’s Timing is usually different from mine – but His timing is always perfect!

A) We see several examples of that in our text this morning

B) Last week we took some time to look at the Conversion of Saul of Tarsus ... Apostle Paul

C) This is what we said about him!

1) Deeply religious – Pharisee –

2) Super intelligent – Top Student of top teacher

D) Fanatical **Filled with Maniacal rage – Destroy Christians**

1) Hunter was being Hunted – Jesus pursued Saul

E) He was apprehended on the road to Damascus

1) Conversion took place – **though blinded – he saw things clearly – Jesus was Messiah!**

F) He was transformed by the power of God!

1) Empowered by the HS/ Water Baptized

RD Acts 9:20-22

V.20 Immediately he preached Jesus as Son of God

A) A transformed Paul wants to tell everyone that Jesus is the Messiah!

B) With every **ounce of Zeal and passion that he was using to destroy Christianity –**

1) He now wants to Proclaim Christ and to Defend the gospel w/ same Zeal and Passion!

C) That is very common trait amongst new Believers

1) Eyes opened – they want to tell everyone – Awesome { Best evangelizers are new believers

D) Tell you what Jesus did for me!

But often times we in the Church can be quick to prop up someone who has influence – Testimony

A) Never allow them to get grounded

B) So Saul is going for it the believers are amazed and the unbelievers are all getting saved – Right?

1) That is not what we see happening here

C) Right guy – doing right thing – right place – but it is evidently the Wrong time!

RD V.23-25

So Paul is Zealous – He is bold – He is preaching and the result is – The Jews want to kill him – he has to flee for his life!

A) I am sure that was a little discouraging for Paul.

B) I picture Paul as this guy who was a type A personality –

1) Bold – smart- outspoken – forceful. – Influential

C) The Kind of guy that others followed !

D) He wasn't used to this kind of rejection from the Jews!

1) So I believe this came as a surprise –

E) V.25 The Disciples TOOK HIM – idea is almost by force – you have got to get out of here.

1) Paul might have been prone to fight!

What happens next in Paul's life is huge – Luke doesn't speak of it here – Paul tells us in Galatians 1

Galatians 1:15-20

“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.”

So Saul goes out into the desert for an unspecified time. –

A) Arabia refers to the area to the east of Damascus.

B) Some think that he spent time in the Sinai desert, where Moses received the law.

C) What did Saul do there? We can surmise that he spent time pouring over the Scriptures that he knew so well from his upbringing,

D) But this time examining them from the **fresh light of his conversion experience with the risen and exalted Jesus Christ.**

Effective ministry is born out of intimacy!

A) Saul goes to the desert convinced that Jesus is the Messiah – comes back even more convinced

B)But He also comes **back a LOVER OF JESUS!**

C)Paul's writing concerning the Love of Christ is astounding –

1)Resounding theme – Christ love for Sinners/ saints

D)So we learn from this an important thing about Ministry- **Sitting at Jesus Feet**

1)Sitting comes before Serving – Mary/ Martha

“One thing is needed .. Chosen.. not taken

E)Some put Paul's desert experience between v22/23

So after Arabia Paul goes back to Damascus a total of 3years – He finally heads to Jerusalem

A)Now is the time right ? – Wrong RD V.26

26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.

B)This shows how vicious Saul was before his conversion – 3 yrs have gone by – the memory of what he was like is still etched in their minds

C)They were afraid of him – not believing – thinking this is a set up { Rabbi in Jerusalem

1)Many of the missionaries have had to leave.

D)So Paul gets rejected by the Jews at Damascus

1)Rejected by the Christians in Jerusalem

E)I am sure that things are not going like he hoped!

1)Being a Christian and a messenger of Jesus is hard

Enter Barnabas – Influential in Paul's life – here and later in Ch. 11

{ Antioch help

A) Barnabas – Son of encouragement – Brings him to the Apostles

RD V.27-30

B) So Paul is sent home – where he is going to stay for

At least 4yrs – possibly 8 yrs

1) Falls off the radar so to speak – **WRONG TIME!**

C) I am sure Paul preached and ministered during that time of his life –

1) Not mentioned – no record – he is ministering in relative obscurity.

2) Add his 3 yrs in the desert and in Damascus with these 4-8 yrs in Tarsus {7-11 yrs out of the picture

D) He will now drop off the pages of the book of Acts until Ch.13 except for one brief mention in Ch. 11

E) For somewhere **between 7-11 yrs** this man's life is a complete mystery

1) And yet he will become the prominent vessel in the 2nd half of the book starting in Ch.13 – **TIMING!**

God had a plan for Paul's life: In God's plan His timing is always perfect – right on time never late!

A) Your life – Single – want to be married – Timing

B) Ministry – Timing

1) Buy a house – Timing

C) Building project – We saw one time frame – He saw another – Economy collapse

1) Can't afford to build right now – considering options – **WAITING!**

D)Not our focus!

So Paul is sent home

31 Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Now the focus shifts back to Peter! RD V.32-35

A)Peter is going out to encourage the Churches / comes to Lydda – 23 miles from Jerusalem

B)Once again we see an illustration of God’s Timing.

1)We will see that God led Peter to Lydda when he did in order to get him to Joppa.

C) So that in Ch. 10 He could get Peter to Cornielus –start this whole new thing amongst the Gentiles.

1)God orchestrates this whole thing so beautiful and when we look back hindsight – perfect sense

Anytime in my life when things seem Fuzzy- I can look back in the rear view mirror so to speak and see what God did at other fuzzy times

A)He was working all along orchestrating events in my life for His GOOD!

B)That gives me confidence to continue to trust in Him during those seasons where things just seem Fuzzy!

**C)He is working – because He always working – He has worked before!
So Peter set out to go and visit and encourage the Churches – God has another Plan.**

A)He comes to Lydda v.33 encounters this man Aeneas who has been

paralyzed for 8yrs

B)V.34 Peter says **Aeneas Jesus Christ heals you – Makes you whole – present tense! Arise**

C)It says v.34 Immediately he arose! – Peter says Arise and immediately He arose –

1)There is no atrophy in those muscles or nerves

D)No need for Physical therapy – no rehab – His bones muscles and nerves are healed instantaneously.

V.35 Says So all saw and turned to the Lord!

A)So God allows this one man's suffering to be a CATALYST moment in bringing many to himself!

B)Looking back in the rearview mirror of His life – I am sure that Aeneas wouldn't have had it any other way!

1)When we meet Aeneas in heaven – he is not going to be the bitter guy in the corner – who is mad because God allowed him to be Paralyzed for 8yrs

C)He is overjoyed that his life – His DASH was able to accomplish so much in his town – thru his weakness! Nick vuijic

D)Joni Erickson – Keep you paralyzed – greater impact!

The impact of the healing of Aeneas was not just reserved for Lydda!

A)This happened in Lydda at this time because God wanted the news of it to spread to Joppa!

36 At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas.

A)I think I would have stuck with Tabitha, - We hear Dorcas – think – female version of Dork

B)Tabitha is Aramaic – Gazelle – Dorcas is the greek rendering of the same word – Gazelle

v.36b This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. 37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died.

When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.

38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, { about 10 miles – from Lydda 33 miles from Jerusalem } and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him {Begging strongly urging} not to delay in coming to them.

RD V.39-43

So we see the Orchestration of God's Divine Timing here in the Life of Peter and His affect on two Cities

A)God wanted him in Joppa and wants him to stay there – we will see why next week

B)New Chpt Gentiles

I want to Close this morning by making some observations about Dorcas!

A)Joppa was destroyed in 68A.D. burned by the Romans!

B)But Joppa has a remarkable history that goes back over 3,000 yrs!

C)We know that when Solomon was building the temple that his father David prior to his death had orchestrated a deal with Hiram king of Tyre

1)Supply cedars of Lebanon to build the temple.

D)Those Cedars were floated town the Mediterranean to the port at

Joppa – taken to Jerusalem.

We know that when Jonah was called to go to Nineveh and preach against that great city

A) He fled to Joppa – boarded a boat for Tarsus.

B) Storm – Lots- Whale – Barf – good man down

1) We know Joppa from that!

C) Things you probably don't know about Joppa also called Jaffa

1) After the Romans destroyed it in 68 A.D. – it fell into Muslim hands for centuries.

D) Until Richard the Lion heart late 1100' came and took Joppa back and rebuilt the Citadel and the city

That was followed by Saladin the Arab warrior who attacked Joppa killing 20,000 of King Richards Men

A) From that point on Joppa laid desolate and under Muslim control.

B) Until 1799 when Napoleon came to Joppa and leveled it to the ground!

C) But then from 1800-1814 it was rebuilt by the Turks and stands to this day

1) Port city in Israel.

Most of you didn't know any of that – did you? All those incredible battles. Richard, Saladin, Napoleon

A) Interesting that what we know about Joppa is from this woman Dorcas!

B) We know this city because of this woman! And verse 36b – tells us this

about her/ **Good Dash – She was full of good works and Charitable deeds**

C) V.37 She got sick – we are not sure how long she was sick – but the Lord had her sick when Peter was at Lydda and had her die while he was there!

D)She is this great godly woman – everyone weeping
1)Sad for the Loss of Dorcas

She is one of the last pp on earth that you would think that God would take!

A)She is doing do Good – Huge DASH – it would have been easy to think – Why her –

B)Lord there are a lot of rotten people in Joppa – Why Tabitha – Not fair

C)Main ministry we are told is she carried for Widows and orphans.
1)She might have been an widow herself – nothing is mentioned of her husband.

D)The fact that her house had an upper room signifies that she had some wealth – not normal

There were many widows in Joppa – port city – seaman

A)Many Wives with their Children saw their husbands sail off and never return.

B) Dorcas decided her mission field was right in front of her!

**C) Which is where most of our mission fields are at
Because most of us will not go off to Africa, Russia,
Not go off to Ireland or Costa Rica**

**D) Dorcas watched those widows down at the shore picking up drift wood
with their kids**

This woman touches an entire city with a needle and some thread.

**A) She was like Mary she did what she could with what she had and it
was enough!**

**B) She dies – all the widows were there mourning – weeping convulsively
– audibly.**

**C) Showing each other the coats and garments that Dorcas had made for
them.**

Most people only had one set of clothes – two was a luxury

A) Didn't have closet fulls like we have today! –

B) Woman Nothing to wear – New

1) Man nothing to wear – Clean

**C) It was huge in a sea port town like that where it could get cold to have
a coat!**

**D) This woman with a needle and thread had tied this entire community
together**

**1) The people loved her so much they thought just maybe – God would
have mercy and bring her back**

E) God answered their Prayer!

**1) Dorcas – Unsung Heros – behind the scene pp –
Doing little things huge impact on pp**

F) Big Dash

As we close today I want to ask a few Questions

1. Presently what is there to show for your Dash?

A) Your life right now – your impact!

B) If you died – Missed? –

**1) Anthony Poole – Memorial – so many wonderful things said – impact –
on and on!**

C) What would they say about you ?

D) Not the motivation – but it is an interesting question to ask ourselves!

2. What is in front of you? – What have you been given- what talent.

A) How are you using that to bless others – benefit others

B) Money are you generous

C) Sewing

D) Mechanically

3. Are you wrestling today with God's Timing

A) Asking why ? Surrender that

B) Complaining how long

Timing – Not saved – Your Dash really hasn't begun

Today is the day of Salvation

Walked away – Surrender