

Given a Mission

Acts 9:10–31

Each day, it's important to take your bearings. Where are you today? In the Easter season, in the scriptures, in your daily life, in your very self? Spend a few minutes getting your bearings for the day.

Let's briefly examine where we are in the Book of Acts and then begin our day with a prayer for deliverance—for ourselves, our fraternity brothers, and all Exodus Men.

You are about to be sent. The apostles have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. With them, we need to prepare for our mission.

Pray that the Lord grants deliverance to you, your family, and your fraternity.

Pray for freedom for all men in Exodus, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy his consolations. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of Acts

Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for a man of Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying, and he has seen a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized, and took food and was strengthened.

For several days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And in the synagogues immediately he proclaimed Jesus, saying, "He is the Son of God." And all who heard him were amazed, and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called on this name? And he has come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests." But Saul

increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night, to kill him; but his disciples took him by night and let him down over the wall, lowering him in a basket.

And when he had come to Jerusalem he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists; but they were seeking to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus.

So the Church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it was multiplied.

Reflection

We all want to think that we are special. In some way, we are all special because we are all precious to God and called into his divine life. But when we think of being special, it may often mean that we are tempted to think we are better or more important than others. The further we progress in the Christian life, the more we should come to understand that our role of service is for the good of others—coming to see their needs before our own.

Saul, who will now be known as Paul, meaning "small," receives a special and unique mission to bear witness to Jesus to the nations. He gets right to work, beginning with his Jewish brothers in the synagogue. His message is simple: Jesus is the Son of God. As he lives out his mission, his life is not focused on himself but on bearing witness to the Lordship of Jesus, and he is so immersed in Jesus that he can say: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Paul teaches us that being a Christian means focusing on Christ before self and, in Christ, being a man for others.

We, too, have been given a mission, even if not as dramatic as Paul's. St. John Henry Newman expressed this beautifully: "God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission—I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next." We have a role in the unfolding of God's plan of salvation. This does not necessarily entail anything extraordinary, such as traveling the world as a missionary. It usually means fulfilling the duties of our state in life with, in, and through God.

We will succeed at our mission if we, like Paul, can say that we no longer live, but Christ lives in us. Our mission is to be Christ in the world, as members of his Body, working for the good of all.

Pray that the Lord may make your mission clear to you and help you build a Plan of life for your mission. Ask that he will pour out the grace of his Spirit upon you to live your mission more fully.

Week 3 Action Items

Witness to your faith.

Host a game night to build community.

Reflect on your current plan.