

# *Can God Save Anyone?*

## **Acts 9:1-9**

East Berlin Community Church

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### Introduction

- Could God save the leadership of ISIS?
- Could God have saved the hardened Jewish religious leaders?
  - Confrontation with “I AM” in the garden of Gethsemane
  - Rejection of “I AM” by the religious leaders—Mark 14:62; Dan 7
- God teaching the apostles the “width” of His grace—Acts 1-11
  - Ministry limited to the Jews—Matt. 10:5-6
  - Ministry expanded to the world—Acts 1:8
    - Jerusalem—Acts 2-7
    - Judea and Samaria—Acts 8
    - Gentiles—Acts 10-11
- But what about the “depth” of God’s grace? Can He save anyone?

### **Exhibit A: Saul of Tarsus**

#### **A. Pre-conversion —The “Good” and “Bad”—Acts 9:1-2**

1. The “Good” or “Light” Side of Saul – Philippians 3:4-6
  - a. Paul’s impeccable spiritual pedigree.
  - b. Paul’s advancement in Judaism—Galatians 1:14
2. The “Bad” or “Dark” Side of Saul—Acts 9:1-2
  - a. Failed to follow his teacher’s counsel—Acts 5:38-39
  - b. Guilty of three sins—1 Timothy 1:13
    - 1) Blasphemy—speaking against God. Acts 26:9, 11
    - 2) Persecution of the Church—Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 22:4
    - 3) Insolent or Violent man—a “bully” and religious fanatic
  - c. Conclusion: “Chief” sinner 1 Timothy 1:15

#### **B. Conversion: The “Good” and “Bad” meets Jesus—Acts 9:3-9**

1. General Observations
  - a. Saul’s unique conversion experience
  - b. The “goading” or the “conviction of the Spirit”
    - 1) The presence of doubt
    - 2) The testimony of Stephen – Acts 6-7
    - 3) His own conscience—Romans 7
2. Specific Explanation
  - a. Saul meet Jesus of Nazareth—9:3-5
    - 1) Only Jesus can save—Acts 4:10-12
    - 2) Believed in the resurrection of Christ
  - b. How this meeting transformed Saul’s life?
    - 1) When the “Bad” meets Jesus, Saul acknowledged his sin and repented of them—Acts 9:4-6
    - 2) When the “Good” meets Jesus, Saul transfers his trust in himself to the goodness of God’s grace—Phil. 3:4-11