

Of Sound Body

Acts 9:1-6

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."

REFLECTION

For these few weeks post-Easter, we've seen stories of Jesus chasing people down: Mary Magdalene who came to his tomb, the disciples behind locked doors, and two disciples on their journey back to Emmaus. This week, as Paul is headed to Damascus to harass people who are following the Way (v. 2), he hears a voice from heaven and is blinded by the light. **How has God gotten your attention in an unexpected and strong way? What did Jesus mean by "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"?**

Between being struck down and his letters of the New Testament, Paul obviously worked out how the unembodied voice he hears was present in the very bodies he was persecuting. When Paul writes to the divided group in Corinth, he takes the lesson he learned and applies it to them: "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." (v. 12) God's design for us is to be different, each fulfilling a significant and necessary role; one body in Christ. **With whom in your life do you have difficulty talking about hard topics? How can this outlook help you try to understand and communicate better with them?**

In a day when many people prefer the church to represent **their** beliefs, Covenant is unique in the variety of outlooks we share while maintaining a common and respectful love for one another. We know that we're not meant to solve things, but we can strive to understand each other in a world that does not want to do the same. **How can enacting these words from Paul help us improve as we week to be Christ's one body in the world?** "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth" (1 Cor. 13).