



But I Heard...

Acts 9:1-20

Growth Group Discussion Questions for October 22, 2017

Getting Started:

- 1) How would you describe the most intimidating person you know?

- 2) **READ:** Acts 9:1-20. Saul was on the fast track to becoming a powerful force in Judaism. He had all the credentials and was doing all the right things to someday be part of the Sanhedrin. In this pursuit, he zealously worked to maintain purity in the Jewish faith and worship of God. His enthusiasm was commendable, but his methods became malicious and destructive.
 - Consider some of the popular causes whose methods have crossed the line today? What do you think causes people to take heart-felt causes to such extremes?

 - Why do you think God singled out Saul to help spread the good news of Jesus when he was so overly zealous for the old ways and traditions of the faith?

 - What is so amazing about Ananias' calling Saul "brother" at this first meeting?

Going Deeper:

- 3) **READ:** Matthew 8:19-34. Mark 5:18-20 and Mark 6:53-56. Jot down any insights, questions, or key observations.
 - On the other side of the lake were ten cities-- mostly Gentile in nature-- called the Decapolis. It was filled with immoral people who followed the Roman gods and ways. They may also have heard that to enter the Decapolis, one had to pass through the territory of the demon-possessed

man. It's not surprising the disciples had many culturally acceptable excuses as to why they couldn't follow Him "to the other side". How does Jesus build up the faith of those who were willing to say "yes" to His invitation to go to the "other side"? (v23-27)

- The demon-possessed man was probably considered "beyond hope" by everyone. With Jesus, who is beyond hope?
 - i. What was the outcome of going with Jesus to "the other side"?

Bringing It Home

- Ananias was also full of sound excuses in response to Jesus' invitation to go minister to Saul. His willingness to say "yes" in scary and uncertain circumstances had a tremendous impact on the spread of God's good news about Jesus throughout the world. Are there any people groups or specific people that you feel are "unreachable"? What have you "heard" to make you feel that way?

- Saul's conversion story is rather sensational and out of the ordinary. How do you feel about your own story? How is it extraordinary? How is it ordinary? How does that impact your willingness to follow Jesus into enemy territory?

- What are the inward threats that keep you from responding to God's invitations?

- In light of this teaching, what is the Spirit inviting you to this week?