

**Annual Budget Sermon - Conversion to Giving
November 4, 2007**

Acts 9:1-19
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Synopsis:

Have you ever met Jesus?

I am not asking,

-Do you belong to the church, the institution?

-Have you heard of Jesus, read about him, studied him?

I am asking, have you ever met Jesus, the way you would meet a person?

Meeting Jesus changes us. Changing us is what I want to talk about today.

I.

A Direct Encounter

Acts 9:5 He asked, "Who are you, Lord?"

Have you ever met a famous person?

Meeting John Glenn at NPC

-not a story

-not a picture

-real, talking, engaging person

*thrilling, changed me

Stephen Lungu of African Enterprise meets Jesus

-Tom and I met him two weeks ago

-Tent meeting in Salisbury (Harare), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)

*meets Jesus, changes him from death to life

II.

Saul Meets Jesus

Acts 9:5 The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting"

READ 3-9

Tell the story of Saul encountering Jesus

-Saul has his plans for life

-Saul already is in touch with Jesus (persecute)

Tell my story of encountering Jesus

- Grandmother
- Sunday School
- Young Life
- Had plans
- Met Jesus in crucible of my family breakup

What's your story?

- Everyone is in touch with Jesus
- Everyone has plans
- Some think institution is Jesus; it isn't
- Some grow up in family of Jesus
- Some encounter Jesus suddenly
 - Augustine: garden hearing children (pick up)
 - Pascal: fire
 - C.S. Lewis: on a train

Have you ever met Jesus?

Do you want to meet Jesus?

III.

Saul Meets Ananias

Acts 9:10 Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias

READ 10-16

Tell story of Ananias

- Jesus prepares Ananias to meet Saul
 - Jesus encounters Saul, Ananias assists
- *Jesus always uses other people

Tell story of Stephen Lungu

- Jesus prepared Johannisberg pastor, young woman
- These assist Jesus

Tell my story

- Jesus used Granny, Bob, Paul, George, Jim

Who assisted Jesus in your life?

Who is Jesus calling you to assist?

IV.

Saul Changes Direction

Acts 9:18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes

READ 17-19

Conversion of Saul:

- meets Jesus
 - meets Ananias
 - meets Holy Spirit
 - then changes (eyes open, baptized, bears name of Jesus)
- *turns him around

Conversion of Geneva: We are turning

-Vision:

Jesus in heart = begins with encounter

Bible in hands = study a person

Feet out door = go where Jesus is

Asking you to encounter Jesus

Asking you to study Jesus

Asking you to give/feet as a result

2 Areas this year:

1. Strategic Initiatives (Iglesia Park, Alzheimers)
-Example: Pumpkin Carnival last weekend

2. Staff:

-increases for staff

-sustain our changes

-bring on children's director

*Encounter Jesus and hand in your pledge

-100% participation

-not how much but a sign that you have met Jesus