Sermon Questions for PCC Small Groups

**Title: Encountering Easter on this side of the Ascension**

**Text:** Acts 9:1-19 (the conversion of Saul of Tarsus)

**Series:** Easter

**Date Preached:** April 17, 2017

**Introductory Comments:** Pray for the Spirit’s guidance and illumination (that he turns on the light). This is text and message about Christian conversion. The goal is to understand better the role that God, others, and you play in the process of conversion. This will be an opportunity to re-visit your own conversion experience in light of Saul’s. Read Acts 9:1-19.

**Questions:**

1. Why do you think Saul was so opposed to “the Way” (the early church)? Do you think that, given who he was and what his worldview was, there may have been something genuine or even “holy” about his desire to shut the church down?
2. What is it about Saul’s conversion experience that is unique, and not normative for most Christian conversions?
3. What is it about Saul’s conversion experience that is very similar to all people’s experiences who come to faith in Christ?
4. Ananias played a central role in mediating the work of the Holy Spirit in Saul’s life as a brand new convert. After outlining all the things that Saul experienced as a result of the ministry of Ananias, reflect on who your “Ananias” is. What person(s) were instrumental in you coming to faith and getting disciple into the life of the church.
5. As you reflect on your own “coming to faith”, in what ways was it (or ***is*** it) personal, transformational, familial, and missional (vocational)? You may want to zero in on one or two.
6. Considering that Saul was God’s “chosen instrument” to bear Jesus’ his name and Jesus’ suffering to the world, how do you see yourself as being called to do the same? How’s it going?
7. How does this 16thC painting speak into how closed and un-missional the Church had become in the middle ages? Is there a contemporary message in it for us?

