

WHEN YOU'RE AT A CROSSROAD

R.E.C.O.V.E.R. Your Capacity to Love Part 3

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“This is what the Lord says: ‘Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.’”
Jeremiah 6:16 (NIV)

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV)

Roadblock #1: _____

AN EVENTFUL PAST

“They dragged him [Stephen] out of the city and began to stone him. The official witnesses took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul... Saul was one of the official witnesses at the killing of Stephen.

“A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem, and all the believers except the apostles fled into Judea and Samaria...”

“Saul was going everywhere to devastate the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into jail... Saul was uttering threats with every breath. He was eager to destroy the Lord’s followers....” Acts 7:58, 8:1, 8:3, 9:1 (NLT)

[Saul] *“I caused many of the believers in Jerusalem to be sent to prison. And I cast my vote against them when they were condemned to death. Many times I had them whipped in the synagogues to try to get them to curse Christ. I was so violently opposed to them that I even hounded them in distant cities of foreign lands.”* Acts 26:10-11 (NLT)

A GENUINE CONVERSION

[Three accounts of Saul’s conversion: Acts 9: 1-19; 22: 6-16; 26:12-18]

“When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They thought he was only pretending to be a believer!” Acts 9:26 (NLT)

AN AMAZING TRANSFORMATION

“And immediately he [Saul] began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is indeed the Son of God!’ All who heard him were amazed. ‘Isn’t this the same man who persecuted Jesus’ followers with such devastation in Jerusalem?’” Acts 9:20-21 (NLT)

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—and I [Saul] was the worst of them all. But that is why God had mercy on me, so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of His great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in Him and receive eternal life.” 1 Timothy 1:15-16 (NLT)

“Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sins are put out of sight. Yes, what joy for those whose sin is no longer counted against them by the Lord.” Romans 4:7-8 (NLT)

ACTION STEPS

1. Read these verses (Psalm 86:5; Mark 3:28; Acts 10:43; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Hebrews 10:10; 1 John 2:2, 1 John 2:12, 1 John 4:10)
 2. Ask God to forgive your past (1 John 1:9)
 3. Talk to a follower of Jesus about your past (James 5:16)
Get your past “out in the open” and allow that Christ-following friend to affirm what you know to be true, “You’re forgiven!” Hear those words. Remember those words. Feel those words. Live out those words. Your past is gone! (2 Cor. 5:17).
 4. Seek further help through small groups & Celebrate Recovery www.friendschurch.org
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