



Getting Started

Acts 9:1-19

Listen! “Ken, what is it about my relational style that harms other people?”

- Both our failures to change and our successful changes lead us to ask: “How does genuine, long-term change really happen?”

Why are we talking about this? Each one of us has areas of our lives that need to change.

Major Question: How does genuine, long-term change really happen?

THE PROCESS OF GENUINE, LONG-TERM CHANGE LOOKS LIKE THIS:

#1 We have allowed a comfortable, but not good, path to trap us. (vv 1-3, 13, 14)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

#2 A catalytic event arrests us. (vv 3b, 4-9)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

#3 We begin questioning the comfortable path we have been on. (v 4b)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

#4 We consider a possible new path. (vv 6b, 15, 16)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

Outline continued /over

#5 We make a decision to pursue the new path. (v 11c)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

#6 We employ a set of resources. (vv 10-14, 17)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

#7 THE CRUCIAL FACTOR: GOD WORKS INSIDE OF US. (v 17b)

- **For Saul:**
- **For us:**

- **The inner life is crucial. Mark 7:21. New things flowing out of us require new hearts in us.**
- **The work of God is crucial. Philippians 2:12, 13. I cannot change without God and He will not change me without me.**

Question: How does genuine, long-term change really happen?

Answer: Through a process of God working to change my heart.

For Instance:

So What? Since genuine, long-term change requires God working inside of me the best thing I can do is open up my heart and invite Him to work.

Walking Papers

“Practical helps for walking the Christian walk this week—the Christian life is a daily thing.”

The Big Idea: Genuine, long-term change only happens when God works in my heart. New things flowing out of me requires a renewal of my heart within me.

Please take some time each day this week to think through these questions and ideas:

- **Today.** List what you consider to be the “comfortable but maybe not very good” paths that you have allowed in your life. Include outer things like the use of money and inner things like attitudes toward others.
- **Monday.** Pray for God to work in each of these areas—humbly open your heart to His work. This means to cease rationalizing, cease defending, cease projecting, cease minimizing, cease denying, cease diverting and invite God to work inside of you for genuine transformation. It is an attitude and stance of deep humility and submission to the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- **Tuesday.** Read Acts 9:1-19 and ask God the Holy Spirit to speak to you from these verses and make the applications to your life clear.
- **Wednesday.** Enlist a trusted friend for help in a key area of change. Simply say to that person, “I have a path in my life, namely that I _____ and I am submitting that path to God for His work. Will you please help me by praying, and by _____, and by doing whatever you see I need in this process?”
- **Thursday.** With humility, grace, and absolute defenselessness ask a family member, “What is it about my relational style that discourages you or others?” Submit the answer to prayer and to the Spirit.
- **Friday.** What do you think is the key to humility, defenselessness, and grace when addressing personal sin and change?
- **Saturday.** Take a few minutes to list the ways that your time is out of control and the opportunities for good that you have missed in the last few weeks.

“When I open up to the work of God—humbly invite Him to work right in the middle of my heart—He works to bring about genuine, long-term change in my life.”