**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr. July 23, 2017**

**The Doors Of The Church Must Remain Open**

ACTS 9:20-31

**Key Truth:** It is impossible to understand the Christian faith apart from the grace of God.

1. The love of Jesus Christ gives a person true purpose and

 passion.

 A. Saul’s purpose is to glorify Jesus and make Him

 known.

 B. Saul’s new life was a witness to the power of the

 Gospel and the reality of the resurrection.

 C. Saul is living proof that God can redeem a checkered

 past.

2. The church must be a safe place for sinners.

 A. To deny that Saul could be saved is to deny the power

 of Jesus Christ.

 B. The church is to be a place of refuge for those who

 have repented and put their faith in Jesus Christ no

 matter their past. Luke 15:1-2

 C. The grace of God doesn’t belong to the church, but it’s

 our message to proclaim to the lost.

3. Every disciple needs a Barnabas.

 A. He encouraged the apostles to trust Saul’s conversion.

 B. He encouraged the church to forgive Saul’s sin of

 persecution and murder.

 C. He encouraged Saul to move beyond his past and to

 walk in his new identity.

 D. We need to encourage one another to fulfill God’s purpose for our life.

**Taking It Beyond The Walls:** Look for opportunities to share the gospel with people you know.

**Food For Thought**

For the Week of July 23, 2017

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

17Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21**

What would be the impact on your community if you became an evangelist like Saul?

How do you view people who have done horrible crimes? How would you react if they became followers of Christ?

Read Luke 15:25-32: Why was the older brother mad at the father?