

Acts 9:1-2,15 – Saul was still breathing out murderous threats
against the Lord’s disciples. ...

but the Lord said to Ananias,
“Go! **This man is my chosen instrument**
to proclaim my name to the Gentiles
and their kings and to the people of Israel.

Flipping the Script

This remarkable, and personal, passage of scripture shows God’s might and power over our sin.

Man really does think that power rests in him. Saul was fully determined to promote his brand of belief in God at the expense of true believers in Jesus. He had the standing and the authority to persecute Christians, to murder them. He was not just a murderer, he was determined to eradicate them, convinced they were heretics.

Yet God wanted to use him.

God is not overcome by our sinful determination. We look at Saul and see a person determined to persecute, to kill, Christians in the name of God. We wonder that God could ever let him live. Yet God not only stopped Saul from persecuting Christians, He then *used him* to spread the Gospel. We cannot overcome someone who chooses to persecute us. We must rely on the LORD to stop them. ... but why stop there? Our emotions would say - LORD, put an end to this and I never want to see them again. But going by Acts 9, God’s plans don’t end there.

Scripture shows us that God can use them greatly for His work, and we must desire for the LORD to *use* them for His purposes. The Christians in Saul’s day plotted to kill him when the LORD brought him back into their midst (Acts 9:23). They were afraid of him, but the LORD was clear about His plans for Saul, and for the spreading of the gospel.

I wonder if the greater prayer is not just that the one who persecutes be stopped, or even be turned for Christ – although both of those prayers are important, and of course we pray for their salvation. The greater prayer is that they *be used* for Christ, as Saul was used and indeed became a weapon in God’s gospel arsenal. All of Saul’s hatred for the Christians became a great

love for them, measure for measure. God flipped the script on Saul's life.

Sometimes we stop short in our prayer for the unbeliever; we pray for their salvation, but do we pray for their usefulness in the kingdom? When I think about praying such a prayer for those who persecute me, I find Holy Spirit power flow through my heart. God is not stopped by our sin. Those dark features and behaviors we see in others, and in ourselves for that matter, are opportunities God would use.

He can flip the script on their lives, and on ours, if we allow Him.

Blessings.