

### Today's Focus: Chosen Instruments

God has a habit of using ordinary people to change the course of history. Let us take a look at a few:

1. **Moses** – A stutterer who was God's spokesman and leader. (Exodus 3-4)
2. **Rahab** – A prostitute whom God used to help his spies and overtake Jericho. (Joshua 2)
3. **Esther** – Adopted orphan who became Queen to save Israel. (Esther 1-8)
4. **Peter and John** – uneducated and untrained [ordinary] men (Acts 4:13-14)
5. **You and I** – Not smart, not influential, don't have a noble birth (1 Corinthians 1:26-28)

### Saul's Story Acts 9:1-22

### Lessons To Learn

1. We don't get to choose our **brothers & sisters** in Christ.  
Acts 9:17/ Matthew 10:2-4
2. No one is **too bad** to join the family of God.  
Acts 9:15/ Titus 3:3-7
3. We **owe people** undeserved mercy.  
1 Corinthians 6:9-11/ Jude 1:22-23
4. Thinking like this requires a **renewed mind**.  
Romans 12:1-2

## **Growth Group Discussion**

### **For the week of September 24, 2023**

#### **WHAT'S YOUR HIGHLIGHT?**

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

#### **WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**

Think of a person who has hurt you, betrayed you, or left you fearful. What would be your first response if you saw that person walk into church one day?

- (a) What are they doing here?
- (b) No, not them. I know what they have done.
- (c) That's never going to last.
- (d) Wow, the Lord must be doing something in their life.
- (e) Praise God! I'm glad they're here.
- (f) Other

#### **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. This weekend we learned anyone can be God's chosen instrument as a result we don't get to choose our brothers and sisters. The prophet Jonah is an example of someone who wanted to keep his enemies out of the family of God. As you read Jonah's story,
  - a. What are some possible reasons Jonah was so angry at the Ninevites?
  - b. What didn't Jonah understand about God that caused his anger?
  - c. What are some hurdles you might face in wanting your "enemies" to know God and receive His love and forgiveness?

- d. How might remembering Titus 3:3-7 and 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 help you overcome those hurdles and welcome others into the family of God?
  - e. In Matthew 5:44, Jesus tells His disciples to pray for those who persecute them. If you were to pray for someone who is your “enemy” as defined in the message, what would you pray for them? (share your prayer with group members).
2. To give undeserved mercy to people requires that we renew our minds when it comes to loving our enemies and bringing them to faith in Christ. Renewing our minds involves focusing on what God desires and thinking like Christ rather than the world, culture, or our natural way of thinking.
- a. How do these verses reinforce the idea of being like Christ by renewing our minds? Colossians 3:7-11; Romans 8:5-6
  - b. What aspect of God’s character can help you to better love someone difficult for you to love?
3. Think of two or three people you view as being in the wrong about something. For example in politics, at church, or work.
- a. Is your response to them more like Jonah’s response to the Ninevites or Ananias’ response to Saul?
  - b. Is there something you can do this week to respond more like Ananias to these people?