

GLEF 2025 Lecture 3 Testimony - Lydia Point

Key Verse Acts 9:15

“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.”

In chapter 9, we learn how the love of Jesus overcame the hatred of a persecutor and transformed him into an instrument of God. Saul of Tarsus was an enemy of the gospel and a persecutor of Jesus' church. He considered the Christians to be a dangerous sect and threw the believers into prison. With the support of the chief priests, he set off for Damascus to continue persecuting the Christians. All Christians trembled before him when he set out for Damascus. But Jesus did not regard him as an enemy, but saw him with the hope of God as a lost sheep. Jesus revealed himself to him with his one-sided forgiving love and appeared to him in a bright light and asked him: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Saul asked, "Who are you, Lord? "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Jesus actually had every reason to punish or destroy Saul. Jesus was as pure and holy as a bright light. But he did not punish and condemn Saul according to the law. Jesus saw him with his mercy and forgiving love. He embraced him with his love so that he could repent of his sin and turn back to him. Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." While Saul was still a sinner, God appeared to him because of his love and hope for Saul. When Saul got up from the ground, he was blinded and was led by the hand to Damascus. God called Ananias, a disciple in Damascus, as a shepherd for Saul. 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." Ananias was shocked when Jesus wanted to send him to Saul. But he obeyed Jesus' instruction absolutely. Ananias overcame his fear and prejudices and embraced Saul, calling him a "dear brother". As a result, the scales fell from Saul's eyes, he regained his sight, was baptized, ate food, and was strengthened. Through his encounter with the living Jesus, Saul came to faith in Jesus with a repentant heart, understanding his sinfulness, and was completely changed 180 degrees. He became a new creation in the risen Christ, preaching in Damascus that Jesus was the Son of God.

This is the personal testimony of Saul; he was a terrible sinner who deserved condemnation, but he was changed into a defender of the gospel by the wonderful grace of Jesus. It is Jesus' wonderful grace that he chose a persecutor of the church as his instrument for the world mission. With Jesus, there are no hopeless cases. When I was living under the slavery of sin, I felt very hopeless, and there was nothing I could do with my own strength to save myself from this burden and God's judgment and find true peace. Jesus revealed himself to Saul when he was willingly going against him. Jesus also revealed himself to me when I was still an enemy of God. Through Romans Bible study, I realized that I am a completely helpless sinner living under the law of sin and obeying the evil desires of my mortal body. There is

no one righteous before God and all people are separated from the holy God because of their sins. The only way to salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ who died for my sins and defated the power of sin and death. I repent for persecuting Jesus who died for me, ignoring God's grace and calling and living a double life in my self-righteousness, ungratefulness, and disobedience towards the word of God. I also ignored God's promise and hope for me and was only occupied with the things in the world trying to enjoy the worldly relationships and emotions. But Jesus did not see me as a hopeless case. Through this chapter, I learned that Jesus saw me as his lost sheep, a bearer of hope, and his chosen instrument to preach the gospel to young people and be used mightily in His salvation work. With this hope, Jesus continued to call me and speak to me through Romans Bible study. God gave me the great privilege to come to Bonn and join Bonn UBF fellowship since October 2024, through allowing me to be accepted to Bonn University, Master's in Economics. He showed me how He has been working in Germany since 1980 and raising shepherds and missionaries who devotedly serve the disciple making ministry in Bonn and Germany. The gospel of Jesus had the power to change these people and continues to change the next generation into His servants who fight the spiritual fight and cwork together for God's glory day and night. Through this year's Acts Bible study, May Bible Conference, and the Romans Bible study, God continued to call me and work in my through the changing power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I learned that I cannot keep living in sin because Christ died for me, and through faith in him, I also have died to sin. God showed me His one-sided and undeserved saving grace that only through true faith in Jesus and practical obedience to the word of God I may receive God's righteousness, bear the fruits of faith, and offer every part of myself as an instrument of righteousness.

The risen Jesus spoke to Saul, and he was able to experience the risen Jesus in his life and acknowledge himself as a sinner and come to full repentance. I learned that the strength of the resurrection is stronger than the strength of sin and death and I also may experience the risen Jesus through loving, studying, and holding on to the word of God, to acknowledge myself as a sinner, and come to full repentance with prayer asking God for the Holy Spirit. God also helped Ananias overcome his prejudices and obey Jesus' command: "Go! This man is my chosen instrument." I was discouraged to preach the gospel to my friends and invite them to have one-to-one Bible study because I had lost God's hope seeing the hopeless situation of sinners, myself being the first, so I also could not have God's hope for others. But through Acts 9:15, I could see God's hope for me that I am His chosen instrument to proclaim the gospel of Jesus to young people in Turkey and Germany, being raised as a second generation missionary for the Muslim Mission through the pioneering work of my parents. Through this example, I may overcome my unbelief and fearful heart, and look at young people with the hope and vision of God that Jesus wants to use them as his witnesses of the resurrection power of Jesus. I pray that God may restore my faith and hope in Jesus, to go and give my friends the Word of God by

forming one-to-one Bible Study teams with them without fear so that they can personally encounter this Jesus.

From this passage, I could see how God prepared a man who was an enemy of the gospel as His chosen instrument for world mission. I learned how great God's love is towards sinners and his great power to change a person completely. I was a terrible sinner who deserved to be punished severely, but Jesus fully bore the punishment for my sins on the cross to give me the free gift of faith and God's righteousness. I pray that I may accept the forgiving love and grace of the risen Jesus and live a new life of faith by fighting the spiritual fight with the word of God. I thank God for giving me 24 years of life and I pray that He may also give me the new life through the Holy Spirit so that I may live a victorious and fruitful life as an overcomer until the end. I pray to accept God's hope and calling into my life through Romans 6:11-13 to live as God's chosen instrument, a new creation, and a woman of faith like Lydia.

Praise and thanks be to God for blessing this GLEF 2025 for using the next generation through the 5 books of Moses Factual Bible Studies and presentations, the Acts Bible Studies, and 7 main messages and testimonies. May God bless the next generation through this program and give us the power of the Holy Spirit, so that we may learn to go in obedience of faith and be used as witnesses of the risen Jesus for world mission to proclaim His name to the ends of the earth.

One Word: Go, Lydia! You are my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the young students. Amen.