**Getting to Know God:**

This week we saw the result of the transformation of Saul

into Paul:

**In the World:** **In God:**

He fostered fear in the hearts of He set their minds and hearts on the

of the church word of God

He scattered of the church. He became the tool to unite them as

“Christians.”

He caused confusion and isolation. He organized them into a body with

a unified purpose.

He brought death and destruction He personally delivers relief to those

to the church. in need.

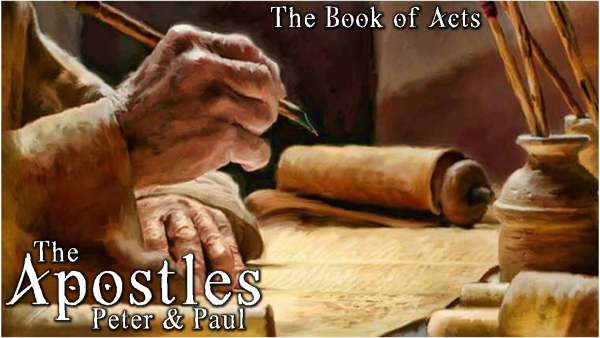
What does this say about what God can do with our lives?

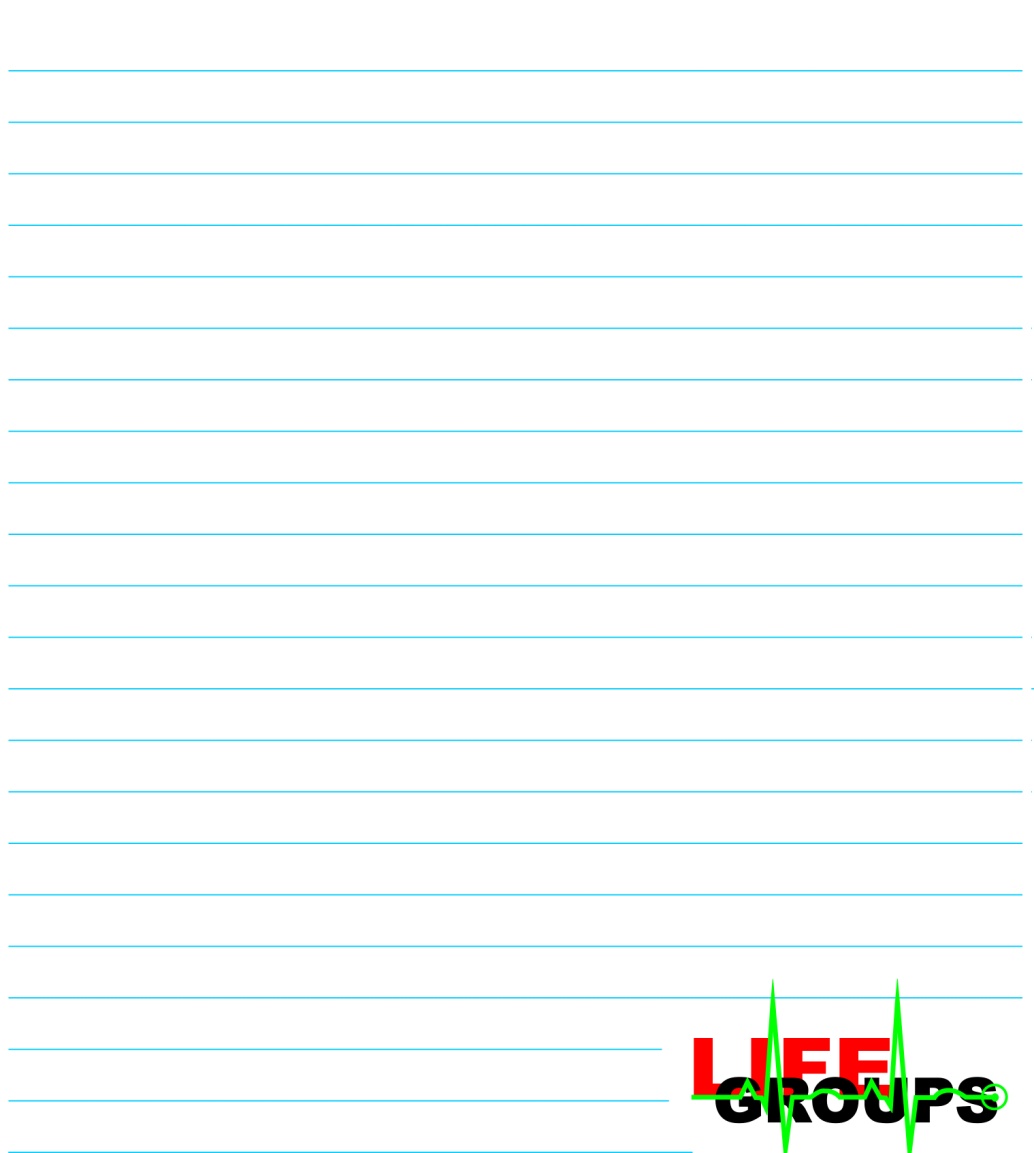
Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 what does God want us to do?

What did I learn this week that I can put to use in my own life?

**My life Group Prayer Needs:**

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** Pressing On Acts 11:19-30**

**Message Notes:** Week of 8/9-15/20

Sometimes life deals us a situation so adverse, a loss so great, we feel unable to meet the challenge of facing day after day in our pain and loss. One day life seems fine and everything is normal and the next thing you know, it throws you a curve ball and you are knocked completely off balance. How do you face each day now? How do you get up tomorrow morning and walk through each hour in agonizing pain and still function? Will you always feel this way? Will the pain ever end or just continue forever? Few of us could bear the thought of living the rest of our lives in such torment. Those facing a divorce, the loss of lifelong dreams, the loss of a loved one, or a debilitating illness have stood and stared at the giant question mark face to face. How do I get through this? Can I get through this?

One sure thing about life is things will always change. You will not always feel the way you feel today. It may take days or weeks or even years, but there will come a day when you will awake and notice the sun is shining again, your heart has moved on and a new phase of your life has arrived.

John F. Kennedy said in a speech in 1959, “When written in Chinese the word "crisis" is composed of two characters - one represents danger and the other represents opportunity.” Crisis, or severe adversity, does bring with it opportunity of one kind or another.

This week we are looking at the opportunities for the Gospel that can come out of adversity. From Acts 11 we see how the intense persecution of the early church served to further the purposes of God.

**Getting to Know One Another:**

Can you look back on a loss or setback in your life that turned out to bring unexpected blessings? Please describe.

What do you believe is a key factor in turning a negative situation into something positive?

Why does God allow His people to go through adversity?

**Getting to Know the Word:**

Read Acts 11:19. Why did the disbursed Jews preach to *“Jews only?”*

Can you think of ways this sort of thing may still be true in today’s church?

How did God correct the, *“Jews only”* situation? See Acts 11:19-21.

The Pastor explained how Antioch was known for being an extremely immoral city. A difficult place to bring the Gospel for sure, yet in the end, .”…*the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord”* (Acts 11:21). What does this say about taking the gospel into difficult situations?

In verse 26 we saw where Christians are first known as “Christians” (khris-tee-an-os,' Christ-followers). What does it mean to you to be a “Christ follower?”