

Pastor Dave Rohde

For Sunday, July 19th "Changing Direction: Surrender"

Jeremiah 18:1-6 – NIV

¹ This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: ² "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message." ³ So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel. ⁴ But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.

⁵ Then the word of the Lord came to me. ⁶ He said, "Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?" declares the Lord. "Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel."

Acts 9:1-19a – NIV

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. ³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

⁵ "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

¹⁰ In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹ The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

¹³ "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

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. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

¹⁷ Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Takeaway: There are times we need to change direction. Surrendering our plans opens us to the transforming work of Christ.

Questions:

1. Reflect on a time when your plans were interrupted or changed. What was difficult about that moment? What did you learn?
2. When Jesus confronted Saul (Acts 9:1-6), he asked, "Why are you persecuting me?" If Jesus were to lovingly confront you today, what would he say?
3. Ananias struggles with going to visit Saul (Acts 9:10-17). What can we learn from his conversation with God, before he surrenders and goes to visit Saul at Straight Street?
4. Saul's story doesn't end with conversion. Instead, it's a new beginning. He's sent out "on mission", invited to participate in what God was doing in the world. Where might God be inviting you to join in His work today?

Sermon: <https://podcast.wpcwestlake.org/services/mp3/sermon20260719.mp3>

Service Video: <https://youtu.be/Z8DuCgqI478>

Alternate Service Video: <https://wpcwestlake.livecontrol.tv/7c8a1725>