Sermon Outline October 4, 2015

***Experiencing God***

**THE SEVEN REALITY IN THE LIFE OF SAUL**

**Acts 9**

How do we know that our kids have grown up and become mature? Is it when they outgrow their clothes? Is it when they acquire new skills and abilities? All of those things are related to growing up; but the real sign that they are mature is that they graduate from a give-me attitude to a giving attitude.

As parents we help them make that transition by holding back on things that we give them and do for them and by making them do more stuff for themselves and others. We do this not because we need anything from them; but because we know that for them to find joy and meaning in life they need to live for something bigger than themselves. Ultimately, they need to live for God.

A very similar thing happens in our relationship with God. The reason we come to faith in God is because we have unmet needs. So, we come to him in prayer and ask for things; and he graciously gives them.

As time goes on, though, God does not give us everything we ask for; and we wonder why he isn’t answering our prayers. It’s because he is getting us to grow up and helping us transition from a give-me attitude to a giving attitude. It’s not that God needs anything from us; but he knows that if we are ever going to find real joy and lasting meaning in life it’s because we have found something bigger than ourselves to live for – we have from Him.

The seven realities of the experiencing God journey get us to take our focus off of our own comfort and kingdoms, which pass away, and put them on God’s kingdom and our eternal life, both of which last forever.

These seven realities were not invented by a man. Rather, anyone can observe them working in the lives of the people God used throughout the Bible. Chapter 5 of the book *Experiencing God* shows how they worked in the life of Moses. This morning we’re going to see how they worked in the life of a man named Saul. If these realities could lead him to an experience of God, then they can lead anyone to such an experience.

1. God was at work in the world around Saul – Acts 9:1-2
2. God initiated a personal relationship with Saul – Acts 9:3-5
3. God invited Saul to become involved in His work – Acts 9:6-9
4. God spoke to Saul through another Christian named Ananias – Acts 9:10-19
5. Becoming involved in God’s work led Saul to a crisis of belief – Acts 9:19b
6. When he became involved in God’s work Saul had to make major adjustments – Acts 9:20-22
7. As Saul trusted and obeyed he experienced God in powerful ways – Acts 13-28