



[Acts 26:12-19](#)

(12) Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, (13) At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. (14) And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (15) And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. (16) But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; (17) Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, (18) To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. (19) Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

King James Version

This passage provides us with an example of how misled a sincerely wrong person can be. Paul, despite his zeal, did not know the true [God](#) even though he was sincerely religious. He was sincerely deceived. [Jesus](#) basically asked him, "Paul, why do you continue to beat your head against the wall by following the path you are on?"

Can we hear in that question His expectation even of the unconverted? There is in the unconverted some minimal level of understanding and [repentance](#) that enables them to see that their values are wrong and to change to those coming from a different, far better Source—Him. If He expects that of them, what does He expect of us whose minds have been opened?

Paul's [conversion](#) led to many being given the opportunity to change their values more fully. However, the fact remains to this day what king [David](#) wrote and that Paul later quoted in [Romans 3:11](#), "There is none who seeks after God." Carnal people are so

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imbued with their own systems that they will not change unless essentially forced to.

[Satan](#) has [the world](#) so deceived ([Revelation 12:9](#)) that God is veiled from the eyes of their understanding, so Satan is the god of this world ([II Corinthians 4:4](#)) and the source of its ways of living. He is worshipped and responded to by all of mankind. Unless God moves to change our values ([John 6:44](#)), we rarely change for the better. When God does move, He demands repentance of us and then loyalty to Him in our lives from then on.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:
[The First Commandment](#)

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