

## I. PRINCIPLES

These principles explore what God says in His Word about Leaning on Him instead of on our own understanding:

### A. BLIND

- Acts 9:1-21 NLT--Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest. <sup>2</sup> He requested letters addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.

<sup>3</sup> As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" <sup>5</sup> "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!" <sup>6</sup> Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

<sup>7</sup> The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one! <sup>8</sup> Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus. <sup>9</sup> He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.

<sup>10</sup> Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord!" he replied. <sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now. <sup>12</sup> I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again." <sup>13</sup> "But Lord," exclaimed Ananias, "I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem! <sup>14</sup> And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name." <sup>15</sup> But the Lord said, "Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel. <sup>16</sup> And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake."

<sup>17</sup> So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." <sup>18</sup> Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized. <sup>19</sup> Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength.

Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is indeed the Son of God!"

<sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus' followers in Jerusalem?"

- Paul was blind even before his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road. He was desperately unaware of his true spiritual condition.
- We all have blind spots, gaps in our ability to see the truth about God, others, and ourselves. These blind spots keep us from experiencing abundance and freedom.
- Some blind spots seen in Saul can be hidden hindrances in our own lives:
  - Feelings of anger, judgment, jealousy and offense
  - Separation, exclusivity, disconnection, and isolation
  - Know-it-all, legalistic, or entitlement attitudes
  - Arrogance, self-importance, or superiority
  - Resistance or denial to the Lord and the move of His Spirit

- Saul was deceived into believing he was working hard in the advancement of God's kingdom when he was actually promoting self and the kingdom of darkness.
- It's tragic when we exert huge amounts of time and energy to later discover that these works have no eternal benefit when we could've been leaning on God instead: 1 Cor 3:10-12 ERV-- Everyone should be careful how they build. The foundation that has already been built is Jesus Christ, and no one can build any other foundation. People can build on that foundation using gold, silver, jewels, wood, grass, or straw.
- According to Scripture, only 2 things will endure forever: 1) the Word of God (Is 40:8) and 2) the souls of men (Matt 25:42). Above all, we're called to invest in these.
- Saul had lots of head knowledge about God's Word but it was not harnessed to God's purposes and power. His well intended works were really dead works.
- Luke 11:35--Make sure that the light you think you have is not actually darkness.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:  
The Lord interrupted Saul to bring him into the light. *Are you willing for God to interrupt you, illumine your blind spots, and/or make a course correction?*

*When blind spots are exposed, it allows us to lean on God, His purposes, and His power. Will you invite Him to do this for you?*

- Insights:

## B. BROKEN

- In light of Jesus and His truth, we can clearly see that we are broken human beings.
- Saul fell to the ground under the weight of Christ's holiness. He was able to see how he had sinned and had done so in the name of God Himself.
- Despite the stark reality of his sinfulness, Jesus met him with love, grace and mercy.
- In place of Saul's willfulness and pride came honesty and humility. He was able to let go of his agenda and lean on the unconditional forgiveness and love of God!
- This is reflected again and again in Saul's future New Testament writings.
- Saul remembered God's promise of forgiveness and leaned on it: Jer 31:34 AMP-- They will all know Me [through personal experience], from the least of them to the greatest," says the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness, and I will no longer remember their sin."

- Feelings of guilt and regret about our past will come sometimes. Let's take God at His Word and proclaim with Paul: Rom 8:1 NLT-- There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.
- LISTENING EXERCISE:  
*Is there anything in your past that continues to hold you back from fully receiving the forgiveness, love and grace of Jesus?*

*Take a few moments to take in the truth of what happened at the Cross: 2 Cor 5:21-- God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

*God says that you are forgiven and your sins are forgotten! Will you, by faith, put aside your feelings about the past and let God have the final word on it?*

- Insights:

### C. BLESSED

- Saul had the incredible blessing of seeing Jesus and hearing Him speak into his life: Matt 13:16-17 MSG-- You have God-blessed eyes—eyes that see! And God-blessed ears—ears that hear! A lot of people, prophets and humble believers among them, would have given anything to see what you are seeing, to hear what you are hearing, but never had the chance.
- When the scales fell off his eyes, Saul was no longer blind and deceived. He had new eyes that could see things from God's point of view.
- Repentance comes when we see things from God's perspective. It's been said that to repent is to turn and see again. [Repent = Re (do over) + Pent (the highest place)]
- Not only did Saul gain the ability to see his sin, he also possessed new power to overcome his old nature and the enemy's grip: Rom 6:4 NAS-- We have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.
- We believers are blessed because the resurrection power of Jesus lives within us to face every blind spot, erroneous mindset, and sin habit in our lives: Rom 8:11 NLT-- The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you.

- Along with power, God also gives us with the desire to follow Him: Phil 2:13 AMP-- [Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure *and* satisfaction *and* delight.
- God blesses our eyes to see truth and our hearts to yield to His transformative work. Let's lean in, acknowledging, listening and looking for Him to make our way straight.
- Saul awaited his instructions in prayer. Though still blind, he was no longer in the dark spiritually. He was now enjoying relationship with Jesus vs. rules and religion.
- Eph 1:17-19 AMP-- [I always pray] that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may grant you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation [that gives you a deep and personal and intimate insight] into the true knowledge of Him [for we know the Father through the Son]. And [I pray] that the eyes of your heart [the very center and core of your being] may be enlightened [flooded with light by the Holy Spirit], so that you will know *and* cherish the hope [the divine guarantee, the confident expectation] to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints (God's people), and [so that you will begin to know] what the immeasurable *and* unlimited *and* surpassing greatness of His [active, spiritual] power is in us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of His mighty strength
- Insights:

## II. PERSONAL APPLICATION

### A. ONE THING

The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

### B. PONDER THE TRUTH

- Take some time to think about the main ideas of the lesson using this outline. Which of the scriptures referenced was particularly meaningful to you? Write out the verse below and review this week to take the truth more deeply into your heart.

- Consider spending your devotional time this week meditating on just one or two verses. Use the verse you recorded above. The handout “Spiritual Blessings” has lots of Scriptures to put into practice based on your current felt need. Journal about your experience.

### C. PRAY IT IN

Take your One Thing and the verse you have chosen to the Lord in prayer:

*“Is there a particular attitude or issue that you want to bring into the light of this truth?”* Write down anything that comes to mind to keep for further exploration:

*“Lord, what would it look like for me to apply this truth?”*

*“I pray that You would make my spiritual eyes and ears alert to You this week.”*

### D. SING IT

- Listen to the playlist for this week to connect more deeply with the principles and to move them from your head to your heart:  
<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBL8waErHIN4B0EiWDkIkRQb-L1aH02Ac>
- Record anything that you received from your personal worship time (lyrics, surrender, peace, etc.):

### E. PERSONALIZE IT

Read through these questions early in the week. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see your personal reality and His pathway for growth. Write down any insights you might have during the week and come back ready to share!

1. Are you willing for God to interrupt you, illumine your blind spots, and/or make a course correction?

If not, why not?

