

Series: big Church

Title: big Audience

Why doesn't everyone in America go to church?

Sinicization: bringing people who are not of Chinese descent under the influence of Chinese culture

How in the world did the church survive the first century?

Acts 5:41-42

⁴¹ The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. ⁴² Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 8:1

¹ And Saul was there giving approval of his death.

Acts 8:1

¹ On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

Acts 1:8

You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 8:2-3

² Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. ³ But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison.

Acts 9:1-2

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus...

Acts 9:2

so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way,

The Way: The Church movement

I am the Way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me

Acts 9:2

...so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

Acts 9:3-4

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?"

Acts 9:5

"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom [a person] you are persecuting," he replied.

We, the church [NOT you the individual], are the representation or the representatives of Jesus on the earth

Acts 9:6

Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.

Acts 9:10-11

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.

Acts 9:13

“Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your holy people in Jerusalem.

Acts 9:14-16

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.”

Acts 9:19

¹⁹ Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus.

Acts 9:20-22

At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”

Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.

1 Corinthians 15:1...

¹ Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you which you received and on which you have taken your stand.

1 Corinthians 15:3

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance:

1 Corinthians 15:4-6

that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time,

1 Corinthians 15:6 (NIV)

⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living

1 Corinthians 15:6-9

⁶ though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. ⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle...

1 Corinthians 15:9

⁹ because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Corinthians 15:10

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect.

Four simple truths

1. Christ **died** for our sin
2. He was **buried**
3. He was **raised**
4. He **appeared**

Challenge: Have I ever embraced that personally?