

Recheck Your “Glue”

Let’s briefly (very briefly and somewhat selectively) review the life of Saul of Tarsus:

- Acts 7:58 introduces us to Saul as a “*young man*” at whose feet the murderers of Stephen laid their garments while stoning him; Acts 8:1 further states that Saul was “*in hearty agreement with putting him (Stephen) to death.*”
- In Acts 9:1-2, Saul is on his way to Damascus to *arrest* Christians;
- Then in Acts 9:3-8, Jesus appears to and tells him to go into Damascus and await further instructions; though *blinded* by the encounter, Saul did as instructed;
- Saul spent *three days* in Damascus *fasting* and *praying*, Acts 9:9,11;
- Though reluctant at first, Ananias found Saul, told him what Jesus wanted him to do (*bear His name to the Gentiles*), and *baptized him*, Acts 9:12-18;
- Then Saul spent *several days* with the *disciples at Damascus* (yeah, those he previously intended to arrest!), and began proclaiming that Jesus “*is the Son of God*” (disbelief in this fact had led him to *bind* and *persecute* believers), Acts 9:19-22;
- After *many days*, the (non-believing) Jews in Damascus plotted to kill him, but *disciples* helped him escape, Acts 9:23-25; and,
- Finally, he came back to Jerusalem from which this life-changing episode commenced, Acts 9:23a.

Now, look closely at the middle part of v.23, “...*he was trying to **associate** with the disciples...*”. Though the rest of the verse and through v.35 continues and completes this part of the story, his attempt to “***associate with the disciples***” in Jerusalem is what I’d like us to consider.

The Greek word “*kollao*” (pronounced *kol-lah-o*) is translated as “*to **associate with***” by the NASB, and as some form of “*join(ed)*” by most other major English translations. *Kollao* literally means, “*to glue, to glue together, cement, fasten together; to join or fasten firmly together*” (Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon). It is the same word Jesus used in Matt.19:5 to describe a *man* being “***joined***” *to his wife*, and that Paul used to admonish the Roman brethren to “***cling***” *to what is good*, Rom.12:9. It is, thus, a strong word. Saul had been previously “glued to” DISBELIEVERS in that he searched for, found, and persecuted believers. And now, he wants to (and through Barnabas’ help does) become “glued to” BELIEVERS- so much so that he does everything he can to proclaim and support the foundational principle that “*this Jesus is the Christ,*” Acts 9:22!

With these things in mind, let’s talk about us as *Christians/disciples* of Christ. Are you “glued to” and “fastened firmly together” with Christ, and those that are His *locally* (a *local congregation* of committed believers)? Or, do you do just enough to keep your name on a membership role, and are thus, at best, only *loosely attached* to them? Are you really “cemented” to Him and them, or just a “sticky note Christian”- you know, the kind that can easily *peel off* and become *tenuously* and perhaps only *temporarily attached* to someone/somewhere else? Think about your *physical spouse*- what if you just *occasionally assembled with*, or were only *loosely associated with*, or only *kind-of attached* to him/her? No spouse wants or would accept that kind of “joining” together or

“cleaving to” them... and neither will your *spiritual Husband*, Jesus Christ (or should his brethren, the local congregation). Please (re)read Luke 9:57-62; Luke 14:25-35; and 2Thess.3:11-15; and recheck your “glue”! (Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at southportcofc.org)