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Over the past few years, I have become more and more attracted to Cardinals. Two years ago, Linda and I even purchased a set of dishes that had Cardinals as one of the featured themes.

This picture of a Cardinal making a turn attracted my attention today. Not only because of the turn, but also because the way it was turning its head. Somehow, it even looked like it was posing, but that could just be me imagining it.

Birds fly; that's what they do. They climb high or dive or make all sorts of maneuvers for whatever they intend to do. You know, in a way, people are like birds. We live just the way we want to, going in whatever direction seems best to us and reaping the consequences of our choices. As I think about it, The Apostle Paul was like this; he did what he thought best and persecuted the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians. Then one day, as he was traveling to Damascus, he was confronted by the resurrected Jesus. He changed from a persecutor of Christians to Christianity's foremost evangelist. The following Scripture tells the tale.

## Acts 26 ( World English Bible )

**1** Agrippa said to Paul, “You may speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand, and made his defense.

**2** “I think myself happy, King Agrippa, that I am to make my defense before you this day concerning all the things that I am accused by the Jews,

**3** especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

**4** “Indeed, all the Jews know my way of life from my youth up, which was from the beginning among my own nation and at Jerusalem;

**5** having known me from the first, if they are willing to testify, that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

**6** Now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers,

**7** which our twelve tribes, earnestly serving night and day, hope to attain. Concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, King Agrippa!

**8** Why is it judged incredible with you, if God does raise the dead?

**9** “I myself most certainly thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

**10** This I also did in Jerusalem. I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them.

**11** Punishing them often in all the synagogues, I tried to make them blaspheme. Being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

**12** “Whereupon as I traveled to Damascus with the authority and commission from the chief priests,

**13** at noon, O king, I saw on the way a light from the sky, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who traveled with me.

**14** When we had all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘**Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.**’

**15** “I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ “He said, ‘**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.**

**16** But arise, and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you a servant and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will reveal to you;

**17** delivering you from the people, and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you,

**18** to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

**19** “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

**20** but declared first to them of Damascus, at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.

**21** For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple, and tried to kill me.

**22** Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would happen,

**23** how the Christ must suffer, and how, by the resurrection of the dead, he would be first to proclaim light both to these people and to the Gentiles.”

The Apostle Peter wrote...

### **1 Peter 2 ( WEB )**

**1** Putting away therefore all wickedness, all deceit, hypocrisies, envies, and all evil speaking,

**2** as newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby,

**3** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious:

**4** coming to him, a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, precious.

**5** You also, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

**6** Because it is contained in Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen, and precious: He who believes in him will not be disappointed.”

**7** For you who believe therefore is the honor, but for those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected, has become the chief cornerstone,”

**8** and, “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” For they stumble at the word, being disobedient, to which also they were appointed.

**9** But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the

excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

**10** who in time past were no people, but now are God's people, who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

**11** Beloved, I beg you as foreigners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Spiritually, if we just do what we want to, we walk in darkness. But when we hear the message of "good news", the light of God comes into our lives and we see the way God would have us live.

Paul later wrote...

**2 Corinthians 4 ( [WEB](#) )**

**1** Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy, we don't faint.

**2** But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

**3** Even if our Good News is veiled, it is veiled in those who perish;

**4** in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the Good News of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn on them.

**5** For we don't preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake;

**6** seeing it is God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

God wants us to live in the light of his truth; to this end he sent his one and only Son to show us the way. Jesus' resurrection proves he was who he claimed to be. This truth calls us to follow him. Satan tries to

hide this truth and blind our eyes to it, but once one sees the truth of the Gospel of Christ for what it is, it is time to turn from the darkness of evil to the light of God.

In the picture, the Cardinal is making a turn and I hope it is for the better. When anyone turns to God, they have chosen the very best way to live and the only one that will lead to living forever. Think about where you are in life and turn in the direction of God and don't look back!