



# STAYING CONNECTED

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR MCIVOR CHURCH FAMILY

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April 26, 2026

## A WORD FROM PASTOR PIERRE – INTERIM TEACHING PASTOR

Luke records Paul's encounter with Jesus Christ (Acts 9:1-19) on the road to Damascus in part to explain why those who are persecuted for their faith should not be surprised at the opposition they are facing. Christian persecution eventually became so intense that Peter devoted his first letter to providing guidance to those who would soon find themselves in the throes of extreme opposition.

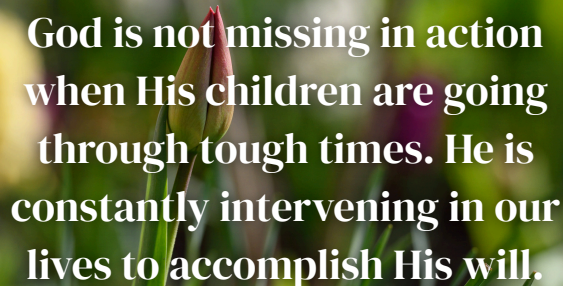
In verse 1, Luke opens a window into the distressing motivation of those who persecute Christians: **"Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples."** (NIV)

Paul was an intelligent man who should have realized, as some other Jewish leaders already had, that the reports of what happened to Christ on Easter morning signaled that something extraordinary had taken place, and that caution should be exercised. But Paul was not motivated by judicious and sober judgment. At this point, the one who would become the apostle to the Gentiles was entirely ruled by an intense and irrational hatred for Jesus Christ himself and, ultimately, for God.

Luke's message is unmistakable: "Don't be surprised by what's happening. Your adversaries are coming for you because the Son of God is out of their reach. You just happen to be the next easiest target."

Luke also reminds his readers that God is not

missing in action when His children are going through tough times. Ananias, who is justifiably hesitant to trust Paul, is shown in a vision that Jesus had in fact been at work, not only to stop Paul but also to usher him into the Kingdom and to use him to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles.



**God is not missing in action  
when His children are going  
through tough times. He is  
constantly intervening in our  
lives to accomplish His will.**

Whenever our circumstances threaten to overcome us, we must remember that despite all appearances, God is constantly intervening in our lives to accomplish His will. Even when the persecutors have the upper hand, as Stephen's tragic case shows (Acts 6:5-7:6), the Holy Spirit gives such supernatural support and comfort that even as the stones are hurtling toward him, Stephen finds the will and the strength to pray for his tormentors and to die peacefully ("he fell asleep" – Acts 7:60).

Being a follower of Christ is not only about pain and suffering. Most of us do in fact experience much joy and happiness. Let's be thankful for the good times when they come, but when difficulties appear on the horizon—as they inevitably do—let's remember that our Lord is always with us, and that, through His Spirit, He will grant us the grace and the strength to live with joy and courage (James 1:2-5).



# This Week at Mc Ivor



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