Sermon: (Acts 9.5-6)

**“Who are you?” “I am Jesus, whom you persecute. Get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do”**

[1] Walking Boots

I have had these boots for years – been up mountains, along muddy paths, on long, several-day walks.

Aidan and Ross often came with us – but had no choice. When with others often I did not chose the route.

Christian faith a journey, NB hymns like “Who would true valour see?” “The Journey of life”.   
In the Bible we have journey stories such as Exodus, Emmaus Road, Saul going to Damascus.

Both Peter and Paul went on a spiritual journey not of their choosing (see John 21.18) [TEXT].

Sometimes in our relationship with God, God calls us to a journey we would not normally want to travel.

[2] East Coker mug

We might think “Why would God want to choose me?” After all we are not good enough.

Rev John Free was Vicar of East Coker; he accused early Methodists of being “pickpockets, rebels, blasphemers, atheists”. Does that apply to any of you? John Free may have been right – many early Methodists may have been pickpockets, rebels, blasphemers, atheists, before becoming Methodists.

Peter – denied knowing Jesus; Paul persecuted early Christians [TEXT] – are we any worse?

How reassuring is it that if God chose these two, God could choose me and you too?

[3] Transformer

The very act of being chosen can change us – eg. marriage, or for a sports team.

Transformers are usually vehicles that become robots, who then fight for justice, or whatever!

In East Coker, those pickpockets, etc were transformed by Christ.

Simon transforms into Peter again; Saul transforms into Paul. Both then are useful for God.

How does all this transformation take place? It is a response to the act of being chosen.

Mutually agreeing to stay beyond 5 years, as we have recently done, can transform the parish and myself for service to God together. [TEXT]

As we travel together for more years yet, let us get up, go into our city - there we too may find our purpose.