

12. Paul Is Changed (Acts 9:1-19)

“As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20)



PLAN

Session Outline

1. Gather

Greeting
Puzzlers
God Sees
Transition to Explore

2. Explore

Sacred Conversations
Hear and See the Bible Story
Interact with the Bible Story
Say the Bible Verse
Transition to Respond

3. Respond

What’s Changed?
Different Perspectives
Loving God,
Loving Neighbor
Transition to Bless

4. Bless

Inviting
Praising
Blessing
At Home with God

Supplies

Basic Supplies: Offering basket | Pencils | Magnifying glasses | White paper | Marker

Gather: TV/DVD player

Explore: TV/DVD player

Respond: Tablecloth | LED candle

Bless: Tablecloth | LED candle | TV/DVD player

Before You Teach

This week, we are exploring the story of Paul and how he went from hating Christians to being one. Paul was a person who actually persecuted Christians with both threats and arrests. He literally terrorized the church. On his way to start harassing Christians in Damascus, he was suddenly encircled by light and he heard the voice of Jesus asking why he was harassing him? Paul at first asks who is speaking to him. Paul is so stunned when he learns that it is Jesus’ voice that he’s hearing that he falls to the ground and has to be helped up by those who are traveling with him. When they help him up, he can no longer see. The travelers take him on to Damascus where he sits without eating or drinking for several days. This period of not consuming nourishment can be interpreted as fasting, a common spiritual practice of Paul’s day and ours.

There was a disciple there named Ananias who received a vision from the Lord that he should seek Paul out, lay hands on him, and restore his sight. Ananias does just that, though he doesn’t want to because he’s heard terrible things about Paul. The Lord replies that he must do this so that Paul can carry his name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites. Ananias tells Paul that Jesus sent him so that Paul could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Instantly, flakes fall from Paul’s eyes. Paul is baptized and begins to recover his strength before heading out to do what the Lord wants him to do.

This story presents an opportunity to explore change. No one changed more than Paul who went from hating Christians to spreading Christianity. You’ll want children to understand that change is a natural part of growth. This session presents opportunities to talk about how God sees things differently than humans, and also to explore looking at situations in contemporary life from different perspectives as both Paul and Ananias were both forced to stop looking at things from their own point of view, in favor of God’s perspective.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display either attendance chart (Class Kit—pp. 16–17 or 15 & 18) at eye level.

- Play “Changed” (Adventure DVD), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have the children mark the “Attendance Chart” by signing their first names on week #12.

SAY: Today, we are learning a story about a man named Paul who changed his mind.

A—Puzzlers (Activity Sheets)

Before class: Tear out the Session 12 Activity Sheets for each child.

- Give each child a copy of “Paul’s Old Name” (Activity Sheets—p. 25). Let them complete the puzzle.
- Allow them to work on the “Synonyms” activity (Activity Sheets—p. 26).

SAY: Today, we will hear about how God changed Paul.

OR

B—God Sees (Activity/Discussion)

Before class: Have a magnifying glass (real or toy) on hand for each child. Optional: Select items that you would like the children to look at through a magnifying glass.

ASK: Have you ever looked through a magnifying glass? Do you know what a magnifying glass does?

SAY: Today, we are going to use some magnifying glasses to look at some things in our room.

- Allow the children to go around the room and look at any objects in the room through the magnifying glass, or let them look at the objects that you have preselected for them to look at.

ASK: What did things look like through the magnifying glass? What kinds of things did you see? Was there anything that you saw that surprised you?

- Allow the children to respond.

ASK: What do you think seeing things under a magnifying glass has in common with the way that God sees things?

- Allow the children to respond.
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Transition to Explore

- Encourage children to bring a chair or to sit on the floor in a carpeted area.
- Invite children to form a circle on the floor.

TIP: *Transitions are a helpful way for children to move easily from one activity to the next.*

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EXPLORE

Sacred Conversations

- Encourage children to join and sit in the circle.
- Demonstrate a listening position for the children.
- Ask wondering questions.

ASK: I wonder:

- How do you feel about change?
 - What would you change about the world if you could?
 - How have you changed over the years?
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Hear and See the Bible Story

- Read the Bible story together (*CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*—Acts 9:1-19).
- Watch the Adventure DVD Session 12.

SAY: Paul’s whole life was changed.

ASK: What has changed in your life?

Interact with the Bible Story

- Assign parts and act out “Paul Is Changed” (Bible Story Sheets—Session 12).
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Say the Bible Verse

Before class: Display the “Unit 3 Bible Verse” poster (Class Kit—pp. 10 & 23). Gather a marker and several sheets of white paper. Write each word of the Bible verse on a separate sheet of paper.

- Tell the children the Bible verse: “As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).
 - Invite the children to say the verse with you.
 - Mix the pieces of paper you wrote on up, and hand them out to the children. Have the children say the verse again and put themselves in verse order according to the word that they’ve been given as they say the verse.
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Transition to Respond

- Encourage children to put away their chairs and/or get back to their places.

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RESPOND

What Changed? (Game)

SAY: Paul changed in our Bible story. Let’s play a game to remind us of change.

- Have all of the children sit, put their heads down, and/or close their eyes. Tell the children that you are going to tap one of them on the shoulder. That child will have an opportunity to change something in the room. He or she can move something to a new location, turn something upside down, hide something, and so forth.
- When the child who changed something in the room sits back down, tell all of the children to open their eyes. The children will then try to guess what changed in the room. The person who guesses correctly will be the next person who gets to change something in the room. If no one guesses correctly, have the child who changed something tell everyone what he or she did, and then have the children close their eyes and select another child as you did the first.
- After you’re done playing, have everyone put what they moved back in place.

OR

Different Perspectives (Storytelling/Drama)

Before class: Photocopy “Different Perspectives”—(Leader Guide—p. 78) and cut out each square.

SAY: Our Bible story for today is all about different perspectives, or seeing things differently. Let’s do an activity to help us see different sides of the same issue.

- Have the children form teams. Hand each team one of the scenarios from “Different Perspectives.” Tell the teams to work together to act out each scenario from the two perspectives listed. Give them time to work out what they will say and do.
- Then let each team act out their scenario from each perspective listed for the class.

ASK: What did you learn about different perspectives from thinking about the issue from both sides?

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: Display the “Mission” poster (Class Kit—p. 2).

- Review the poster with the children.

SAY: We’ll be learning about and supporting the Wesley Centre over the next several weeks. Last week we made a donation box for the center.

ASK: Based on what we’ve read, how do you think the Wesley Centre makes life better for the people it serves?

Transition to Bless

- Ring a bell to announce the transition.
- Create a worship center on a small table with a tablecloth and an LED candle.

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BLESS

Inviting

Before class: Display “Unit 3 Bible Verse Signs” poster (Class Kit—p. 31) on a wall or bulletin board.

SAY: Let’s learn to sign our Bible verse.

- Gather the children around the Bible Verse Signs poster. Have the children read the Bible verse.
 - Teach the children to sign the verse.
 - Have the children practice signing the verse to another child.
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Praising

Before class: Gather a TV/DVD player and the Adventure DVD.

SAY: Today, Paul experienced being changed by God. Let’s sing a song to remind us of Paul.

- Play “Changed” on the Adventure DVD.
 - Let the children sing along.
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Blessing

SAY: In our Bible story, Paul experiences being unable to see. Let’s pray with our eyes closed as we remember Paul’s story.

- Gather around the worship center, and light the LED candle.
- Have the children close their eyes, and pray the following prayer.

PRAY: Dear God, we know that you are with us helping us change and grow no matter what our circumstances. Open our eyes to your love as you did Paul’s. Amen.

At Home with God

SAY: What was one thing that you learned today about how Paul was changed? Can you share what you learned with your family?

- Send Bible Story Sheets—Session 12, and the Unit 3 Song Sheet home with each child.

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1. You didn't do your homework because your best friend had a last-minute pool party on a school night and you really wanted to go.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Teacher's Perspective

2. Your little sister wants to watch cartoons on TV like she does every night, but there's a new show starting tonight that you really want to see.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Sister's Perspective

3. Your friend's mom just baked a fresh batch of cookies. Your mom told you not to eat anything that would spoil your appetite before dinner. You ate 10 cookies anyway and now you don't want dinner. Your mom asks you why you're not hungry, and you tell her what you did.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Mom's Perspective

4. Your dad told you that you had to clean your room on Saturday morning if you wanted to go to your best friend's house on Saturday afternoon. You hid all of the mess in your closet and under the bed. Your dad found out and told you that you could not go to your friend's house.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Dad's Perspective

5. You broke a vase at your grandmother's house. You didn't think it looked like anything special, but when you told her what you had done, she seemed very sad. She said that the vase was a wedding gift from her parents.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Grandmother's Perspective

6. Your grandfather wants to teach you about growing vegetables. You think it's boring, but your grandfather is really excited about teaching you. He says that growing your own food is a life skill.

- a. Your Perspective
- b. Your Grandfather's Perspective