



# Saul Is Converted on the Road to Damascus

Acts 9:1–31



## LESSON GOAL

The child will repent of being God's enemy and enter into God's family.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Tell how and why Saul persecuted the church.
- Describe Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus.
- List ways that Saul demonstrated his faith in Jesus.
- Explain how Saul began to fulfill his call.

## KEY VERSE

"But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things He must suffer for my name's sake.'" —Acts 9:15–16

## APPLICATION

- Examine whether your religious actions really please God.
- Ask Jesus, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"
- Be willing to suffer for Jesus as you proclaim Him to others.
- Rejoice that God loves His enemies enough to make them His children.

## NEXT WEEK

The Gentiles Receive the Gospel  
Acts 10:1–11:18

### Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level



## PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

*“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... you shall teach them to your children.” —Deuteronomy 11:18–19*

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here that will aid you in understanding the Scripture.

### Bible Background

#### Introduction

In Acts 1–8, Luke records the miraculous growth of the church, beginning in Jerusalem and extending throughout Judea and Samaria. Although the Gospel had advanced rapidly, God was not finished bringing people into his church. Before His ascension, Jesus proclaimed that the Gospel would spread “to the end of the earth” (1:8). In Acts 9, Luke reveals how God chose one of the church’s worst enemies to continue the spread of His Gospel. Acts 9 records the conversion of Saul, his call to apostleship, and the beginning of his preaching ministry. Because God had chosen Saul to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles, the call of Saul is one of the key events in Luke’s record of the Gospel’s spread. Saul’s conversion is also a powerful example of how God reconciles His enemies to Himself and brings them into His family.

#### Saul’s Opposition to Christ (Acts 9:1–2)

Before his conversion, Saul was an enemy of Christ and His church. Saul is first mentioned in Acts for his participation in the murder of Stephen (7:58; 8:1). Since Stephen had preached in the synagogue of Cilicia, the Roman province which Saul was from (6:9; 22:3), Saul was likely one of those who debated with Stephen and who induced others to bring false charges against him (6:10–14). After giving his approval to Stephen’s death, Saul continued to persecute the rest of the church. According to Acts 8:3, Saul “made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.” In Acts 26:10, Saul admits that when believers “were put to death, I cast my vote against them.” Saul’s animosity against the church was so intense that he even asked for permission from the high priest to bring any believers he found in Damascus, a city 160 miles away, back to Jerusalem for punishment (Acts 9:22; 22:5). Saul despised those who “were of the Way,” a name for Christianity frequently found in Acts (9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22).

Even though Saul was God’s enemy, he thought that he was pleasing God by his actions. In Acts 22:3, Paul describes himself to his opponents: “I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God.” Although a Hellenistic Jew, Saul had been brought up in Jerusalem, the center of Jewish worship. He had been taught by Gamaliel, one of the most noted rabbis of his time. He strictly followed the traditions taught by the Pharisees and was himself a Pharisee (Phil. 3:5). He was so “zealous toward God” (Acts 22:3) that he persecuted the church (Phil. 3:6). Saul was certain that he was pleasing God with his actions, even his persecution of those who called on the name of Jesus. He believed he was God’s friend when in reality he was at enmity with God.

### **Saul's Conversion and Calling (Acts 9:3–19)**

Even though Saul was His enemy, God had grace upon Saul and revealed Himself to him. When Saul was nearing Damascus, a “light shone around him from heaven” (Acts 9:3). Although it was around noon (22:6), the light was so bright that both Saul and his traveling companions were terrified and fell to the ground (9:3; 22:9; 26:14). The men around Saul heard a sound but only Saul understood the voice which spoke to him (9:7; 22:9). The voice asked Saul, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” (9:4). Little did Saul know that when he persecuted the church, he was actually attacking God the Son. Saul’s horror at this point must have been unimaginable. When Saul voted to put to death believers, he believed he was righteously punishing God’s enemies. But now a divine voice from heaven had accused Saul of persecuting Himself! When Saul asked, “Who are You, Lord?” (v.5), Saul must have already begun to expect the answer. He had persecuted those who called themselves by the name of Jesus. In confirmation of his worst fears, Jesus responded, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads” (9:5; 26:14). A goad was a prod used to move an animal. Jesus pictured Saul as an animal who had stubbornly refused to go where its master desired. (During this vision, Saul not only heard Jesus but also saw Him (Acts 9:17; 26:16; I Corinthians 9:1; 15:8; Galatians 1:16).) Saul must have been surprised to find himself talking to the Son of God and still alive. He had taken part in the murder of the last man who saw God’s Son (Acts 7:55–56). Since Jesus had accused Saul of resisting His will, Saul knew exactly what he must do. Saul submitted to Jesus. Recognizing Jesus as his Sovereign God, Saul said, “Lord, what do You want me to do” (Acts 9:6). Without God’s grace upon Saul, Saul would have never submitted himself to Jesus.

The Lord Jesus told his servant Saul what He wanted from him, both right then and in the future. Jesus first told him to go to Damascus and wait for further directions (Acts 9:6). In Acts 26:16–18, the second time in Acts that Saul tells of his conversion, Saul tells Agrippa what else Jesus said to him: “I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will reveal to you” (Acts 26:16). At the time of Saul’s conversion, Jesus told Saul that he was going to be his witness, both to Jews and Gentiles (26:17–18).

When Saul opened his eyes, he realized that he had been blinded by the “glory of that light” (Acts 9:8; 22:11). Broken and helpless, Saul was led by the hand to Damascus (Acts 9:9). For three days, Saul was “without sight, and neither ate nor drank” (Acts 9:9). Perhaps Paul did not eat because he was so distraught over the harm he had brought to Jesus and his church. Instead of eating, Saul prayed (9:11). Saul likely begged for forgiveness for his sins, praised God for his mercy, and committed himself to obedience.

During those three days, Saul had a vision of a “man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight” (Acts 9:12). Luke records that the Lord spoke to a believer named Ananias, gave him directions to exactly where Saul was staying (at Judas’ house on Straight street), and instructed him to heal Saul (9:10–12). Ananias doubted the Lord’s command because he had heard what Saul had done to the saints in Jerusalem and because he knew that Saul was in Damascus to arrest believers (9:13–14). Just as the Lord had revealed to Saul his future ministry, the Lord also told Ananias that Saul was “a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel” (9:15). In addition to proclaiming His name, Jesus told Ananias that Saul would suffer for His name. God would glorify the name of Jesus not only through Saul’s preaching but also through his suffering.

Ananias obeyed God and went to Saul. Because Ananias recognized that Saul had

been converted, Ananias addressed him as “Brother Saul” (9:17). Ananias’ arrival must have been assuring to Saul for a number of reasons. Ananias affirmed that Saul had seen and heard the Lord Jesus (9:17; 22:14). He announced that Jesus had sent him not only so that Saul could receive his sight but also be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17–18). When Ananias laid his hands on Saul, “immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once” (Acts 9:18). The same Lord who gave Saul his sight back would fill him with his Spirit and enable him to fulfill his commission. Ananias also confirmed that God had chosen Saul to be “His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard” (Acts 22:14–15). Saul was probably also encouraged by Ananias’ command for Saul to “be baptized” (22:16). Ananias had welcomed Saul as his brother and had called on him to publicly profess his allegiance to the name of Christ. Even though Saul had persecuted the church, he could be confident that his sins had been washed away (22:16) and certain that God had set him apart to proclaim the Gospel, not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles.

### **Saul’s Ministry in Damascus (Acts 9:19–25)**

After his baptism, Saul spent several days with the saints in Damascus. During this time, Saul was probably instructed how Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, although he had probably heard these teachings many times from those whom he persecuted. As soon as he could, Saul preached “the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the son of God” (19:20). Because God had opened his eyes, Saul now understood that God’s Word proclaimed God’s Son. Those who heard Saul were naturally amazed at his complete turn around (19:21). Saul had come to Damascus to imprison those who called on Jesus’ name, but now not only did he call on Jesus’ name but he was also trying to convince others to do the same! The Jews of Damascus were left speechless as Saul proved to them that Jesus was the Messiah (9:22).

After his ministry in Damascus, Saul spent approximately the next three years in Nabatean Arabia, a desert which stretched east from Damascus down to the Sinai Peninsula (Gal. 1:16–17). Almost nothing is known of Saul’s three years in the desert. When Saul returned to Damascus, he continued preaching the Gospel (Acts 9:23; Gal. 1:17). The persecution God promised to Saul began in Damascus where the Jews planned to kill him. When Saul found out about the plot, he tried to escape the city but the gates were watched by the Jews “day and night” (Acts 9:24). (The Jews were probably helped by Aretas, the Nabataean Arab king, who posted a garrison to guard the gates (2 Cor. 11:32–32).) Because of the persecution, Saul escaped when the disciples “took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket” (Acts 9:25). Saul had already begun to suffer for the name of Jesus.

### **Saul’s Ministry in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26–30)**

From Damascus, Saul went to Jerusalem. Even after three years, the disciples “were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple” (Acts 9:26). Barnabas believed Saul and brought him to the apostles (9:27). Saul told the apostles how he had seen and spoken to the Lord and had preached in Damascus. After being accepted by the apostles, Saul began his preaching ministry in Jerusalem. Luke records that “He spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists” (9:29). Saul may have proclaimed Christ in the same synagogues where Stephen had preached. After three years, the Jew’s response to Jesus’ name was the same. The Hellenists tried to kill Saul just as they had tried to kill Stephen (9:29). In a vision, the Lord told Saul that his testimony would not be received by the Jews and sent him to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17–21). Because of the

Jew's plot to kill Saul, the "brethren...brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus" (22:30). From the Mediterranean seaport of Caesarea, Saul sailed to Tarsus in the region of Cilicia. Saul likely preached the Gospel while in Cilicia (Acts 15:23; Galatians 1:21). The Lord's will for Saul continued to be fulfilled, both through his preaching and his suffering.

### Conclusion

God's salvation of Saul is foundational to understanding how the Gospel spread to the ends of the earth. The importance of Saul's conversion is demonstrated by its being recorded three times in the book of Acts (9:1-19; 22:3-16; 26:9-18). Because Saul was God's chosen instrument to turn the Gentiles "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" (26:17-18), his call is an important proof that God wanted the Gentiles saved. At the same time that Saul's conversion played a part in God's plan for the spread of the church, Saul's conversion is also one of the most powerful examples in Scripture of how God transforms someone from His enemy to His child. Saul demonstrated this transformation through his submission to Christ, his repentance, his prayers, his baptism, his entrance into the local church, his confession of Christ, and his sufferings for Christ. Believers today must not forget God's awesome work in their own lives when he changed them from being His enemies to His children.

## POINT TO THE TRUTH

*"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth."  
—Psalm 78:1*

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



### Review Questions

Where did the Lord send Philip?

*The Lord sent Philip to go down a road that goes from Jerusalem to Gaza.*

What did Philip do?

*He arose and went.*

Who did Philip see on the road?

*Philip saw an Ethiopian eunuch who took care of the treasury of a queen.*

What was the Ethiopian reading?

*He was reading a scroll from the prophet Isaiah.*

What did Philip do when he heard what was being read?

*He caught up to the chariot and asked the Ethiopian if he understood what he was reading.*

Did the Ethiopian understand what he was reading?

*No, Philip explained what it meant and shared God's good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.*



What did the Ethiopian want to do once he believed?  
*He wanted to be baptized right away.*

What happened to Philip after he baptized the Ethiopian?  
*Philip disappeared and was in Azotus.*

What did the Ethiopian do?  
*He went away rejoicing. He was praising God for salvation.*



### Difficult Concepts

**Gentile:** A Gentile is any person who is not a Jew. Gentile is a term for a group of people who were of a different race and religion than Jews. Refer to races your children know of, such as Hispanic or Asian, to explain the concept of “Gentiles.” Religion was a crucial way Jews were different than Gentiles. Explain how religion defined who the Jews were by discussing differences in cultures today, such as unique foods or celebrations. For instance, July 4th is an American holiday that is special to us, but not to people in other countries. All Jews believed basically the same thing, and Gentiles were people who did not believe those same things. Gentiles were part of a different family and they believed differently than Jewish people.

**Goad:** A goad is a sharp stick used to make cattle move. Animals pulled carts and carried things for people, but sometimes they would walk slow, stop, or go the wrong way. A goad was then used to make them walk again or go the right way. Talk about ways people make animals move today, like leashes for dogs or reins on a horse.

**Chosen Vessel:** A vessel is some type of pot or container. Certain vessels were chosen for special jobs, like carrying water. God calls Paul a chosen vessel because He selected Paul to do a specific job. God is comparing a person to a pot to show that He chose Paul specifically, and that He picked Him for a specific reason. Ask the students to imagine looking at their favorite cups and picking which one they want to drink some juice from that day.



### Can't See

In order to illustrate Saul's blindness on the road to Damascus have the students close their eyes and keep them closed. Let them listen to different sounds and have them guess what each sound is. Ask them if it is hard not to be able to see. Tell them that in today's lesson they will learn about a man named Saul who wasn't able to see for a little while.



### Stop and Wait

Play a game with the students where they have to freeze and wait. Explain that in today's lesson the students will learn about Saul who had to wait three long days without being able to see. He didn't eat or drink anything for those long three days. Discuss with the students times that they had to wait.



### Important Jobs

Bring in objects that the students would be familiar with and that they would connect with a particular job. For example bring in a fire truck or a police car. Discuss with the students that these are very important jobs. In today's lesson we will be learning about a man named Saul who God had planned a very special job for.



### **“Religious Leaders, May I?”**

This game has similar elements to “Mother May, I?”. Stand in front of the room and responds to the students’ requests. Have the students stand in a line at the far end of the room opposite from you. Have them raise their hands and ask permission to take a particular number and size of steps. For example they may say, “Religious leaders may we take three large steps?” and you say “yes” or “no.” Designate one helper or student to be Saul. When that person is called on he or she will ask for permission to arrest a particular category of students such as all wearing red. If you say “yes” then all those wearing red must go back to the beginning. The goal is to reach the religious leaders. This can also be played with religious leaders being blindfolded so that they do not know how close the students are getting.



### **Heads-up Seven-up**

One of the events occurring in today’s lesson is when Ananias lays his hands on Saul so that he might receive both his sight and the Holy Spirit. To incorporate this in before the lesson, alter the traditional game of “Heads-Up, 7-Up.” With all the students eyes closed, pick one student to be Ananias. Ananias, while the rest of the class’ heads are still down, will travel around the room touching several students on the shoulder. After Ananias has taken his seat, those students who were touched on the shoulder will come up front and try to guess which of their classmates was Ananias.



## PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

*“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done.” —Psalm 78:4*

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use alongside the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done right from the Bible.

### Bible Lesson

#### Passage Outline

Saul’s Opposition to Christ (Acts 9:1–2)

Saul’s Conversion and Calling (Acts 9:3–18)

Saul’s Ministry in Damascus (Acts 9:19–25)

Saul’s Ministry in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26–30)

#### Reading of the Text

Read Acts 9:1–30.

#### Introduction

Up until this point, man has not been able to stop God from spreading the Gospel. The Jews in Jerusalem killed His servant Stephen and this did not stop the Gospel. Many people had become enemies of Christ, trying to do everything they could to stop the Gospel from spreading. As we will see in today’s lesson, their efforts would not work. In Acts 9, Luke reveals how God chose one of the church’s worst enemies to continue the spread of His Gospel. Let us look now at how God turned one of His enemies into a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.



#### Lead-off Questions (LOQs)

**LOQ:** At the beginning of today’s lesson, how is Saul seen persecuting the church?

**Answer:** Saul hated the church very much. So much so that he was even going from house to house arresting any and every Christian that he saw. Saul had already received permission from the high priest to punish those he found following Christ. Luke records that Saul even put some of these Christians to death (26:10).

**LOQ:** Why would Saul be doing such a thing to the church?

**Answer:** Luke writes that Saul was a Pharisee, someone who was desperately trying to please God with their actions. The sad thing is that Saul was certain that he was pleasing God with his actions, even his persecution of those who called on the name of Jesus. He believed he was God’s friend when in reality he was God’s enemy.

**LOQ:** What happened to Saul while on his way to persecute Christians?

**Answer:** Even though Saul was His enemy, God had grace upon Saul and revealed Himself to him. When Saul was nearing a town called a Damascus, a bright light suddenly shone around him. It was light from heaven, and was so bright that all who were with Saul fell on the ground in fear of God.

**LOQ:** What was asked of Saul there on the road to Damascus?

**Answer:** Suddenly a great voice rang out from the light of heaven. The voice asked Saul, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (9:4). Little did Saul know that when he was persecuting the church, he was actually persecuting God Himself. Saul, shaking in fear asked a question to which he already knew the answer: "Who are you, Lord?" He knew he was talking with Christ Himself, for the only ones he was persecuting were those who called on the name of Jesus.

**LOQ:** What was Jesus' response to Saul there on the road to Damascus?

**Answer:** Jesus answered Saul's question saying, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." A goad was a big stick used to move an animal in the direction you wanted it to go. Jesus pictured Saul as an animal who had stubbornly refused to go where its master desired. Saul had seen Christ. His only response now was to submit to the Lord Jesus and ask Him what He desired him to do. Jesus tells Saul to get up and enter the city. From there he would be told what else to do. This would be the beginning of God doing great things through Saul.

**LOQ:** What was Saul's physical condition after seeing Christ there on the road to the city?

**Answer:** When Saul opened his eyes, he realized he had been blinded by the great light. Broken and helpless, Saul was led by the hand to Damascus. For three days, Saul was without sight. He did not eat or drink. During those three days, Saul had a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.

**LOQ:** How does the disciple named Ananias respond to the Lord's instructions to go visit Saul?

**Answer:** Luke records that the Lord spoke to a believer named Ananias, gave him directions to exactly where Saul was staying, and instructed him to heal Saul (9:10-12). Ananias knew of Saul and how much he hated Christians. He doubted the Lord's command because he had heard what Saul had done to the saints in and outside of Jerusalem.

**LOQ:** How does the Lord comfort the doubting Ananias?

**Answer:** Just as the Lord had revealed to Saul his future ministry, the Lord also told Ananias that he had chosen Saul to be His witness to both the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel (9:15). In addition to proclaiming His name, Jesus told Ananias that Saul would also suffer for His name. God would glorify the name of Jesus not only through Saul's preaching but also through his suffering. Ananias obeyed God and went to Saul. Confident that the Lord knew what He was doing, Ananias enters the house where Saul was staying, called him his own brother, and told him that the Lord Jesus had sent him. All happened just as Saul had seen in the vision.

**LOQ:** What happened as Ananias laid his hands on Saul?

**Answer:** Luke writes that when Ananias laid his hands on Saul, he immediately received both his sight and the Holy Spirit. At that moment Ananias had welcome Saul as his brother and had called on him to publicly profess his allegiance to Christ by being baptized. Even though Saul had persecuted the church, he could be confident that his sins had been washed away (22:16) and certain that God had set him apart to proclaim the Gospel, not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles.

**LOQ:** What does Saul do after being baptized there in Damascus?

**Answer:** After his baptism, Saul spent several days with the saints in Damascus. As soon as he could, Saul preached Christ to those in the synagogue, that He is the Son of God. Because God had opened his eyes, Saul now understood that God's Word proclaimed God's Son. Those who heard Saul were naturally amazed at his complete turn around (19:21). Saul had come to Damascus to imprison those who called on Jesus' name, but now not only did he call on Jesus' name but he was also trying to convince others to do the same!

**LOQ:** How does Saul manage to escape to Damascus?

**Answer:** The persecution God promised to Saul began in Damascus where the Jews planned to kill him. When Saul found out about the plot, he tried to escape the city but the gates were watched by the Jews "day and night" (9:24). Because of the persecution, Saul escaped when the disciples "took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket" (9:25). Saul had already begun to suffer for the name of Jesus.

**LOQ:** Which one of the apostles were willing to accept Saul when he had arrived there in Jerusalem?

**Answer:** Even after three years the disciples were all afraid of Saul, and did not believe that he was a disciple. Barnabas believed Saul and brought him to the apostles (9:27). Saul told the apostles how he had seen and spoken to the Lord and had preached in Damascus. After being accepted by the apostles, Saul began preaching there in Jerusalem.

**LOQ:** How did the Jews there in Jerusalem receive the preaching of Saul?

**Answer:** The Jews response to the Gospel had not changed over the course of several years. They continued to hate Christ, and as Saul preached Christ they hated Saul. Because of their hatred for Christ, the Jews there in Jerusalem tried to kill Saul just as they did Stephen. In hearing about the Jews plan to kill Saul, the believers there in Jerusalem brought him out and sent him on a boat to an area known as Caesarea. The Lord's will for Saul continued to be fulfilled, both through his preaching and his suffering.

## **Summary**

After the death of Stephen, Saul continued to persecute the church. Though he thought he was pleasing God, Saul had become an enemy of Christ. Fortunately for Saul, God's plan for him did not involve repaying him for all the harm he had done to the church. God's plan was to extend grace and forgiveness to Saul, using him to help share the gospel with both Jews and Gentiles alike. In order to convert Saul from being his enemy to his friend, God chose to reveal himself to Saul on the road to Damascus. Blinded by a great light, Saul had seen the very one he had been

persecuting, Jesus Christ. There on that road the Lord Jesus instructs Saul that he will share the gospel with the Gentiles and that he would suffer a great deal for his name. From that experience, Saul now desired to bring glory to God's Son Jesus. Following a visit from the disciple Ananias, Saul received both his sight and the Holy Spirit. Saul was now prepared to do the work of the Lord, and began boldly preaching Christ in both Damascus and Jerusalem. In both places, the Jews hated Christ and tried to kill His servant Saul. From that point on, Saul was obedient to share the gospel with all men, suffering a great deal for the name of Christ.

### Application

To be an enemy of Christ is a horrible thing that will be judged before the Lord. Fortunately for us, God's grace still extends to us just as it did to Saul. For this reason, we should examine our actions to see if they really please God. If our actions prove that we are an enemy of the Lord, we should respond as Saul did and submit to Christ and repent of our sin. All that have submitted should rejoice that God would love us, who were once His enemies, by making us now His children.

### Presentation Ideas



#### A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards®

Use appropriate A Beka Book® Flash-A-Cards® with the lesson.



#### Betty Lukens Flannel Graph

Use appropriate flannel graph pieces with the lesson.



#### Act It Out

One captivating way to teach today's lesson is to have a real live Saul visit your classroom. Have a guest teacher enter the classroom dressed in clothes of Bible times. After introducing the guest as Saul, the guest will go on to teach the lesson as if he or she were the actual Saul that experienced Christ on the road to Damascus. The guest will tell the class all about his conversion, then describe all that he suffered because of his obedience to Christ to share the gospel.



#### Signpost Prop

Make or reuse the signpost for your class. This week, include signs (pointing opposite directions) for Jerusalem and Damascus. (Last week you had Jerusalem and Gaza; next week change to or add Caesarea and Joppa.)



#### Freeze Scene

In a previous lesson, we dramatized Saul persecuting someone, then freezing while "the gospel spread." Start the presentation time with the scene as it was frozen, then pick it up for today's lesson about Saul persecuting the Christians in Jerusalem and getting letters to arrest them in Damascus.



#### Lesson Props

Within the lesson there are several key elements that will need to be given emphasis to. Some of these elements will be: 1) Saul's submission to Christ, 2) his repentance, 3) his baptism, 4) his testimony concerning Christ, 5) the persecution he suffered, and 6) the church. To aid the students in remembering these elements of today's lesson, here are a few visuals or props to teach with:

Hands giving up—Saul's submission to Christ

U-turn—repentance  
Water—baptism  
Group of People—church  
Testimony—open mouth  
Persecution—him in a basket.

## Praise and Worship

*Open Our Eyes*

*As the Deer*

*Change My Heart, O God*

## PRACTICE THE TRUTH

*“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.” —Psalm 78:7*

Choose ideas from this section that review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



### The Blind Saul Game

Set up an obstacle course in the classroom. Blindfold one student, and have another guide him through the obstacles. Once the student guiding the blindfolded one reaches the end, have him repeat Ananias' words to Paul in Acts 9:17.



### Saul in a Basket

Materials: Saul stand alone, paper cup, strips of paper, stapler, string

Directions: Give the students each of the above materials and tell them that some people were very mad at Saul for preaching the gospel. Instruct them to staple the strips so that they extend above the top of the cup on each side. Fold down the sides and staple again to create the handles. Next punch a hole in the cup and attach the string. Finally, have the students tape or glue Saul into the basket.



### Discussion on Saul

Discuss why people wanted to kill Saul. Talk about how he hated Christians and threw Christian men and women in jail. Explain that many people knew about Saul's persecution. He was famous for his cruelty.

Discuss what made Saul God's enemy. After explaining that Christians are part of God's family, ask the students how they would feel if someone was mean to one of their family members. Talk about how Christians were God's messengers, so when Saul attacked Christians he was actually opposing God.

Discuss why Saul thought he was doing the right thing. The Christians were teaching that Jesus was the Messiah, the person the Jews believed would rescue them and be their king. Because Saul rejected Jesus, he believed the Christians were telling lies and teaching false things. Saul loved God's Word, the Torah, and he wanted to do all he could to protect it. He persecuted Christians because he believed God wanted him to and because he cared so much about his religion. Saul thought he was protecting the truth, but really he was fighting against it.



### **“Saul on the Damascus Road” Spinner**

Materials: Saul on the Damascus Road” craft page, crayons, scissors, hole-punch, brads

Directions: Give each student a craft page and have them cut off the bottom portion of the page and then cut out the spinner. Next, have them decorate each picture and attach their spinners with a brad. Spin Saul around the road as you review the lesson.



### **“Road to Damascus and Back” Flipbook**

Materials: copies of “Road to Damascus and Back” craft pages, scissors, glue, crayons

Directions: Give each student a page with the two signposts to color and decorate. Instruct them to fold the page in half so that the sign posts are back to back. Next have them fold each side up to meet in the center and then glue the center section together. This should make a flip book. Have the students each cut out an angry Saul and a non-angry Saul. Glue the angry Saul to the first page and the non-angry Saul to the second. Talk about how God changed Saul.



### **“Saul Escapes in a Basket” Yarn Pull**

Materials: copies of “Saul Escapes in a Basket” craft pages, 4" pieces of yarn, hole-punch, scissors, crayons

Directions: Give each child a craft page and a Saul in a basket. Punch a hole in the craft page just below the man’s hand and in the basket just below the knot. Thread the yarn through the holes and tie a knot on the ends. The students can pull the string and let Saul down.



### **“Saul’s Conversion and Calling”**

Use this worksheet to reinforce the key truths of today’s lesson. It is located at the back of this lesson.



### **Small Group Activity: “God Changes Sinners”**

Give each student a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. He or she can complete the page individually, in a small group, or at home.

### **Coloring Pages**

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets from the back of the lesson. He or she can color the pages in class or take them home to color.

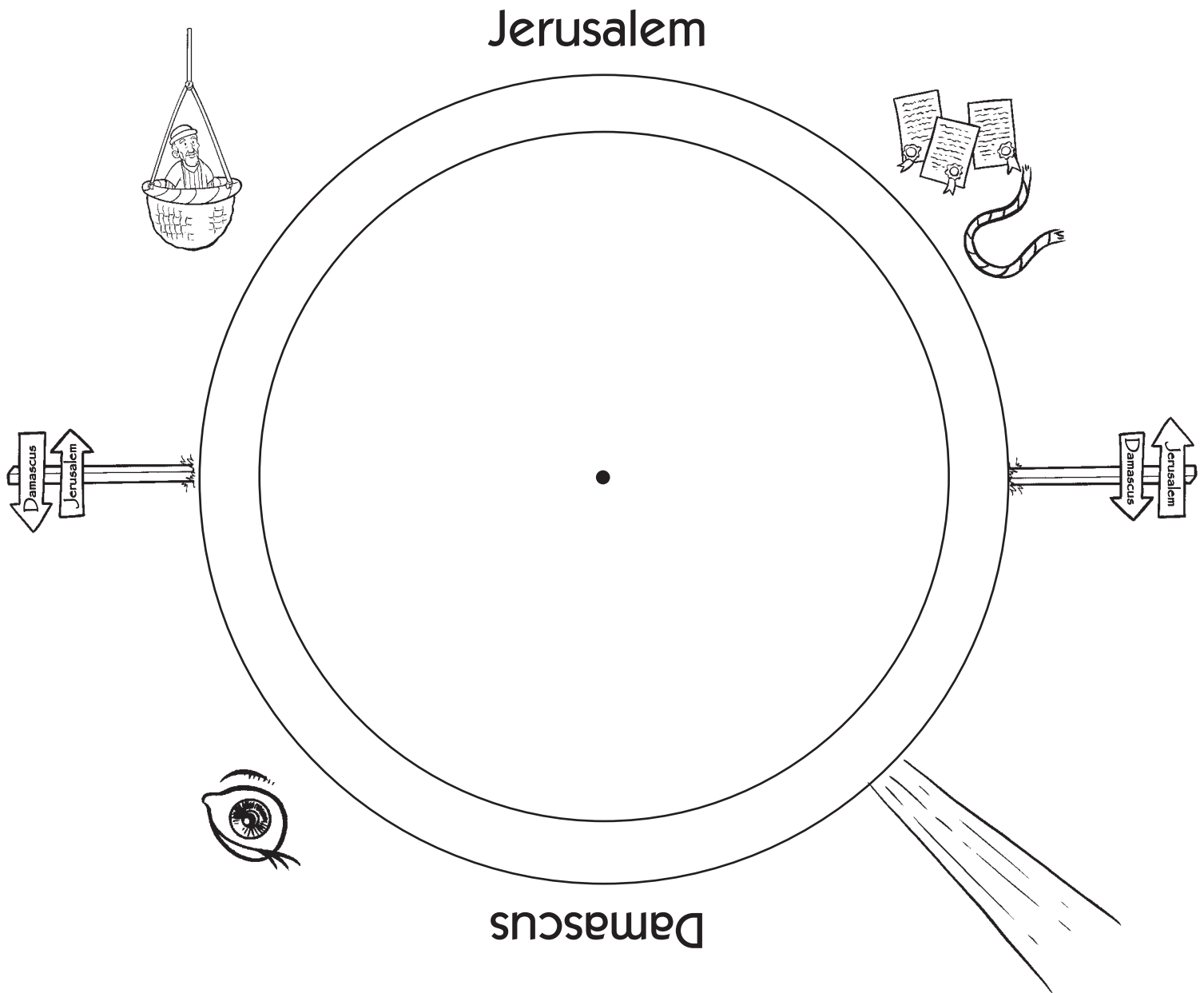


### **MEMORY VERSE**

“Lord, what do You want me to do?” —Acts 9:6b



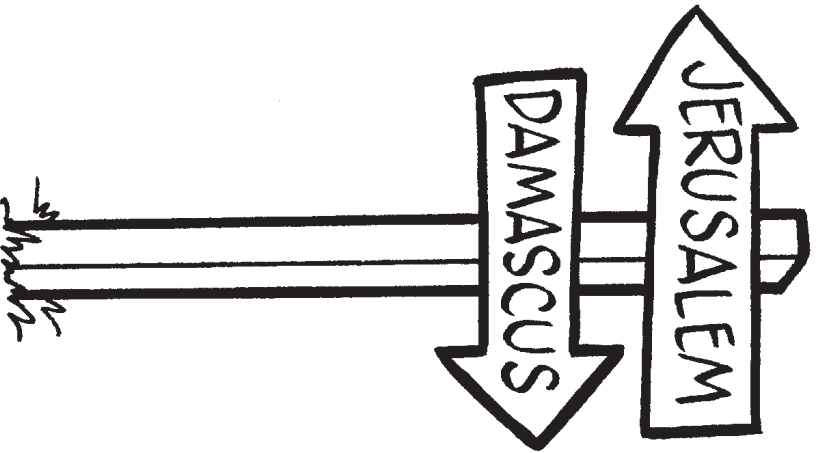
# Saul on the Damascus Road





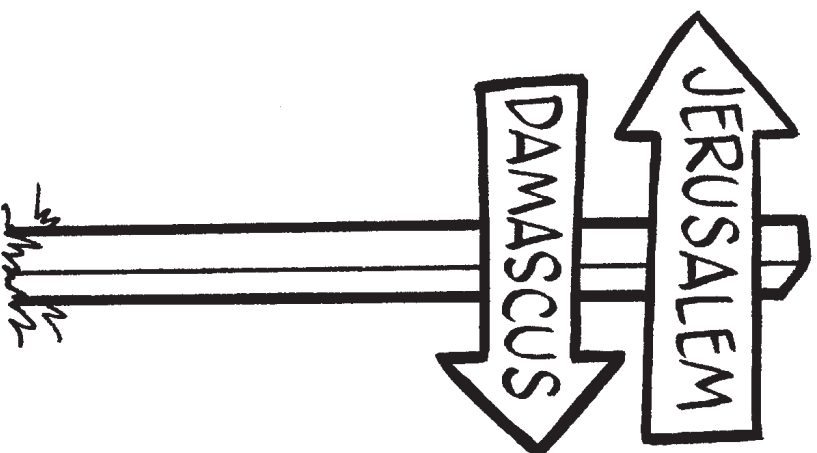
# The Road to Damascus

...and back



"Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem."

—Acts 9:1-2

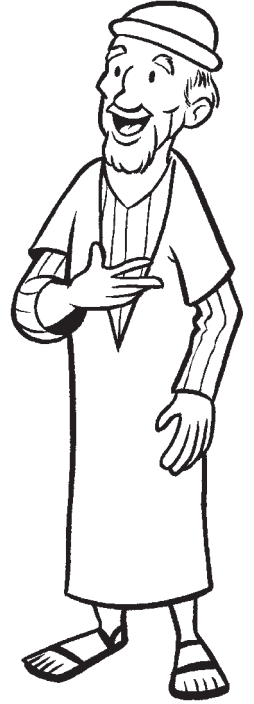


"So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus..."

—Acts 9:28



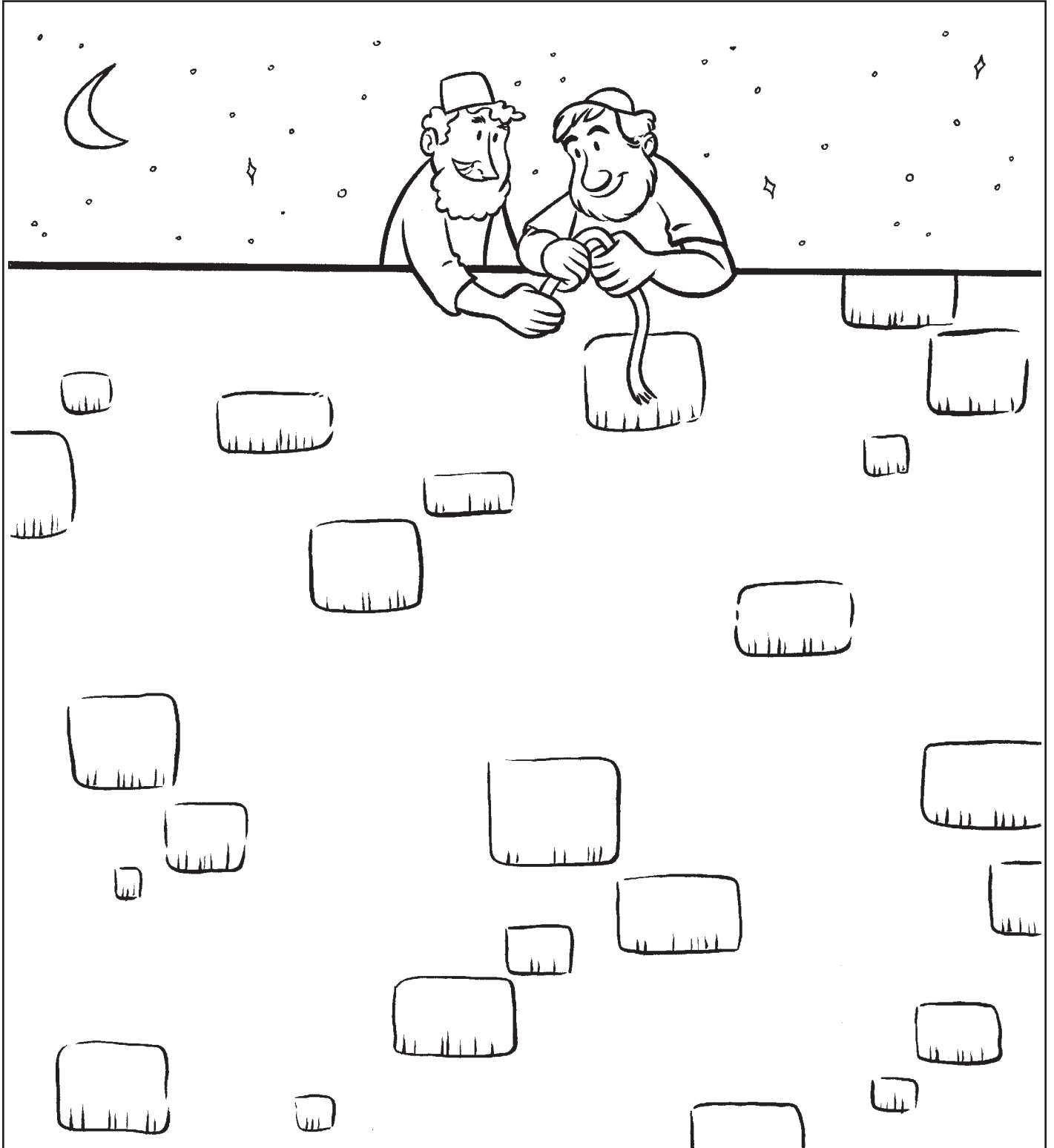
# The Road to Damascus and Back







# Saul Escapes in a Basket

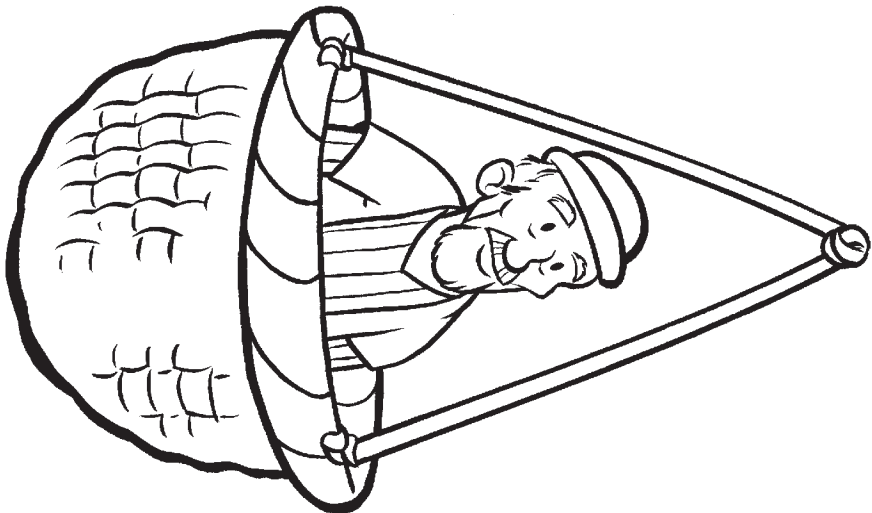
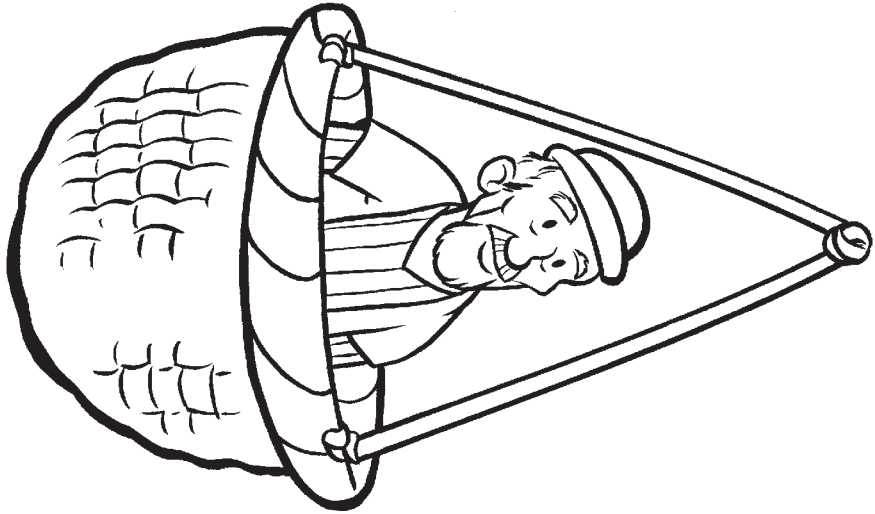
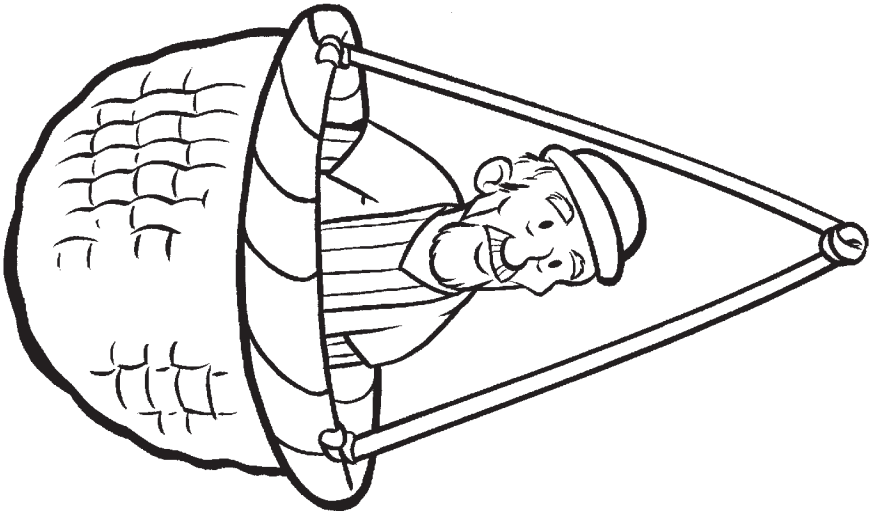


**“Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.”**

**—Acts 9:23–25**

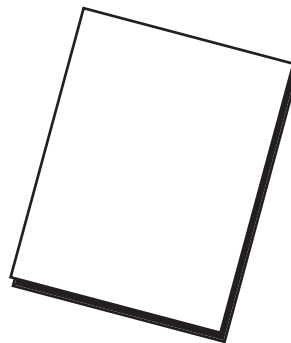


# Saul Escapes in a Basket





# Saul's *conversion* and **calling**



**Acts 9:1-31**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. True or False: Saul wanted to arrest and murder those who followed Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Who spoke to Saul on his way to Damascus? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. When Saul persecuted Christians, he was also persecuting \_\_\_\_\_.
  
4. Saul asked Jesus "What do \_\_\_\_\_ want me to \_\_\_\_\_?" (Acts 9:6)
  
5. Saul was without \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ for three days.
  
6. The Lord told Ananias in a vision to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. go to the street called Straight
  - b. ask for Saul
  - c. put his hand on Saul
  - d. all of the above
  
7. After receiving the Holy Spirit and his sight, Saul was \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 9:18).
  
8. Saul preached that Christ was the \_\_\_\_\_.





## God Changes Sinners

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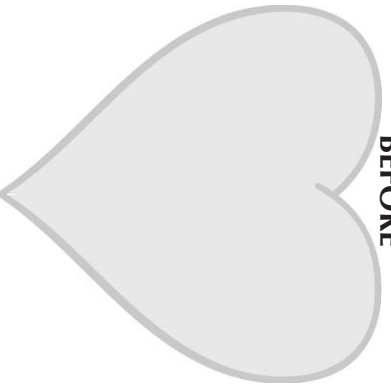
“But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, Kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for my name’s sake.’” —Acts 9:15–16

Has anyone ever said mean things to you because your are a Christian, or if you are not a Christian, have you ever said or thought mean things about Christians? Saul did—he actually was in charge of arresting and killing Christians, before Christ changed him.

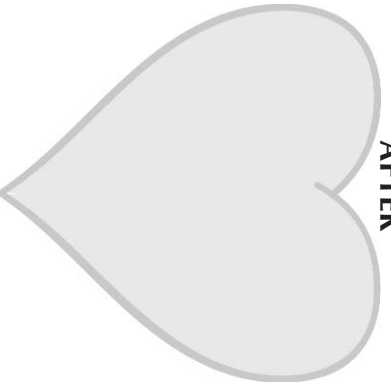
Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:15 that he is the chief (the worst) of sinners, yet Christ changed his life from sinner to a follower of Him. God changed Paul from being His enemy to being His friend. Christ can do that for you, if you are not a Christian, or for the people in your life who make fun of you because you are a Christian.

There are two hearts below, in the first one write words that describe Saul before he believed in Jesus, in the second one write words that describe Saul after Christ changed him.

**SAUL  
BEFORE**



**SAUL  
AFTER**



## God Changes Sinners

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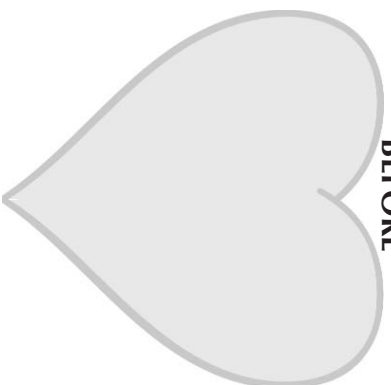
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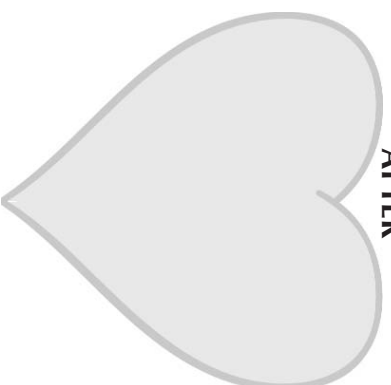
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**SAUL  
BEFORE**



**SAUL  
AFTER**



Write out 2 Corinthians 5:17.

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God's Word tells us that when we are saved all things become new and the old has passed away. Christians are new creations.

What changed in Saul's life when he was saved? \_\_\_\_\_

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Write down the name of someone who you want to share the gospel with.

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Write out 2 Corinthians 5:17.

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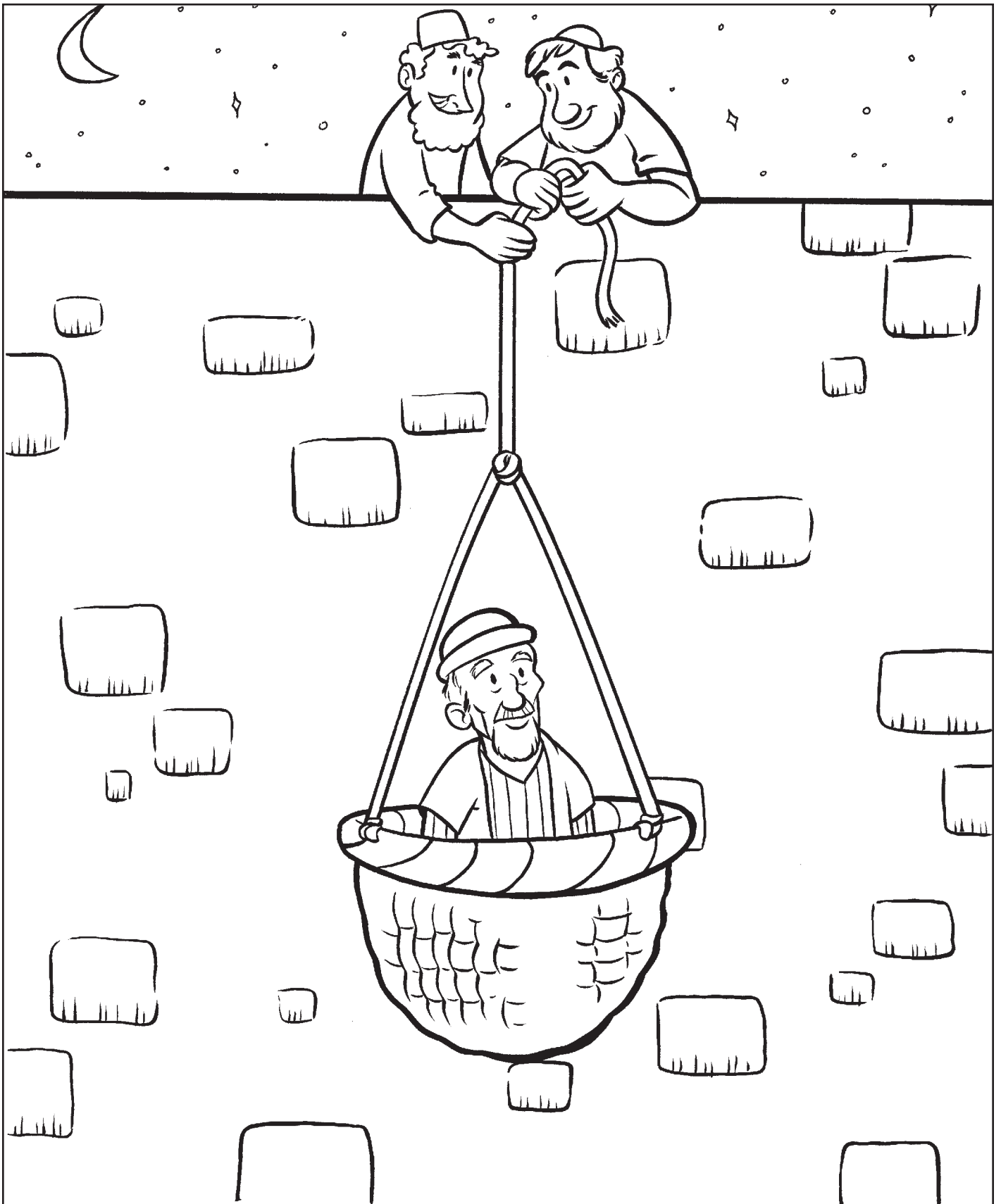
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**“As [Paul] journeyed to he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’” —Acts 9:3–4**





**“Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.”**

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