

STORY

Conversion of Saul to be God's Special Servant - Acts 9:1-19

TEACHER PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I thank You for the love You gave to Saul, and that Your love supported him through all his trials as Your spokesman. I ask for a measure of that support for me in my teaching and living today. Open my mouth that I may present You to these children in all Your saving grace and loving care. As always, in Your Savior name. Amen.

OUTER AIM

When God saved Saul's soul, He also prepared him to be the great Christian apostle and missionary Paul.

INNER AIM

God's love is for all people, the Jew and Gentile.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 2, pp. 505-518)

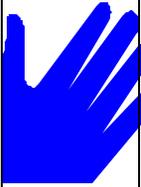
We have seen how God worked on a Christian Jew, Peter, to recognize the needs of the gentiles. The LORD had an even bigger job getting a non-Christian Jew, Saul, to see his own needs and God's love for him in Christ Jesus. Converting Saul was a special miracle of grace, and the apostle Paul said many times that if God saved him, God could save anyone. So saving Saul was one small step in God's larger program of saving souls--Jew and gentile--all over the world for centuries to come.

v.1,2

- ▶ Saul was a super-Jew, a premier champion of Pharisaism, which is the conscientious attempt to be "right with God?" by the route of obedience to the commandments.
- ▶ This life-style attempts to prove to God that "I am a really good person?" and God ought to reward me; it is, of course, in direct conflict with the Christ-centered approach: "God loves me, not because I'm a good person, but because He is such a wonderful Person to forgive me for what I am and what I do against Him."
- ▶ Saul had to learn this for himself before he could help others to learn it.
- ▶ Since Saul was actually convinced that Jesus was a false prophet, he volunteered for the privilege of persecuting His followers as far away as Damascus, 140 miles NE of Jerusalem.
- ▶ He was hoping to arrest and extradite such heretics back to Jerusalem, where they stood little chance of surviving the fate of Stephen--which, by the way, had been a pleasure for Saul to watch (ch.7:58-8:3).
- ▶ "The Way" is a term used to identify the Christian religion, which was not the way of the unbeliever, nor the way of the Jewish religion, but the Way of Jesus.

v.3-9

- ▶ Jesus stopped Saul and set him straight.
- ▶ Here Luke is reporting what Paul himself later told the Jerusalem mob (Acts 22) and again King Agrippa (Acts 26).
- ▶ We usually assert that Saul was converted on the highway by this confrontation with Jesus, but the text does not pinpoint the moment or hour or day when Saul's heart was won over to Jesus as his



Savior and LORD.

- ▶ It probably happened gradually during the three days of his anguish (blindness, nervous tension, isolation) after which Saul was given the Christian greeting "brother Saul," and received his sight and was baptized.

v. 3

- ▶ Jesus chose the time and place to arrest this "storm-trooper?" in a reality check that would convince Saul that the Christians were correct, while he had been in the wrong.
- ▶ The intense, blinding light (ch.26:13) evidently hit so hard that he suffered a jarring fall from his horse.

v. 4

- ▶ There on the ground, disoriented and blinded, he knew that he was at the mercy of whoever was speaking.
- ▶ The voice from heaven called out his name in Hebrew with the soul-piercing question: "WHY ARE YOU PERSECUTING ME?"
- ▶ Indeed, WHY ME? What do you think you have to gain by this? What prompts such ungodly behavior against ME?

v. 5

- ▶ Because of the terrifying voice of the unidentified heavenly person, Saul knew that someone in heaven (Moses? Gabriel? Abraham?) was really angry with him.
- ▶ But to whom should he apologize? "Who are you, lord?"
- ▶ The answer: "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting!" left Saul "trembling and astonished," because this meant that the Jesus he had rejected was not a false prophet at all, but was really reigning at the right hand of the Father in heaven!
- ▶ The awful truth now scalded Saul's heart that he had been duped by Satan to attack God Himself, and the horrifying dread possessed him that an angry God would exact a terrible payment from him for this sin.
- ▶ The statement that "it is hard for you to kick against the goads" (just as an ox hurts himself if he kicks against a sharpened cattle-prod) reminded Saul that he had often heard the truth about Jesus from Christians, but had reacted angrily against the Spirit's prodding him to submit to the truth.

v. 6

- ▶ What penalty would be demanded from him?
- ▶ He had to find out.
- ▶ "Lord (*Master*, rather than *LORD Jehovah*), *what do you want me to do*"--to make restitution for my vicious opposition to you and your people?
- ▶ We must say that this is not yet the response of a converted heart, for Saul still expected to appease God by his own personal payment.
- ▶ Jesus' answer "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do" still left him in the dark to wonder what an upset God was planning as a suitable "pay-back."

v. 7-8

- ▶ Everybody else in the group had also been knocked flat (ch.26:14) , so Saul had to take charge to get them into Damascus, even as he remained blinded and helpless.
- ▶ They found lodging at Judas' house on Straight Street.

v. 9

- ▶ What the Spirit did for Saul during those three days and nights is not revealed to us.
- ▶ Yet it was prime time for God to work on Saul's heart.
- ▶ Saul would review the Scriptures he had in his memory banks, especially the prophecies of the Messiah and what he had heard about Jesus from His followers.
- ▶ He could not relax enough to eat--and perhaps slept but little--because he was totally absorbed in sifting through his guilt of disbelief, in recycling the meaning of the prophecies, and in rehearsing the Spirit's prodding.

v. 10

- ▶ God enlisted a mature Christian in His venture to reclaim Saul.
- ▶ Ananias' response "Here I am, Lord?" came from a heart ready and willing to serve his Savior.

v.11-12

- ▶ Directions follow--the street and house address where he could find Saul, praying for the help God had available for him coming in the person of Ananias armed with God's love.

v.13-14

- ▶ It was natural that Ananias, under threat of persecution, would have reservations about approaching Saul, already notorious for his assaults on God's people.

v. 15-16

- ▶ Of course, Ananias did not know what God had already done to disarm Saul, so God briefly outlined His progress with Saul: a) I have selected Saul as a chosen vessel of Mine; b)I am authorizing him to represent Me wherever I send him, to Jew and gentile, the lowly and the regal; c) and he will get rehabilitated under My chastisement.

v.17

- ▶ That evidently was enough to gain Ananias' support as a co-worker, so off he went, found Saul and gladly welcomed him into God's family as his brother in Jesus the Messiah.
- ▶ He continued with assurances that this meeting had been programmed in heaven by Jesus for the purpose of healing Saul's sight (both spiritual and physical) and giving him the Holy Spirit to fill the void left by his Pharisaism and then to empower Saul for God's service.

v.18

- ▶ The miracle followed, of course,--visible to Saul and to others.
- ▶ Baptism next--not to initiate faith, but to give Saul the assurance that his soul had been cleansed and to initiate him into the Christian fellowship with the saints of God.

v.19

- ▶ Breakfast next--with good Christian friends--and in a shared love that overcame emotional scars as they got to know one another better.
- ▶ Saul was on his way to becoming one of God's extra-special vessels (containers) that would pour out God's redeeming love to others. All glory to God in the highest!

STUDENT PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I thank You for the love You showed me by making me one of Your dear children. Keep my soul free from Satan's grip until I will join You in our heavenly home. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Tell the story in your own words with the same emotion and excitement as if you were there.

ACTIVITY

- Color the picture on page 1. Carefully cut along the three dark lines. Fold along the one dashed line near the top of the flap you just made.
- At this point you may want the children to glue a second sheet of paper to the back of page one. This would make attaching the picture of Jesus somewhat easier.
- Color the picture of Jesus below. Cut it out. Glue this picture onto page one behind the flap that lifts up. Either glue it so that it is on the back of the flap that lifts up, or the picture could be glued to the backer sheet that you added. Whichever way you think looks best.
- Cut out the word box below. Glue it to the bottom of page one.
- Use you finished page one to tell the story of how Saul became a Christian.

APPLICATIONS

1. The subject of conversion is a natural with this Bible account, and Saul's dramatic case is recorded for a number of reasons. Primarily, it demonstrates that God is so filled with grace and love that He can salvage and rehabilitate the most perverse sinners, including blasphemers. Paul later referred to himself as an example of the way God's love reaches out to the "worst sinners.?"
2. In addition, we may deduce some truths about conversion: a) It is God's will and God's power that salvage a lost soul, turn it around, and then use the convert to help others. b) If a person begins to feel that he has made a contribution to his own conversion, he should review Paul's personal experience supported by the Spirit's testimony in Romans (esp. the close of ch.3, and ch.5:6-11) and the theme of God's grace promoted in every Pauline Epistle (see Eph.2:8-9).c) Current popular theology that "you should accept Christ? or "make your decision for Christ? puts a dangerous *self-centered slant* on conversion; although this approach purports to be a gospel invitation, it may also rob God of His glory.
3. Few conversions are as dramatic as Saul's--simply because his case was so extreme that it required extreme measures to salvage him. So we refrain from using Saul's example as the paradigm of genuine conversions.
4. Yet it has common denominators for adult conversions: a) the realization that one has been opposed to God's will and work in Jesus; b) soul-searching in the light of Scripture (which for Saul took three days), yielding repentance for having been God's enemy; and c)an application of assurance that God loves and forgives.
5. God has a plan for each Christian's life; a purpose for our existence on earth; a calling, be it missionary, teacher, pastor, businessperson, homemaker, etc.; His hand touches us at all stages of life--teenager, parent, or grandparent--for God is always giving us openings to touch others as Ananias did to Saul, and as Saul did for others.
6. Saul became the great Christian apostle and missionary Paul; God also inspired him to write over a dozen of our New Testament books, filled with doctrine, instruction, explanations, etc., for upbuilding us even today. You can get better acquainted with this extraordinary person in a Bible dictionary or Rupprecht Bible History References, II, 506-507. We today are still receiving the blessed fall-out from what God did to him and for him.
7. Jesus can overcome hatred and unbelief in any sinner's heart. God works this out in every conversion (also for infants), because a soul can be freed from Satan's grip only by a stronger hand--the hand of God's love. God pulled Saul dramatically free of Satan's grip, as this record of Acts 9 shows us.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

I Cor 6:11 - But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

I Cor. 15:10 - By the grace of God I am what I am , and His grace toward me was not in vain.

Middle any of the above and...

Gal. 1:15-16 - "...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace..."

Rom.10:4 - For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

Eph. 1:3-5 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

Upper any of the above and...

I Tim.1:15-16 - This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

Acts 26:18 - "...to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."

Phil. 3:7-8 - But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ.

HYMN CHOICES

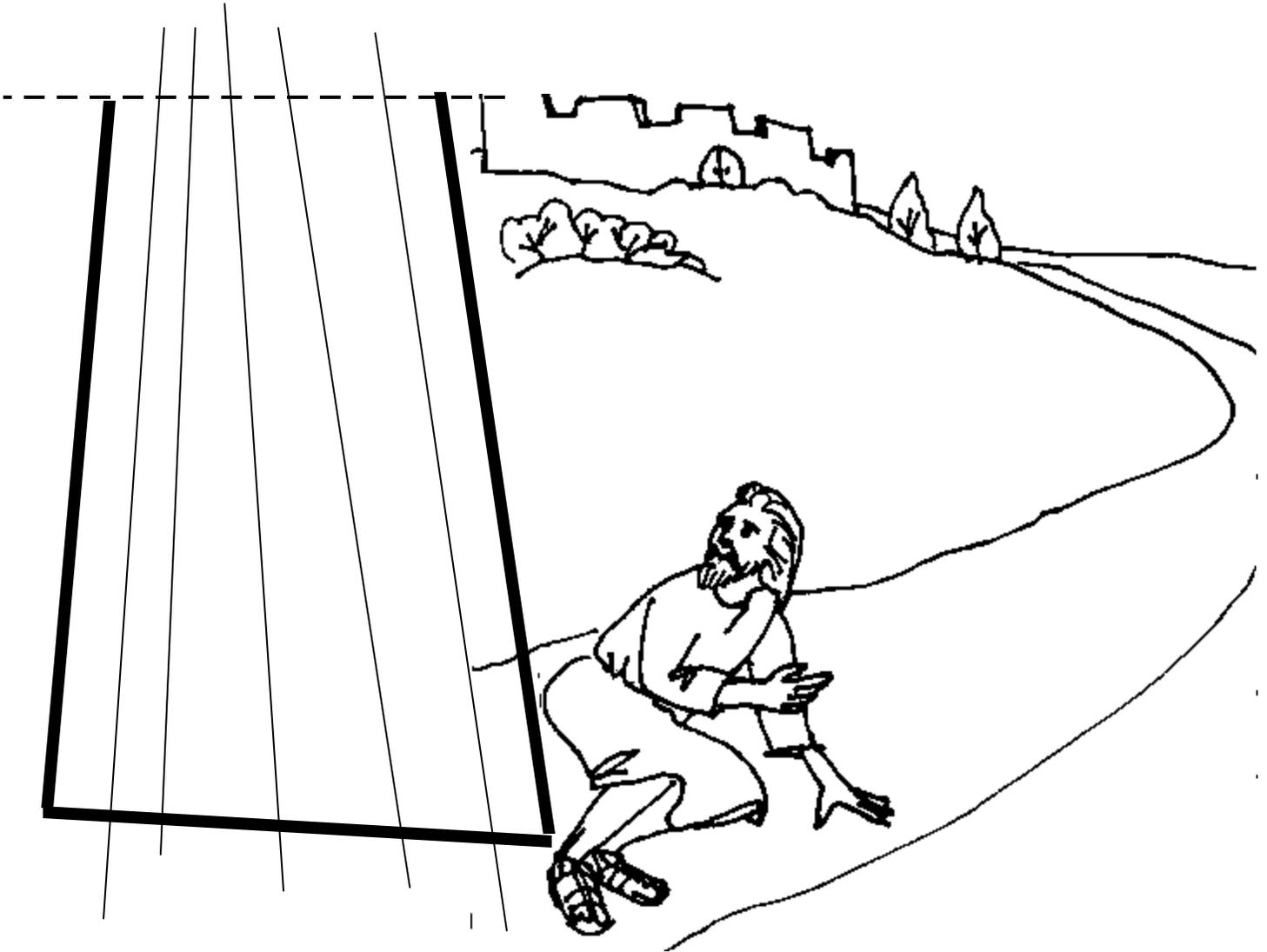
"Chief of Sinners Though I be" (TLH #342)

"Grace! 'Tis a Charming Sound" (TLH #374)

"My God, Accept My Heart this Day" (TLH #336)

The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1-19



“Saul, Saul, why are you trying to hurt me?”

Glue box here



The Story

Do you remember the young man who watched over the coats of the Jews who stoned Stephen? The man was named Saul. Saul had been brought up to love God, but he hated Jesus and would not believe that Jesus was God. Saul wanted to get rid of everyone who loved Jesus and talked about Him.

Saul went from house to house in Jerusalem hunting for men, women, and children who believed in Jesus. He dragged them off to jail. He hoped they would be killed for calling Jesus their God and Savior. Saul really thought that he was pleasing God by doing this!

The Christians were afraid to stay in Jerusalem, so many of them moved to the big city of Damascus. Saul heard about these Christians, so he made up his mind to get them, too. He was given permission from the high priest to bring them back to Jerusalem in chains. Saul got some strong men to help him, and they set out on the long trip to Damascus.

Suddenly, when Saul was almost to Damascus, a bright light flashed down from heaven. The light was so strong and bright that Saul fell down to the ground shaking with fear. Then, Saul heard a voice calling to him from heaven saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you trying to hurt me?"

Saul said, "Who are you, Lord?"

The voice said, "I AM JESUS, whom you are hurting."

What a shock for Saul! All this time he had hated Jesus. Now he knew the truth: Jesus is God!

Saul asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

Jesus said, "Get up and go into the city. There you will be told what you must do."

When the light had gone away, Saul was blind. His men had to lead him into the city by the hand. For three days Saul could see nothing.

In Damascus, there was a Christian man named Ananias. God called to Ananias in a vision saying, "Find a man here in the city named Saul. I want you to lay hands on him so that he may see again."

"But Lord, " said Ananias, "I have heard of Saul, and the terrible things he has done to Your believers in Jerusalem. He has come to Damascus to capture Christians and take them to prison, too."

But God said, "Go, for I have chosen Saul to be My special preacher who will take the good news of the Savior to many people."

So Ananias went to find Saul. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me to lay hands on you so that you may see again." When Ananias did this, Saul could see again! Then

Ananias baptized him and the Holy Ghost came into Saul's heart.

Saul was so happy to know the good news, that he went out and began telling all the people that Jesus was the Son of God, the Savior. The Jews couldn't believe what they were hearing! They said, "Isn't this the man who hunted and captured Christians at Jerusalem? Didn't he come here to find Christians and take them back to prison in Jerusalem?"

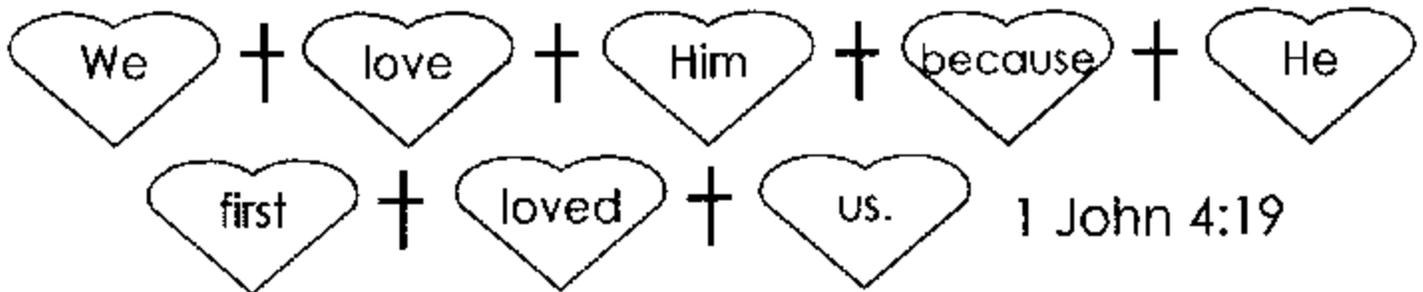
The more Saul preached, the more the Jews hated hearing about Jesus. The Jews decided to have

men watching for Saul at the city gates. There they would kill Saul as he tried to leave the city.

The Christians heard of this plan. One night, Saul's friends let him down through a hole in the city wall in a large basket. Saul escaped and went to Jerusalem.

God had made this wonderful change in Saul: faith in Jesus, his Savior from sin. Saul would no longer be Saul, the man who hated Jesus, but Paul, the man God chose to spread the news of Jesus all over the world!

Passage - Color each word a different color. Learn the passage.



Hymn

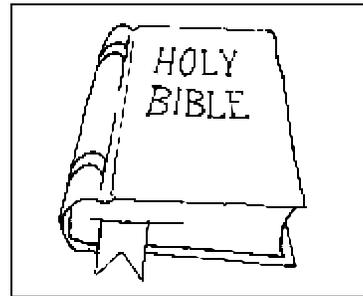
Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me;
Died that I might live on high,
Lived that I might never die.
As a branch is to the vine,
I am His and He is mine. TLH 342

Prayer

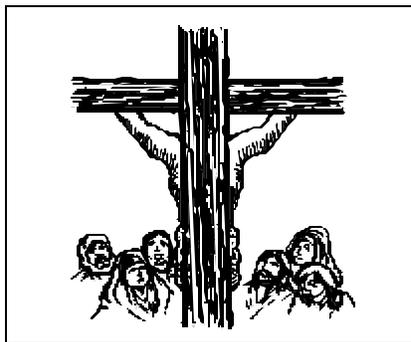
Dear Father, Thank You for bringing Jesus into our hearts through



and

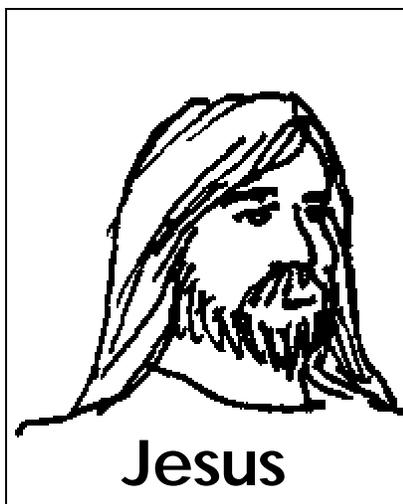


Thank You for
Amen.



Activity

- Color the picture on page 1. Carefully cut along the three dark lines. Fold along the one dashed line near the top of the flap you just made.
- Color the picture of Jesus below. Cut it out. Glue this picture onto page one behind the flap that lifts up.
- Cut out the word box below. Glue it to the bottom of page one.
- Use you finished page one to tell the story of how Saul became a Christian.



**Who talked from the bright light to
Saul as he was going to
Damascus? (Lift the flap and see.)**

The Conversion of Saul

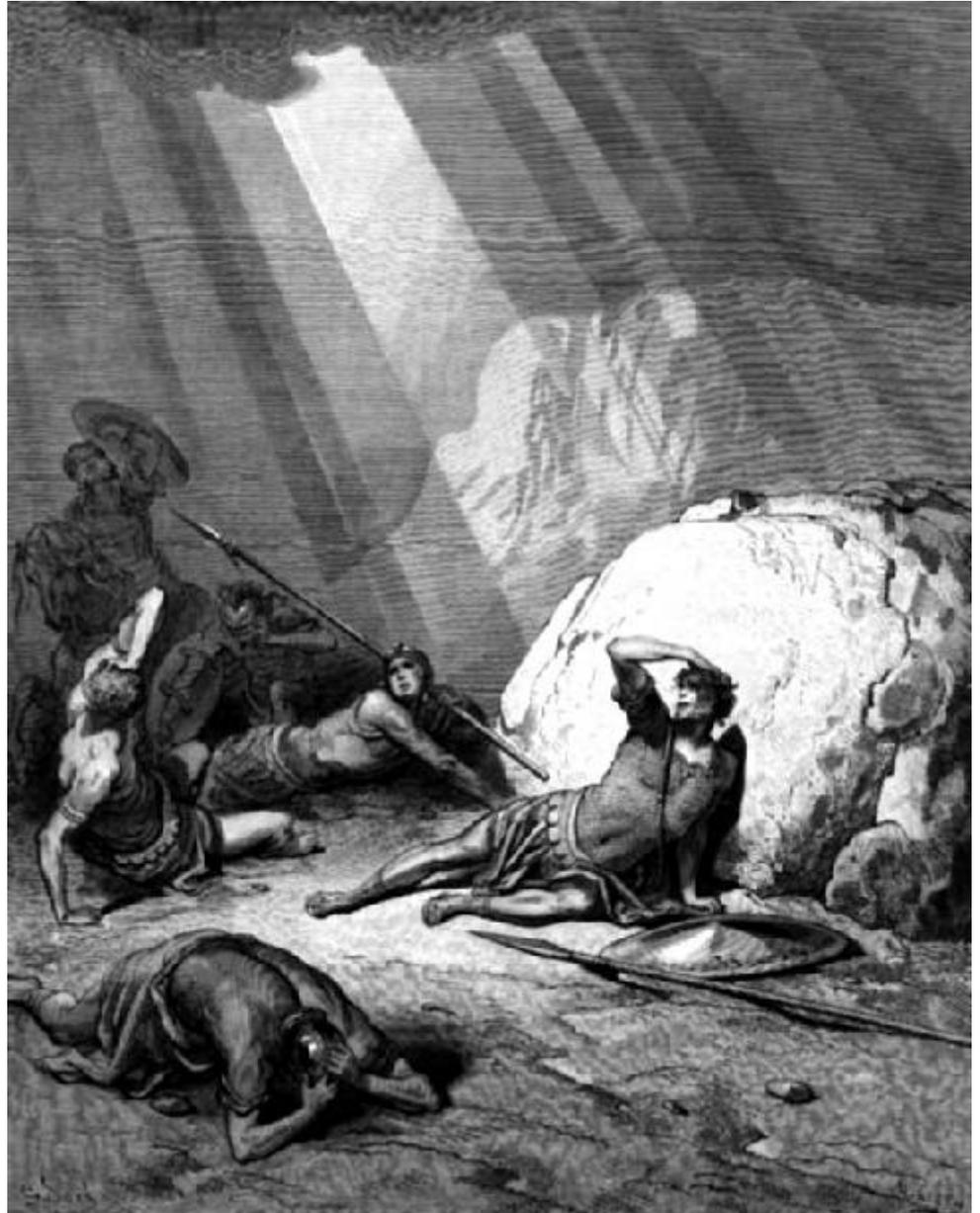
Acts 9:1-19

The Story

My name is Saul. I was born at Tarsus in Cilicia. I was born into the Jewish faith. I grew up in Jerusalem learning all of the Old Testament laws that were handed down through the generations. I was taught as a disciple of Gamaliel, and very devoted to the ways of God from the Old Testament laws, but I did not believe in Jesus, our Savior, at first.

You know that I had persecuted the Christians and that I had tried to wipe out the believers of Jesus. Because I was determined to follow the customs and traditions handed down by the Jewish leaders, I did more than any other to ruin the work of Jesus. I truly believed that I was doing the right thing, for I had been given the authority and

support of the High Priests. It was by their direction that I threw the followers of Christ into prison. I spoke in the synagogues against those that believed that Jesus is the



Savior. I did this within the city of Jerusalem, and I even hunted them down in other towns and places in the region.

It happened one day that I was going to Damascus to be about this very business; under the authority of the high priest I was looking for any who confessed Jesus so I could arrest them and bring them to Jerusalem. It was on that road to Damascus that a very intense light shone around me. The light was so bright it was greater than the power of the sun. As I fell to the ground in fear, I heard a voice call out to me, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

Then I answered and said, "Who are You, Lord?"

The Lord said to me, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads (*a pointed stick used to drive cattle.*)"

I began to tremble and in my astonishment I said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

The Lord told me to get up and go into the city and I would be told what I must do.

The men that were traveling with me were confused. They did not know what to say, for they had heard the voice as I had, but they could not see who was speaking.

When I got up off the ground and I opened my eyes, I could not see. The men that I was with led me by the hand into the city. There in

the city of Damascus I waited for three days. I could not see during that time, nor did I want to eat or drink.

While I was waiting in that condition, the Lord called upon a certain disciple of Jesus who was living in Damascus, Ananias. In a vision the Lord called, "Ananias."

Ananias said, "Here I am Lord."

The Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

Ananias was afraid because he knew about all the terrible things I had done to the Christians in Jerusalem. He knew I was coming to Damascus under the authority of the religious leaders of Jerusalem to bind those that confessed the name of Jesus. He spoke of these things to the Lord.

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."

Ananias followed the command of the Lord and went to the house where I was staying. He laid his hands on me and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you

may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Immediately there fell from my eyes something like scales, and I received my sight at once. I arose and was baptized.

After that I was given some food which allowed me to get my

strength back. I spent some time with the disciples there before I left the city of Damascus. I was no longer called Saul, but Paul.

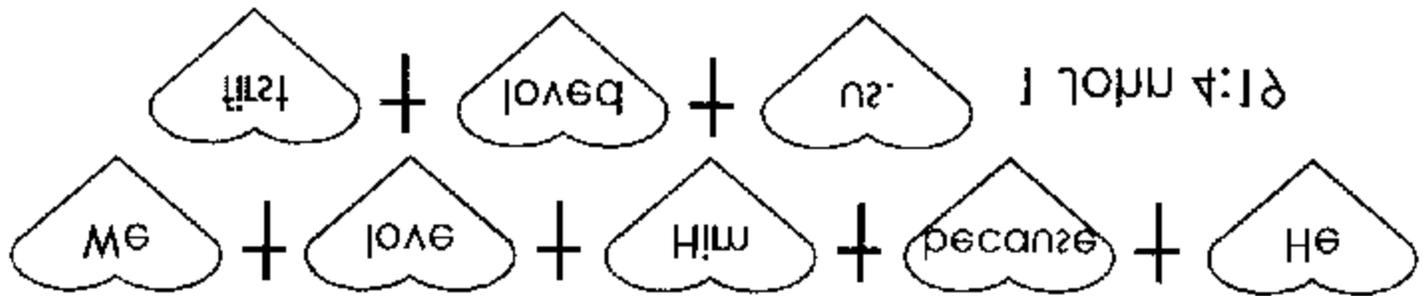
Truly it was the hand of God and His love that had chosen me, one who had once hated Jesus, to preach His Word to other people.

Review - Use the words in the box to fill in the blanks below.

Paul	Damascus	high priest	Ananias	blind
	Jesus	baptized	light	

1. Saul got permission from the _____ to capture Christians and put them in prison.
2. Saul went to _____ to capture more Christians.
3. When Saul was almost to the city a great _____ shone down from heaven.
4. _____ said, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”
5. When the light was gone, Saul was _____.
6. God sent _____ to Saul to lay hands on him and heal him.
7. Saul was then _____ and the Holy Spirit worked faith in his heart.
8. Now Saul’s name became _____.

Passage - Color each word a different color. Learn the passage.



Hymn

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me;
Died that I might live on high,
Lived that I might never die.
As a branch is to the vine,
I am His and He is mine. TLH #342 v.1

Prayer

Dear Jesus, We thank You that You rescued Saul and brought him to faith. Thank You for saving us from our sins and giving us faith through baptism and Your Word. Keep us strong in our faith until we see You in heaven. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

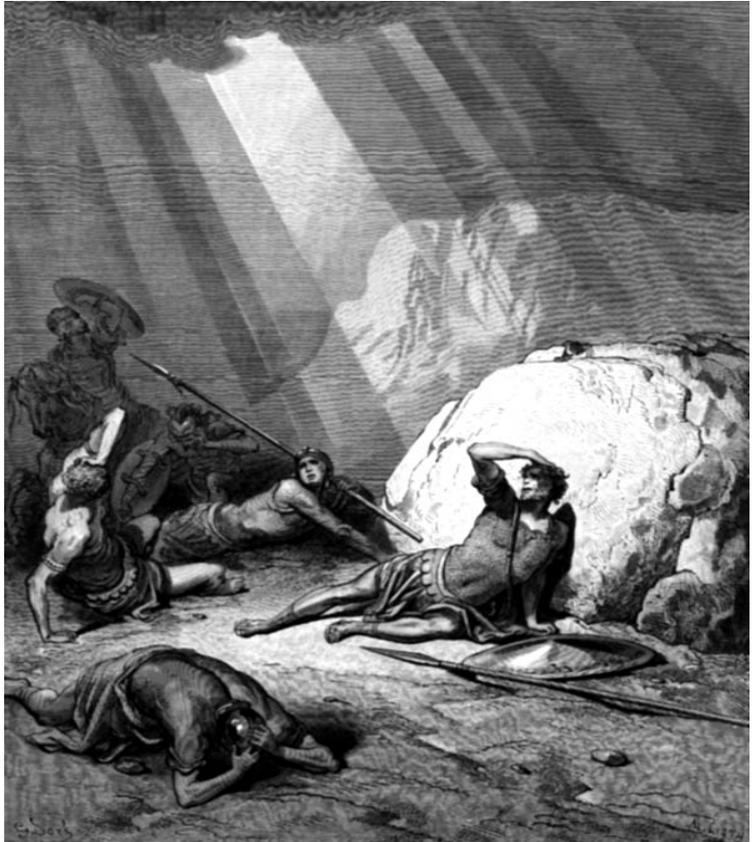
The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1-19

When the men stoned Stephen, they laid their coats at the feet of a young man. What was the name of that man?

What was that man busy doing to the Christians of that country?

How do you think Jesus felt about what that man was doing to His Church?



Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, thank You for calling us to faith through the work of the Holy Spirit in our baptism. Through the death of Jesus, Your Son, You have overlooked the sin in our hearts. Please continue to work upon the souls of unbelievers through the Holy Spirit in Your Word. Amen.

The Story - Acts 9:1-19

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest {2} 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.

{3} As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. {4} Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"



{5} And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads (*a pointed stick used to drive cattle*)."

{6} So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

{7} And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one.

{8} Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. {9} And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

{10} Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

{11} So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. {12} And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

{13} Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. {14}

And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

{15} 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. {16} For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

{17} And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." {18} Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. {19} So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Outer Aim

When God brought Saul to know Jesus as Savior, He also prepared him to be the great Christian apostle and missionary Paul.

Review - Write (T) rue or (F) alse for each of the following. If false, change the statement to make it true.

1. _____ Saul went to the city of Tarsus to find more Christians to persecute.
2. _____ Jesus appeared in a bright light to Saul and told him to wait in Damascus to be told what to do.
3. _____ Saul lost his voice after Jesus spoke to him.
4. _____ The Lord sent Ananias to Saul in Damascus.
5. _____ After Ananias talked to Saul, he received his sight.
6. _____ Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit because he ate and drank.

Questions

1. What does your Savior mean to you?
2. Describe how God might also allow you to suffer for Jesus' sake.
3. What will make you willing to suffer like that?
4. How will Jesus make you able to endure such persecution?

Hymn

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me;
Died that I might live on high,
Lived that I might never die.
As a branch is to the vine,
I am His and He is mine. TLH 342

Passages - Find and circle the words in dark print in the word search below.

I Corinthians 6:11 - "But you were **washed**, but you were **sanctified**, but you were **justified** in the name of the Lord **Jesus** and by the **Spirit** of our God."

1 Corinthians 15:10 - "By the **grace** of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain."

S A N C T I F I E D Y
P V R N Q B V T L Z O
I N J U S T I F I E D
R A E Z G B C N P S L
I L S U R X D R J L F
T Q U W A S H E D N G
D X S R C U I S R L V
Y O T S E Q Z Y W N B

Inner Aim

God's love is for all people, the Jew and the Gentile.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank You for changing my life by calling me out of darkness into light through my baptism. Please continue to strengthen my faith so that I will not be afraid to suffer for Your name's sake. Strengthen Your Church so that it may continue to grow even though the devil and the world continue to persecute It. May You do this for the sake of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

The Conversion of Saul

Acts 9:1-19



What is this man doing? If he is praying, to whom may this man be praying?

Will a false god be able to forgive his sins?

How will he find out about the True God?

Today we will read about Saul, who also was following the wrong religion. How did he find out about the True God?

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, thank You for calling us to faith through the work of the Holy Spirit in our baptism. Through the death of Jesus, Your Son, You have overlooked the sin in our hearts. Please continue to work faith in the souls of unbelievers through the Holy Spirit in Your Word. Amen.

The Story - Acts 9:1-19

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest {2} 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.

{3} As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. {4} Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

{5} And he said, "Who are You, Lord?"

Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for

you to kick against the goads (*a pointed stick used to drive cattle*)."

{6} So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

{7} And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one.

{8} Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. {9} And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.



{10} Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias."

And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

{11} So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. {12} And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

{13} Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. {14} And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

{15} 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. {16} For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

{17} And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

{18} Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. {19} So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Outer Aim - When God brought Saul to know Jesus as Savior, He also prepared him to be the great Christian apostle and missionary Paul.

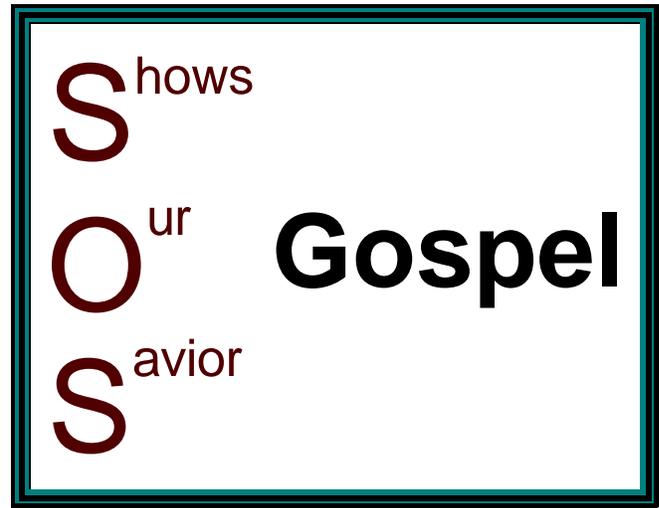
Review - Write the correct letter in the blank to complete this summary.

1. ____ asked to be allowed to capture Christians in ____.
 2. As he traveled there, a ____ came from heaven and a voice said, "Saul, Saul, why are you ____ Me?"
 3. Saul asked who was speaking, and the voice said, "I am ____."
 4. The Lord told Saul to go into the city and ____.
 5. Saul was then ____.
 6. ____ was told by the Lord to go to Saul.
 7. After Saul was able to see he was ____.
 8. Saul spent some days with the ____ at Damascus.
 9. He would later be known as ____.
- a. disciples
 - b. wait
 - c. light
 - d. Paul
 - e. Ananias
 - f. persecuting
 - g. blind
 - h. Saul
 - i. Damascus
 - j. Jesus
 - k. baptized

Inner Aim - God's love is for all people, the Jew and the Gentile.

Discussion - Discuss the following with your classmates and teacher.

- ◆ Describe the spiritual problem of everybody.
- ◆ What does the Law show us?
- ◆ When we realize we are sinful, what are we led to do?
- ◆ What does the Gospel then shows us?
- ◆ What Person of the Triune God works through the Bible to convert?
- ◆ When did you become a child of God?



Hymn

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me;
Died that I might live on high,
Lived that I might never die.
As a branch is to the vine,
I am His and He is mine.

Oh , the height of Jesus' love!
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity.
Love that found me - wondrous tho't!
Found me when I sought Him not. TLH 342 v. 1-2

Passages - Use the passages below to answer the questions.

1 Corinthians 6:11 - "But you were washed, but you were sanctified,
but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus
and by the Spirit of our God."

1 Timothy 1:15 - "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus
came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Ephesians 1:3-5 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...as
He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestined us
to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself,
according to the good pleasure of His will.

1. Underline the three words in the 1 Corinthian passage that tell what has happened to you because of Jesus and the working of the Holy Spirit.
2. What are you called by God in the 1 Timothy passage and Hymn 342, stanza 1?
3. According to God's Word in Ephesians 1, when were you chosen to be children of God?
4. Whose child were you before God brought you into His family?

Prayer

Dear Father, thank You for changing my life by calling me out of darkness into light through my baptism. Please continue to strengthen my faith so that I will not be afraid to suffer for Your name's sake. Strengthen Your Church so that it may continue to grow even though the devil and the world continue to persecute It. May You do this for the sake of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.