



Use Week of:

Unit 30 • Session 2

Paul Met Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Acts 8–9

STORY POINT:

Jesus saved Paul and chose him to spread the gospel.

KEY PASSAGE:

Colossians 1:18

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.

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LEADER Bible Study

Saul was no stranger to religion. He grew up in a religious household. He was a devout Jew who was born in Tarsus (Phil. 3:5) and inherited his Roman citizenship from his father. So when people began talking about this man named Jesus and claiming that He was the promised Messiah, Saul was defensive.

Saul believed strongly in the Jewish faith of his ancestors. He violently persecuted God's church and tried to destroy it. (Gal. 1:13-14) He dragged believers from their houses and put them in prison. He approved of the stoning of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Saul thought he was doing the right thing by defending Judaism, but God's purposes could not be stopped. As Saul was on his way to arrest believers in Damascus, the Lord stopped him in his tracks.

Jesus revealed Himself to Saul, and Saul was never the same. He was struck blind and led into Damascus, where a believer named Ananias placed his hands on Saul. Suddenly, Saul could see again. Saul was convinced that Jesus is Lord. Saul later described the experience as being like dying and receiving a new life. (Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:17)

God had a purpose and a plan for Saul. He had set Saul apart before Saul was even born. (Gal. 1:15) God said, "This man is my chosen instrument to take my name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites" (Acts 9:15).

Jesus changed Saul's life. As you teach kids, clarify that conversion happens when a person recognizes his sin, repents, believes in Jesus, and confesses Jesus as Savior and Lord. Jesus changes a person's heart, and as a result, his life is changed too.

Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus called Saul, who was once an enemy of Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The BIBLE Story

Paul Met Jesus

Acts 8–9

After Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, people in Jerusalem who believed in Jesus were persecuted, or **treated cruelly because of their faith**. One of Jesus' followers, Stephen, was even killed. **A man named Saul** had watched in approval

when Stephen was killed. **Saul wanted to put an end to the church. He went into the believers' homes, dragged them out, and put them in jail.** Many believers fled the city.

Saul headed to Damascus to arrest believers there, but on the way, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him. Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

"Who are You, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus," He replied. "Get up and go into the city. Then you will be told what you must do."

Saul got up and opened his eyes, but he couldn't see! So the men who were traveling with Saul led him by the hand into

Damascus.

Ananias (an uh NIGH uhs), a disciple of Jesus, lived in Damascus. **The Lord** spoke to Ananias in a vision. He **told Ananias to go to the**



house where Saul was staying. Ananias knew that Saul had hurt many believers and that he arrested anyone who believed in Jesus. But **the Lord said, “Go! I have chosen this man to take my name to Gentiles, kings, and Israelites.”**

Ananias obeyed. He found Saul and told Saul that Jesus had sent him to help. Ananias **put his hands on Saul, and Saul could see again.** Saul got up and was baptized. For the next few days, Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus. He **began to go to the synagogues to preach about Jesus.** Saul told the people, “Jesus is the Son of God!”

The people were amazed. They recognized Saul and knew he had wanted to put an end to the church. Now he was one of them! **The Jews did not like Saul’s message. They planned to kill him, so one night Saul left the city.** The disciples helped Saul escape by lowering him down the city wall in a basket.

Saul was also known as Paul.

Christ Connection: Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) Jesus called Paul, who was once an enemy to Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust in Jesus.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use lighting effects:** Stand in a spotlight as you tell of Paul’s encounter with Jesus on the road. Turn off the spotlight after Paul’s encounter.
- **Vary your voice:** Speak with a strong, loud voice for Jesus’ words. Use a trembling, quieter voice for Saul.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Paul Met Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 8–9

STORY POINT: Jesus saved Paul and chose him to spread the gospel.

KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:18

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about a time they met someone famous, or share whom they would like to meet. How did they react or how do they think they would react?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Paul’s Encounter” activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete “Paul’s Encounter” on the activity page. Guide kids to color the spaces according to the key.
SAY • This man’s name is Paul. He was also known as Saul. How do you think he’s feeling in this picture? [*Allow kids to respond.*] In today’s Bible story, we’ll find out what surprising encounter he had as he traveled to a city called Damascus.

LOW PREP

- blindfold (optional)

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Who are you?

Ask for a volunteer to stand at the front with his or her eyes closed. (You may choose to use a blindfold to help prevent cheating.) Quietly tap the shoulder of another kid to walk

up to the volunteer. The volunteer should say, “Who are you?” and the kid should try to disguise his or her voice and say, “I am ... ” and name another kid in the room. Allow the volunteer two tries to guess the real identity. Play additional rounds with new volunteers.

SAY • In today’s Bible story, a man heard a voice while on a journey. He asked, “Who are you?” and got a response that changed his life forever!

OPTION 2: Blinded

Set up obstacles in an open space. Arrange chairs or cones. You may tape paper to the floor as obstacles to avoid.

• blindfolds
• obstacles (chairs, cones, and so on)

Guide kids to form pairs and stand at one side of the room. One player in each pair should put on a blindfold. His partner will guide him through the obstacle course using only verbal instructions; the partner may not touch the blindfolded player. After kids move through the obstacles, pairs should switch roles and go again.

SAY • Everyday tasks become so much harder when you can’t see, right? In today’s story, we will learn about a man who was blinded by the Lord so that he could finally see the truth about Jesus.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 8–9

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KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:18

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• whistle
• soccer ball
• clipboard

[Leader enters wearing a polo shirt with a whistle around his or her neck, carrying a soccer ball and clipboard.]

LEADER • Welcome back, team! We had a great first week together, so we're diving head first into more strategies to build our team unity.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

This week's focus is on vision. That includes our actual vision—our eyesight—as well as our purpose and goals. Everyone knows we can't play soccer well when we can't see what's in front of us. We can run drills to improve our eye coordination, but we also we can't work together as a team toward our common mission if we don't have a vision for where we're going. We have to keep the big picture in mind.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • We talked last week about how we're learning lessons from the early church and applying them

to our team. Do you remember our big picture question? *Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.* Because the early church knew their purpose, they had vision for where they were going. We can do the same today.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. · Giant Timeline

LEADER • Last week, we met Philip—a man who was obedient to the Holy Spirit and shared Jesus’ love everywhere he went. Today, we’re meeting a man named Saul. He was also known as Paul. So when you hear the name *Saul* or *Paul*, remember we are talking about the same man.

Saul had a huge vision problem, the goal and purpose-related kind. You could say he had “blindness” on. He wasn’t seeing the big picture correctly from God’s perspective.

Well, that led to an even bigger vision problem for Saul, the eyesight kind. Listen and see what you can learn from Saul’s experience so we can identify the “blindness” in our own lives.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 8. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Paul Met Jesus.”

LEADER • Saul was a very focused man who thought he was doing the right thing. He would have told you he knew exactly what his purpose was in life. What

- Bibles
- “Paul Met Jesus” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

was his purpose for the trip to Damascus? Can someone read for us Acts 9:1-2? [*Choose a volunteer to read the verses and answer.*] Saul had his sight set on Christians to wipe them out! But whose sight was set on Saul? Would someone read Acts 9:5-6? [*Choose a volunteer to read the verses and answer.*]

Jesus had a different plan for Saul's life—a better plan that would completely change his direction. Jesus got Saul's attention by taking away his eyesight. When God used Ananias to heal Saul, Saul not only got his eyesight back, he got a new vision for life. His entire purpose changed. Who can tell me what other name Saul was known by? (*Paul*) That's right. **Jesus saved Paul and chose him to spread the gospel.**

I wonder what the people traveling with Paul thought. He was a totally different person after this. It took a while for people to believe that Paul had really changed. But when he proved that he wasn't going back to his old life, he began to experience the very persecution he helped start. I'm sure he was thankful for new friends who helped him escape Damascus.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 181 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus has a plan and purpose for each of our lives, and He wants us to live out that plan. So Jesus appeared to Saul and changed him inside and out. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Jesus called Paul, who was once an enemy to Christians, to spend the rest of his life telling people the gospel and leading them to trust in Jesus.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 30, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about when they first trusted in Jesus. Do they remember the experience? Guide them to discuss how their life is different since trusting in Jesus.

If kids do not yet follow Jesus, suggest they think about someone they know who trusts in Him.

• “Unit 30, Session 2”
questions from kids
video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the photos around the room and invite kids to “meet” the missionaries by walking around to look at the photos. Ask volunteers to introduce the missionaries by reading the captions. If you have a world map, find the countries or regions where the missionaries serve.

LEADER • Jesus saved Paul from his sins and chose him

to spread the gospel. These missionaries were also chosen by Jesus for a special task of living in another country and telling the people there about Jesus.

Pray for the featured missionaries as well as any missionaries your church supports. Thank God for the missionaries who spread the gospel.

• “Missionaries Around
the World” printable
• world map (optional)

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Colossians 1:18. Review any motions created in the previous session.

LEADER • The end of this passage talks about giving Jesus

first place in everything. If Jesus is your first priority, you will never have a “vision” problem. He will always show you where He wants you to go.

Lead boys and girls in singing “First Place In Everything (Colossians 1:18).”

• Key Passage Poster
• “First Place In
Everything
(Colossians 1:18)”
song

- "This Is Where the Mission Begins" song
- Bible

Sing (4 minutes)

Open your Bible and read aloud Jeremiah 29:13.

LEADER • God promises that we will find Him when we seek Him. Let's spend some time worshiping Him now and seeking His plan and purpose for our lives. Sing together "This Is Where the Mission Begins."

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Jesus, thank You for knowing exactly where we are and how to get our attention. We pray You will change our hearts like You did Saul's. We want to follow You all the days of our lives, telling others about Your love so they can trust You too. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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KEY PASSAGE: Colossians 1:18

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- flashlight or laser pointer

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Colossians 1:18 together.

Shine a flashlight on the words of the key passage poster while the group reads them aloud. Pass the flashlight around so each kid has a turn to shine it on the passage while everyone reads together.

SAY • A great way to keep our sight set on Jesus is to memorize God's Word. Let's keep working together as a group to memorize this verse and keep Jesus first in our lives.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Acts 8. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 8:1.

SAY • Because Christians were being persecuted and attacked in Jerusalem, many of them went north. This is how Christians ended up in Damascus and why Saul was traveling there.

Point out the location of Damascus (A8) on the New Testament Israel Map. Show how it is north of Jerusalem. Explain that Damascus was a very old city. During the

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

time of King David, it was part of the land of Israel, but it belonged to Syria in Paul's day.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why was Ananias nervous about going to Saul? *Help kids recognize Ananias knew what Saul had done in Jerusalem and why he had come to Damascus.*
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 9:13-14.)
2. What happened to Saul because Ananias obeyed God? *Help kids recognize that Saul received his sight, but he also received Jesus as his Savior. Saul followed in baptism and learned from the Christians in Damascus.*
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Acts 9:18-19.)
3. Why should we be like Ananias, willing to obey even if we're scared or nervous? *Help kids recognize that nothing is impossible with God, so we can trust Him when He tells us to do something.*
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Mark 10:27)

SAY • Jesus saved Paul and chose him to spread the gospel. Jesus has a plan for your life too! He wants to save you and use you to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Missionary tools

Form small groups or pairs and give one missionary tool to each group. Ask kids to brainstorm how a missionary might use that tool to spread the gospel. For example, a garden tool might be used by a missionary who teaches someone how to grow food.

After a few minutes, invite each group to share the tool and ideas for how that tool might be used in missions.

LOW PREP

• "Missionary Tools"
printable

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

SAY • Missionaries around the world use many different tools to serve people and spread the gospel. But the Bible is the most important tool. [*Hold up a Bible.*] Missionaries want people to know that the Word of God teaches us how to know Jesus and be saved. The Holy Spirit can use any tool a missionary has to point people to Jesus.

Let's say our big picture question and answer: ***Why does the church exist? The church exists to glorify God by worshiping Him, showing His love, and telling others about Jesus.***

OPTION 2: Story in pictures

- large sheets of paper
- markers or crayons
- Bibles

Form small groups of kids. Assign each group a scene from the story. Challenge them to illustrate their scene as best they can. When groups finish, invite them to present their scenes in chronological order to retell the story.

Scene suggestions:

- Christians leaving Jerusalem (Acts 8:1)
- Saul traveling on the road (Acts 9:3)
- Saul's encounter with Jesus (Acts 9:4-6)
- Ananias hearing from God (Acts 9:10-16)
- Ananias going to Saul (Acts 9:17-19)
- Saul preaching in the synagogues (Acts 9:20-22)
- Saul escaping Damascus in a basket (Acts 9:23-25)

SAY • What scene or part of today's story stands out to you the most? [*Allow kids to explain why they like that particular part of the story.*]

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Jesus changed Saul's life. **Jesus saved Paul and chose him to spread the gospel.** When people recognize their sin, repent, and believe in Jesus, Jesus changes their hearts. As a result, their lives are

changed too! This is the most important decision you can ever make.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for giving us His Word so we can see with our eyes and our hearts what His plan is for our lives.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Key Word Matching" on the activity page. Kids should match each word with the correct definition or description.

• pencils
• Journal Page
• "Key Word Matching"
activity page,
1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.