



Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus Acts 9:1-20

Five- and six-year-olds understand the concept of change. They can comprehend such changes as a baby growing into a young child, the colors yellow and blue mixing to make green, or ice melting. Help children broaden their understanding of change by teaching them that Jesus changes us on the inside. Help children see that Jesus can change bad behavior or the way someone feels, and Jesus can change a bad or broken heart.



► Bible Point


Jesus changes our lives.

Key Verse

“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will tell others that Jesus changes our lives.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 10 min.</i>	Welcoming Song Sing a song welcoming all their classroom friends.	CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Prayer Changes Things Match pictures of things that have changed.	Bible, scissors Teacher Pack: Changes Cards	Cut the cards along the lines.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 20 min.</i>	Theo's News Find out what a flashlight has to do with the Bible story.	CD player, Surprise Box, Theo puppet, flashlight Teacher Pack: CD	Place the flashlight in the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.
	Bible Time Act out the Bible story.	Bible, 1 flashlight, 1 blindfold per 3 children, 1 heart-shaped sticker per child Teacher Pack: “Saul Meets Jesus” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	

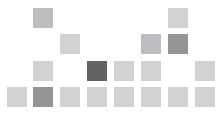
Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> (Choose 2 centers.)</p>	<p>Center 1: The Many Faces of Saul Make puppets and retell the story of Saul.</p>	My Bible Playground, scissors, glue sticks, 1 craft stick per child	Remove the Lesson 7 pages from each My Bible Playground student book. Cut the slit on each child's paper, and cut off the bottom corner with the Saul puppet.
	<p>Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes Decorate cupcakes to look like flashlights as reminders of the bright light Saul saw.</p>	boxed cake mix and ingredients to prepare it, flat-bottomed ice cream cones, yellow frosting, plastic knives, muffin tins	Prepare the cake mix batter. Fill flat-bottomed ice cream cones about three-quarters of the way to the top, and then place these in muffin tins to prevent them from tipping over. Bake at the time and temperature suggested in the directions for cupcakes on the cake mix box.
	<p>Center 3: Clean Again Make sand sculptures, and then wash their hands.</p>	newspaper, basins of sand, cups, smocks, water, paper towels	
	<p>Center 4: Changed Colors Paint a picture from today's story, mixing colors to make new colors.</p>	newspaper, washable paints, shallow containers, paintbrushes, white construction paper, smocks	Cover the working area with newspaper.
<p style="text-align: center;">5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 5 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Playground	
	<p>"Thank You for Changing Me" Prayer Do an action prayer.</p>		
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.





Saul Meets Jesus Near Damascus

Acts 9:1-20

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Saul Encounters Jesus on the Damascus Road

Saul was traveling to Damascus to arrest Christians when Jesus met him on the road. A light he later described as “brighter than the sun” (Acts 26:13) flashed out of heaven, and he dropped to the ground. When Jesus questioned Saul, Saul’s question in return was genuine. The term *lord* can refer simply to a person of superior standing. It seems that Saul really didn’t know who was addressing him. When Jesus told him who he was, the truth of all that had happened must have swept through Saul like a flood. All that Saul had believed about Jesus was wrong, and in his zeal for God, he had been persecuting those who believed what was true!

Blinded Saul Is Told to Wait for Instructions

It’s interesting that Jesus told Saul that he was to go into the city and wait for instructions and that Saul was blinded and remained that way as he waited in Damascus for three days. We can only speculate on what went through Saul’s mind during that time, but he must have been going through all the Old Testament Scriptures stored in his memory, sorting out how Jesus could be the Messiah in spite of Saul’s earlier belief. God gave him time to think!

Ananias Helps Saul

Saul’s meeting with Ananias introduces another aspect of the story. Imagine the faith it took for Ananias to seek out the man he probably knew was coming to town to arrest him and other Christians. How better could the Christians there and around Judea have found out about the change in Saul? God definitely knows what he is doing!

Why did God choose Saul? God could have used anyone. Perhaps he chose Saul to be a supreme example of how a life can be changed when God enters it. It is often suggested that Saul of Tarsus became Paul after this conversion. The truth is that “Saul” was his Jewish name but “Paul” was the Roman equivalent by which he became better known.

The Jesus Connection

Maybe you haven’t experienced that kind of “Road to Damascus” conversion, and that’s okay. The road that brought you to a relationship with Jesus doesn’t matter. What is important is whether or not you are making the most of your journey with him.

Think of one person you can share your Lord with. Pray that God will help you show that person the light. You can write your prayer here.





Welcoming Song Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "We Welcome You
to Church Today"
(track 15)

Prayer Changes Things Supplies

Bible

scissors

Teacher Pack

Changes Cards

Prayer Changes Things Easy Prep

Cut the cards along the
lines.

1 GETTING STARTED

Welcoming Song



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each child and welcome him or her with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to bring the children together in a circle.

Play "We Welcome You to Church Today" (track 15 on the CD) to the tune of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Tell the children to stand up and greet each other as they sing and march around the room. Encourage the children to shake hands with one another when they sing the words "We welcome you to church today."



We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today, hurrah, hurrah!
We welcome you to church today.
We're here to worship and to pray
As we sing together,
Learning about God's love.
(Repeat 2x.)

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Prayer Changes Things

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible is found in James 5:16. It says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." This means that prayer is powerful.** Show children the words in your Bible, and then lead them in saying the adapted version of the Key Verse together: **Prayer is powerful.**

Prayer is powerful because when we talk to God, he listens to us and answers our prayers. Prayer changes things. Let's play a matching game with these cards.





Some of the pictures show things that are old or broken, and some of the pictures show things that have been repaired or are new. Let's match each old or broken item to a new item. When you find the matching card say, "Prayer is powerful."



Place the matching cards face down on the floor, and spread the cards out. Let children take turns trying to match the items. When a child finds the correct match, have him or her repeat the Key Verse.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How does prayer change things?
- How has talking to God changed something for you?

Say: **Prayer is powerful because when we pray, God hears us and can change things.**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Theo's News

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Friends, it's time for Theo's News!** Have the children sit in a circle. Then begin "Here, Theo" (track 3 on the CD). When the CD segment ends, bring out the Surprise Box, and put the Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet on your hand. Then follow along with the script.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's nice to see you today! Tell us what interesting news you've dug up about our Bible story.

Theo: It's something bright and fun! I hid it in the Surprise Box.

Teacher: Let's look inside to see what Theo dug up for us today.

(Choose a child to open the Surprise Box, and have kids pass the flashlight around the circle. Give the children time to guess what the Bible story might be about.)

Teacher: What happens when we turn the flashlight on?

(Pause while children respond.)

Teacher: Theo, why did you put a flashlight in our Surprise Box?

Theo: In today's Bible story, a man named Saul saw a very bright light.

Teacher: Let's pay attention to our story and see what happened.

Theo: It's time for me to go. Have a good time today, boys and girls!

Teacher: Let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Theo's News Supplies

- CD player
- Surprise Box (any box will do)
- Theo puppet
- flashlight
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "Here, Theo" (track 3)

Theo's News Easy Prep

Place the flashlight inside the Surprise Box, and hide the box where it's easily accessible.





Bible Time Supplies

Bible
 1 flashlight
 1 blindfold per
 3 children
 1 heart-shaped sticker
 per child
Teacher Pack
 “Saul Meets Jesus”
 poster (from the Big
 Bible Poster Pack)

Bible Time

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Clear a large area of your room, and then have children form groups of three and line up against a wall. Hang the “Saul Meets Jesus” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) on the opposite wall at a height the children can easily reach. Open your Bible to Acts 9:1-20, and show the children the words.

Say: **Today’s Bible story tells about a man named Saul and shows us that**

► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** Choose one person in each group to be Saul, and have the other two be Saul’s friends. **Saul was a man who put Christians in jail and hurt Christians because he didn’t believe in Jesus.**

Saul and his friends were on the way to a city called Damascus. Point to the opposite side of the room, and tell kids to pretend that the wall is the city of Damascus. Have children start to walk towards the wall. **Suddenly a bright light appeared, and Saul fell to the ground.** Have the children fall to the ground. Turn on the flashlight and point it toward the children’s faces. Have the children cover their eyes as if blinded by the bright light. Have the children who are playing Saul kneel.

Saul heard a voice say, “Saul, why are you hurting me? I am Jesus. You are hurting me when you hurt my people.” Then Jesus continued, “Saul, go into the city and I will tell you what to do.” Saul got up from the ground—but he was blind and confused. Blindfold the children who are pretending to be Saul. Then have the other group members spin each Saul around three or four times.

Jesus wanted Saul to show love instead of hurting others. Jesus changed Saul’s life. I want those who are blindfolded to try to put a heart on the picture of Saul. Give each blindfolded child a heart-shaped sticker. Tell the friends in each group not to help Saul but to also make sure the child doesn’t run into or trip over anything.

Give other children a chance to play Saul. Have groups go to the middle of the meeting area, switch roles, blindfold the new Saul, and spin him or her around three or four times. If you have time, continue the game until each child has had a chance to play Saul.

Say: **Saul’s men had to help him walk to Damascus.** As the last child in each group pretends to be Saul, have the groups each lead that child over to the wall.

Ask:

- **What was it like to find your way to the poster?**
- **How do you think Saul felt after he was blinded?**

Say: **The story doesn’t end when Saul reached the city. God sent a man named Ananias to help Saul. Ananias prayed for Saul, and Saul was able to see again! God opened Saul’s eyes.**

Have children remove the blindfolds.





Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How do you think Saul felt when he could see again?
- What do you think happened to Saul after that?

Say: **Saul completely changed! He became a Christian. He stopped hurting Christians and started teaching others about Jesus. Jesus changed Saul's life, and**
▶ JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.



4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

The Many Faces of Saul

What You'll Do

Let the children each fold the puppet from their student pages in half so Saul can be seen on both sides; then have them glue the puppet onto a craft stick. Let the children work in pairs and use their puppets to retell the story.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did Saul act like before he heard Jesus' voice?
- How did Saul change after he heard Jesus' voice?
- How can Jesus change us?

Say: **Saul was angry and mean at the beginning of our story. Once he let Jesus into his life, he became a changed man. Saul was happy to tell others about Jesus.**
▶ JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES, too. Jesus loves us and wants to help us change.

Center 1: The Many Faces of Saul Supplies

My Bible Playground
scissors
glue sticks
1 craft stick per child

Center 1: The Many Faces of Saul Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson
7 pages from each
My Bible Playground
student book. Cut the
slit on each child's
paper, and cut off the
bottom corner with the
Saul puppet.





Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes Supplies

boxed cake mix and ingredients to prepare it
flat-bottomed ice cream cones
yellow frosting
plastic knives
muffin tins

Center 2: Flashlight Cupcakes Easy Prep

Prepare the cake mix batter. Fill flat-bottomed ice cream cones about three-quarters of the way to the top, and then place these in muffin tins to prevent them from tipping over. Bake at the time and temperature suggested in the directions for cupcakes on the cake mix box.

! ALLERGY ALERT

Center 3: Clean Again Supplies

newspaper
basins of sand
cups
smocks
water
paper towels

CENTER 2:

Flashlight Cupcakes

What You'll Do

Have children wash their hands (or use wet wipes). Provide bowls of yellow frosting and plastic knives. Let each child frost a cupcake cone, and then children can pretend these are edible flashlights. Before children eat their snacks, review the Bible story and remind children of the bright light that shone onto Saul.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's the brightest light you can think of?
- How did Jesus change Saul?
- How can Jesus change you?

Say: **When Jesus stopped Saul with that bright light, he changed Saul's life.**

► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES, too.**

CENTER 3:

Clean Again

What You'll Do

Cover the work area with newspaper, and give kids smocks to wear. Set out small plastic cups and several dishpans or similar containers of wet sand. Encourage the children to mold the sand into sand houses, sand animals, or other creative sand sculptures. After a few minutes, compliment children on their sculptures. Then have children remove most of the sand from their hands by rubbing their hands together.

Say: **Even though you've wiped off your hands, they're still a little dirty, aren't they? When we do wrong things, we can't make our hearts new on our own again, but God can make our hearts new.**

Let kids rinse their hands with water and dry their hands with the paper towels.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did the water make your hands clean again?
- How does Jesus make us clean and new again?





Say: ► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** When our hearts are dirty from the wrong things we do, Jesus makes our hearts clean again.

■ **CENTER 4:**

Changed Colors

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children form pairs. Give each pair two large paintbrushes and a large sheet of white construction paper. Have each child wear a smock or old shirt while painting. Have pairs mix the colors on their papers to paint a picture of today's Bible story. Encourage children to notice how the colors change when they are mixed.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- How did your partner change your picture?
- How can we let Jesus change our lives?

Say: **The colors changed into new colors when we mixed them. If you mix yellow and blue paint together, you'll make green paint. That's kind of like what Jesus does for us. When Jesus comes into our lives, we're changed for the better.**

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up the centers, sit with kids in a circle on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they enjoyed learning from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge to encourage your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: Today we learned that ► **JESUS CHANGES OUR LIVES.** I'd like each of you to choose one of these Daily Challenges to trust Jesus to change your life.



Center 4: Changed Colors Supplies

- newspaper
- washable paints
- shallow containers
- paintbrushes
- white construction paper
- smocks

Center 4: Changed Colors Easy Prep

Cover the working area with newspaper.

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Playground





Give kids these three Daily Challenge ideas to choose from:

1. **Each night when you change into your pajamas, thank Jesus for changing your life!**
2. **Draw a picture of something Jesus has changed about you. Then say a prayer, thanking Jesus for changing your life.**
3. **Bring a sick friend some soup, and let your friend know you care about him or her. Tell your friend that Jesus helps us feel better and can change our lives.**

Say: **If you want to pray at night, circle choice number 1. If you want to draw a picture, circle choice number 2. If you want to bring soup to a friend, circle choice number 3.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Playground page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

“Thank You for Changing Me” Prayer

What You’ll Do

Help the children say the following prayer and do the motions.

Thank you, Jesus, for changing me (*fold hands in prayer, and then turn around*)

And helping me do what I should. (*Nod head.*)

Open my eyes so I can see (*use fingers to hold eyes open wide*)

How to be kind and good. (*Cross arms and smile.*)

In your name, amen.

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Playground book pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment throughout the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.