

References

Acts 9:10-19; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 115-122



Memory Verse

"This man is my chosen instrument" (Acts 9:15, NIV).

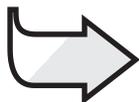


Objectives

The children will:
Know that God's grace can change people.

Feel thankful that God's love can change hearts.

Respond by asking God to change our hearts to have love for Him and others.



The Message

God's love changes people.

Now I See!

Monthly Theme

God never stops loving us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus appears to Saul and tells him He is sending Ananias to restore Saul's sight. Then Jesus speaks to Ananias and tells him to go to Saul. At first Ananias hesitates, aware of Saul's reputation and his persecution mission to Damascus. But Jesus assures Ananias that He has chosen Saul for a mighty work. Ananias goes to Saul and addresses him as "Brother." God uses Ananias to heal Saul. Ananias promises that Saul will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

This is a lesson about grace.

God's grace operated in the life of Saul, not only to stop him from persecuting the believers, but also to transform him into a champion of what he had originally been fighting. Ananias also serves as an example of grace when he accepts Saul into the family of believers by calling him "Brother." God's grace still works in the lives of sinners today.

Teacher Enrichment

"When, in the midst of his blind error and prejudice, Saul was given a revelation of the Christ whom he was persecuting, he was placed in direct communication with the church, which is the light of the world. In this case Ananias represents Christ, and also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth, who are appointed to act in His stead. In Christ's stead Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ's stead he places his hands upon him, and, as he prays in Christ's name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the authority of Christ. Christ is the fountain; the church is the channel of communication" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 122).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 6.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>B Is for Bubbles</i> B. <i>Trust Fall</i> C. <i>Blindfold Walk</i>	small containers of bubble mixture, thin wire none blindfolds
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> simple offering device relating to the field of mission emphasis chalkboard/whiteboard, chalk/ marker
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costumes, piece of fruit, table and chairs, tape recorder beanbag or wadded paper Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>God's Love Changes People</i>	paper, pencils or markers, transparent sheets
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Loving Unlovely People</i>	paper, pencils, scissors

***Prayer and Praise me be used at any time during the program.**

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Listen to last week’s memory verse and encourage the children to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- small containers of bubble mixture
- thin wire

Bubble Mixture Recipe

Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup detergent with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water.

To make bigger bubbles, increase the amount of detergent. To create longer-lasting bubbles, add the same proportion of sugar or gelatin or glycerin as that of the detergent. Make wands from thin pieces of wire twisted into a circular shape.

A. B Is for Bubbles

Distribute small containers of bubble mixture. Say: **Let’s see who can blow the most bubbles at once, and who can blow the biggest bubble.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think God made bubbles?** Accept any answer. **I’m not sure why, but I like to think it’s just because He loves us. Bubbles are like a free gift. You don’t do anything to deserve a gift. All you have to do is take it. What other things does God give us just because He loves us?** (beautiful flowers, tasty food, twinkling stars, rainbows, good smells, our families) **All of these things show us God’s grace. Saul experienced God’s grace in an unusual way. Today we are going to hear more about Saul. Our message for today is:**



GOD’S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

Say that with me.

B. Trust Fall

Have the children line up. Say: **Today we are going to learn about trusting. I want you to come to me one at a time. You are to stand with your back toward me. When I say “Go,” I want you to relax, keep your body straight, and fall backward and let me catch you.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Was it hard to relax and fall back? Why? How would you feel if a stranger was standing here to catch you? How about a family member? How much would you trust someone who had deliberately let someone fall? It was just that kind of situation in which Ananias found himself in our story this week. However, he trusted in God to show him the right way. He found a way to share God’s light. That’s what today’s message is about:**



GOD’S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

Say that with me.

C. Blindfold Walk

Let the children choose a partner, someone they know well, to guide them around

an obstacle course made of furniture in the room. Blindfold one child and have the other lead the way around the room. Halfway around say: **Stop. Everyone change partners. Your new partner cannot talk, but can guide you by the hand.** Be sure all the children change partners. Repeat the process so everyone has a turn.

You Need:

- blindfold for each pair of children

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when you knew who was guiding you? Did you trust that person? Why? How did you feel when you did *not* know who was guiding you? Which was harder? In our story today Ananias is given a hard task. He had to help someone who had been threatening to kill him. He did it because he trusted God. And that's what our message is about:**



GOD'S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing from last week's lesson study and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Psalm 118:24" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 94)
- "Jesus, We Want to Meet" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 95)
- "His Banner Over Me Is Love" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 25)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*. Emphasize that a missionary is someone sent from God. You don't have to go overseas; you can be a missionary wherever you are.



Offering

Say: **Our offerings go to help people learn about Jesus, how much He loves them, and that He is waiting to save them.**

You Need:

- simple offering device relating to the field of mission emphasis



Prayer

Ask the children if there is anything they are worried about, or if they feel unsure about anything. List their concerns where all can see. Invite different volunteers to pray for each of the concerns.

You Need:

- chalkboard/white board
- chalk/marker

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes
- piece of fruit
- table and chairs
- tape recorder

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Saul, Judas, Ananias, “voice” of God

Setting the scene:

Create a room inside a house, with Saul sitting at the table. The children who are not main characters can be Christians in Damascus watching what happens.

Read or tell the story.

[Saul is sitting by a table with head bowed.] Saul sat quietly in Judas’s house. He did not look at all like the fearsome, masterful, take-charge person he had been only a day or so ago. He sat quietly, his head bowed. He spent all of his time praying.

There was so much to pray for! He had certainly prayed for forgiveness! He was horrified when he thought of the Christians he had persecuted so relentlessly. And he had also thanked and praised the Lord again and again for his salvation. The memory of actually seeing Jesus there on the road outside of Damascus still thrilled him. He lived the moment over and over in his mind.

[Tap Saul on the shoulder and put a piece of fruit in his hand. Saul shakes his head.] Judas and his family offered Saul food to eat, but he would not take it. He would not even take anything to drink. Finally, they just left him alone with his thoughts.

[A group of people sitting, nudge and whisper, “Saul is here.”] The news spread quickly through Damascus. Saul had arrived! Saul, the terrible hunter of Christians! The believers had heard he was coming, and now he was here. But it

was said he was sitting in Judas’s house. It was said that he had somehow been struck blind and had been led into the city like a child! Something strange had certainly occurred. No one was quite sure what.

[Ananias is in a different part of the room. He stands and looks at something in the distance.] Three days after Saul’s encounter with the Lord, Ananias, a follower of Jesus, had a vision. The Lord appeared to him and said *[taped or hidden man’s voice]*, “Get up and go to Straight Street. Find the house of Judas. Ask for a man named Saul from the city of Tarsus. He is there now, praying. Saul is blind. He has seen you in a vision (a dream). You will go to him, pray, and lay your hands on him. Then Saul will see again.”

[Ananias shakes head, looks nervous.] Ananias was nervous. “Lord,” he answered, “many people have told me about this man and the terrible things he did to Your people in Jerusalem. Now he has come here to Damascus. The leading priests have given him the power to arrest everyone who worships You!”

The Lord reassured Ananias. *[Use taped voice.]* “Don’t worry, just go. I have chosen Saul for an important work. He must tell people about me. He will tell kings, Jews, and people of foreign lands about My love for everyone.”

[Ananias walks slowly toward Saul.] Ananias obeyed the Lord. He walked down Straight Street toward Judas’s house. As he walked he may have looked around. Everything looked quite normal. Ananias shook his head. Everything was really far from normal. He had just had a vision from the Lord! And he was on his way to meet the dreaded Saul, whom the Lord said was now a believer!

Ananias found Judas's house. Inside, he found Saul sitting quietly, unable to see, waiting for him. Ananias was filled with compassion. *[Ananias lays hands on Saul.]* He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus sent me. He is the one you saw on the road on your way here. He sent me so that you can see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again! And Saul was baptized even before he took the time to eat or drink.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why didn't Ananias want to help Saul? Do you think that was a good reason? How do you think he felt when God told him to go to Saul?**

How do you think you would feel if God told you to help a bully? (afraid, unwilling, wondered if I had understood God right)

Why did Ananias go? (He trusted God. God's grace is available for everyone. Ananias believed that he was God's tool to help Saul.)

Now what do you think about today's message? Let's say it together:



GOD'S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

Memory Verse

Write the memory verse where all may see. Stand in a circle. Say the first word of the verse. Then toss the beanbag randomly around the circle. As each child catches it, they say the next word of the verse.

After going through the verse three times, start to cover up one word at a time. By the time all the words are

You Need:

- beanbag or wadded paper ball
- memory verse written where all can see

covered, the children should know the verse.

Today's memory verse is: **"This man is my chosen instrument" (Acts 9:15).** Be sure the children understand that the verse is talking about Saul, and explain the meaning of "instrument."

Bible Study

Ask: **If you were going to choose a missionary or a pastor, would you choose someone everyone is afraid of? Why?**

Why did God choose Saul? Let's read Acts 9:15 to find out. (God chose him to spread the gospel among the Gentiles—non-Jews.)

Let's read about some of the other people God has chosen to do special jobs for Him.

Form four small groups and give each group one of the following texts. Instruct them to read to find out who God called and how He called them. Each group is to report to the class. Pair readers and nonreaders, or have adults help as needed.

Matthew 4:18-22

Luke 5:27-31

Exodus 2:11, 12; Exodus 3:9-12

1 Samuel 16:1, 5-13

Debriefing

Ask: **What kind of people did God choose to be leaders?** (fishermen, shepherd, murderer, tax collector) **Are any of these the kind of people you think of as leaders?**

What made it possible for Saul and people like him to be leaders? (God's grace; God's love)

God's grace makes a difference. It can make a difference in our lives, too. Let's say our message together:



GOD'S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- pencils/
markers
- transparency
sheets

God's Love Changes People

Have the children draw a picture of some wrong thing they have done and are sorry for. Give them a clear plastic sheet of transparency to cover their paper and help them draw a cross and a heart on the plastic. Then write at the top or bottom: "God's love changes people."

Say: **Put the transparency over your picture. What do you see?** Allow discussion time.

Say: **Everything lies behind the cross. God has taken care of all the things we have done. His love can change us so we no longer want to do**

those things. Just ask Him to help you, and He will.

Debriefing

Ask: **Is it easy to love someone when they do something mean to you? Why?** Allow discussion time.

What do you think about knowing that God can help a mean person change? And that God can change our hearts to love them anyway? How can that happen? (It happens when we ask God to change our hearts.)

Let's remember today's message. Say it with me.



GOD'S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Loving Unlovely People

Ask: **What do you usually do when someone is mean to you?** Allow discussion time and accept all answers.

How is this like or unlike the way God treats us? Allow discussion time.

What do you think God wants you to do when someone is mean to you? (Pray for the person; ask a loving adult to help you with that person; treat that person with kindness.)

Think about someone who has been mean to you. Trace around your hand and cut out the outline. Write that person's name or draw a picture of that person on one side of your paper hand. On the other side, draw a picture of the way you will treat that person the next time he or she is mean to you.

Debriefing

Say: **This week, pray for the person you drew or wrote about on your paper hand. Ask God to help you change your heart, your feelings toward that person, to help you love them like He does. You can ask Him to help them want to change their heart too, to help them to know Him and love Him. And let's remember our message:**



GOD'S LOVE CHANGES PEOPLE.

Closing

Have the children form a circle and sing "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 134). In a short prayer, ask God to help each child as they work and play with others this week, that His love will shine in them.

You Need:

- paper
- pencils
- scissors

Now I See!

References

Acts 9:10-19; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 115-122

Memory Verse

“This man is my chosen instrument” (Acts 9:15, NIV).

The Message

God’s love changes people.

Imagine not being able to see anything. Everything is dark. You know it is day or night only by what other people tell you. For three days Saul could not see anything. Read on to find out what happened at the end of the third day.

Saul sat quietly in Judas’s house. He did not look at all fearsome or masterful. He was not the take-charge person he had been only three days ago. He sat quietly, his head bowed. He spent all of his time praying.

There was so much to pray for! Saul had certainly prayed for forgiveness. He was horrified when he thought of the Christians he had persecuted! And he had also thanked and praised the Lord again and again for his salvation. The memory of actually seeing Jesus on the road to Damascus still thrilled him. He lived the moment over and over in his mind.

Judas and his family offered Saul food to eat, but he would not take it. He would not even take anything to drink. Finally, they just left him alone with his thoughts.

The news spread quickly through Damascus. Saul had arrived! Saul, the mighty hunter of Christians! The believers had heard he was coming, and now he was here. But it was said he was sitting in Judas’s house. Rumor had it that he had somehow been struck blind. People

learned that he had been led into the city like a child! Something strange had certainly occurred! But no one was quite sure what.

Three days had gone by since Saul’s encounter with the Lord. Then Ananias, a follower of Jesus, had a vision. The Lord appeared to him and said, “Get up and go to Straight Street. Find the house of Judas. Ask for a man named Saul who is from the city of Tarsus. He is there now, praying. Saul is blind. He has seen you in a vision (a dream). You will go to him, pray, and lay your hands on him. Then he will see again.”

Ananias was understandably nervous. “Lord,” he answered, “many people have told me about this man. He has done terrible things to Your people in Jerusalem. Now he has come here to Damascus. The leading priests have given him the power to arrest everyone who worships You!”

The Lord reassured Ananias. “Do not worry. Go. I have chosen Saul for an important work,” He said. “He must tell people about Me. He will tell kings, Jews, and people of foreign lands about My love for everyone”

Ananias obeyed the Lord. As he walked to Judas’s house on Straight Street he may have looked around. Everything looked quite normal. Ananias shook his head. Everything was really far from normal. He had just had a vision from the Lord! And he was on his way to meet the dreaded Saul, whom the Lord said was now a believer!

Ananias found Judas’s house. He



found Saul sitting quietly and without sight, waiting for him. Ananias was filled with compassion. He laid his hands on Saul. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord Jesus sent me. He is the one you saw on the road on your way here. He sent me so you can see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Immediately something like scales fell from Saul's eyes. He could see again! And Saul asked to be baptized at once. He did not even take time to eat or drink. Yes, God had called Saul. And he called Ananias, too. They served the Lord for the rest of their lives. Today God has called you to be His witness. Will you choose to listen?

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Plan to go for a walk this afternoon with your family. Imagine you are Ananias walking to where Saul is staying. How would you walk? Then imagine you are walking to meet Jesus. How would you walk? What made the difference?
- Thank God that Jesus is coming soon.

Sunday

- With your family, read and discuss Acts 9:10-19. What lesson can your family learn from these texts?
- Draw six different lights. Write one word of your memory verse on each light. Cut out the lights and mix them up. Then put the words in the right order. Use this to teach the verse to your family. Ask God to make you an instrument of light to tell others of His grace.
- Try this when in the dark. Turn out the lights and get dressed or undressed. How easy is it to put things away or find them?

Monday

- Read and discuss Acts 22:11-21 during worship. What is the most important point in these verses? Put on a blindfold. Ask someone to hand you three different objects. Can you guess what they are?
- Find out about the Braille alphabet for blind individuals. Using a Braille dictionary, a pin, and thick paper, try to "write" your name. Can you read it with your fingers?
- Thank God for the wonderful things you can see.

Tuesday

- Read 1 Peter 2:9 during family worship. What does it mean to be called into the light? Give everyone a candle and turn out the lights. Have Mom or Dad strike a match and light their

candle. Look at the amount of light. Light each person's candle in turn. What difference does each make? Turn on the main light. How does this compare with the candles? How is this activity like spreading God's love?

- Sing "This Little Light of Mine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 134) before prayer.

Wednesday

- With your family, read Mark 4:21, 22. Light a candle and cover it completely with a jar. Let the candle burn and see what happens. How is the candle in the jar like people who do not share the gospel?
- Review your memory verse before prayer.
- Ask your mom if you can make some "traffic light cookies." Cover baked round cookies with green, yellow, or red icing.

Thursday

- Read your lesson with your family during worship. Ananias was afraid to go to Saul, but he went. Why? Read a promise God makes to everyone in Joshua 1:9.
- Sometimes we meet bullies in school. Talk about it during worship and think of a plan to deal with bullies. Ask two people how they have dealt with bullies.
- Pray for someone you know who is having a hard time.

Friday

- During worship, read and discuss Acts 9:10-19 again. Act out the lesson story. What important lesson have you and your family learned from these verses? Say your memory verse together. Are you one of God's chosen instruments? How can that be?
- Sing some favorite songs, then thank God for the gift of His Word, the Bible. Thank Him for the Sabbath, too.