

Aim of lesson

To have the class consider what conversion involves.

Bible background

Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-31.

Outline of lesson

If your class enjoy acting, you may like to begin the lesson with the following:

Interrogation

Tell the class that they are going to act out a situation to see what their reactions are. Give cards out to each member of the class to tell them their role. Give one or two members a card saying "You are a guard with orders to arrest any Christians in the room and put them in jail". Give the rest of the class cards saying that they are Christians. Encourage the class to speak, answer and ask questions as their role suggests. After the 'Christians' have been taken off to prison (a corner of the room) call all the class back and ask how they felt in that role and what they learned about what it must have been like and how it must have tested the reality of the beliefs of Christians who were really taken to prison or killed. Read together Acts 8:1-3 to expand this picture of persecution.

On the way to Damascus

Turn to the worksheet and ask the class find the words START HERE. Read each section of Acts 9 indicated next to the journey. Ask them to write a sentence on each set of lines to summarise what is happening. Bring in the actions of prayer and baptism which form part of Saul's conversion. Use the space at the top of the sheet to start the class thinking about the change in Saul's mind which later affected everything he did.

What changed?

Discuss with the class the difference in Saul's thinking and values which resulted from his encounter with the Lord Jesus. Read together Philippians 3:4-14. Use the two spaces at the bottom right of the first page in the workbook to write what Saul would have said was important before his conversion and what later was important to him.

Discuss with the class what can be of first importance to people who do not follow Christ today and what is of first importance to those who do. Various interests can take over our lives today e.g. money, fashion, cars, sport, being thought well of by friends, etc. Draw out that conversion today involves a similar 'about turn' of our attitudes and priorities.

Digging deeper

What do we know about Paul?

This section looks at Paul's background and family.

Relevance to our lives

The last box on the worksheet should be done individually, and could be used as homework if you wish. You may like to point out to the class that Saul did not know all that serving Christ would involve when he accepted him as Lord and nor do we. Accepting him involves trusting and being prepared to continue serving him whatever the future holds.

Prayer

Ask for ideas for a prayer suggested by today's lesson – perhaps on preparing ourselves for serving Jesus. Have one member of the class write up the one-line prayer on the large prayer sheet; or have each member add the prayer to their individual prayer sheet.

Other suggestions for activities

- A visual display of Acts 9 could be made by asking each member to choose a scene to draw. The scenes should have captions explaining what is happening and should be pinned up in sequence. This allows a review of the lesson.
- The class could divide into two groups and plan 10 or 20 questions based on Acts 9 for the other group. You could keep score.