



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE

TRUE STORY

BIG IDEA

Jesus changes lives.

THE BIBLE

Saul's Conversion: Acts 9:1-22 (2 Corinthians 5:17; Isaiah 1:18; Philippians 1:6)

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

LARGE GROUP TIME

- **ACTIVITY** | Blind Drawing
- **ACTIVITY** | True or False
- **QUESTION** | What is the biggest change you've experienced?
- **THE BIG IDEA** | Jesus changes lives.
- **BIBLE STORY** | Acts 9:1-22
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Running Pepper
- **SCRIPTURE** | 2 Corinthians 5:17; Isaiah 1:18
- **VIDEO** | Metamorphosis
- **ACTIVITY** | Caterpillar Craft
- **PRAYER** | The Caterpillar Gospel
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22

SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
 - What happened to Saul when he saw Jesus on the road?
 - What was Saul like before he experienced Jesus?
 - How was Saul changed after he experienced Jesus?
 - Do you remember a time when you heard about Jesus for the first time?
 - What changes has Jesus made in your life?
- **SCRIPTURE** | Philippians 1:6
- **ACTIVITY** | Scratch Off Pictures
- **MEMORY VERSES** | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22



WEEK 1

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

TRUE STORY

BIG IDEA

Jesus changes lives.

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Saul's Conversion: Acts 9:1-22 (2 Corinthians 5:17; Isaiah 1:18; Philippians 1:6)

LARGE GROUP TIME

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

ACTIVITY | Blind Drawing

- Welcome! This month, we're talking about explorers — those are people who go on big adventures!
How many of you have been on an adventure?
- **Adventures are full of surprises, aren't they?** We never know when an adventure will start.
- Today, we're going to hear and talk about the story of a man named Saul, whose great adventure started when he was on a hike and lost his eyesight (for just a few days) when he saw a bright light. What came after his sight returned is the best part of the story. But before we get there, let's play a game to see what it would be like to not be able to see.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Give every kid white paper and a crayon or marker. Tell them to put their marker on the paper and then close their eyes (no peeking). Tell them they will have to draw what you say while closing their eyes or wearing blindfolds. Tell them to draw these things: the sun, a pair of binoculars, a campfire, a mountain, a fish. When they finish, have them open their eyes and see what they've drawn.*
- **Does your drawing look the way you thought it would look?** It's hard to draw when we can't see what we're drawing, isn't it?
- All of the things we just drew have something in common. They are all things you might need, use, or see when you're exploring.
- **Have you ever been camping or hiking?** Today, we're going to hear the true story of a man who was going on a hike when something crazy and life-changing happened to him!

- **FOR PRETEENS:** *Play this game like a blind Pictionary game. Have someone draw an object on a white board while blindfolded. The rest of the group will try to guess what they are drawing. You can assign them words that are themed with today's lesson.*

ACTIVITY | True or False

- Since we're talking about true stories, let's play a game to see how well you can tell the difference between things that are true and things that are false. "True" means it really did happen and "false" means it didn't really happen.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell kids to stand up if they think the statement is true and sit down if they think it's false. Or, give them two colored pieces of paper and tell them to hold one of them up for true and the other for false. If you really want to get them moving, have them go to one side of the room for true and the other side for false. Read the statements listed below (or invent your own) and have the kids guess if they think each one is true or false.*
 - **Some animals can get sunburnt.**
True. Certain animals are more susceptible to sunburn than others, especially those with shorter hair and light-colored skin.
 - **Cats hate water.**
False. It's true house cats would probably rather sleep on a bed of nails than get in the bathtub, but many big cats enjoy splashing around. Bengal tigers, in particular, are fond of lakes and streams.
 - **Frogs drink lots of water.**
False. You would think water makes up a large part of a frog's diet, especially since they always seem to live near water, but frogs don't drink at all. Frogs are unique creatures that actually absorb water through their skins to stay hydrated.
 - **Elephants eat using their noses.**
True. Elephants belong to a largely extinct group of animals called proboscidea, which use their noses as forks and spoons. They do not actually swallow their food through their noses, but lift branches, grass, and plants with their strong trunks.
 - **Camels can walk 100 miles in the desert without water.**
True. Camels can go up to 100 desert miles without a drop to drink. Once they have access to water, however, they can consume up to 30 gallons in as few as 13 minutes.
 - **Chimpanzees are nocturnal.**
False. They usually sleep during the night and are awake during the day.
 - **The hummingbird egg is the world's smallest bird egg.**
True. Hummingbirds lay the smallest eggs, while ostriches lay the largest.
- It can be hard to know which things are true and which are made up.
- **Have you ever heard a friend tell a story that was so crazy, you were sure it was made up?** Our story today is an amazing *true* story about how God can change a life!

QUESTION | What is the biggest change that has happened in your life?

- We all have things change in our lives. **What is the biggest change you've ever had to go through?**
- Sometimes change is good, but sometimes it's bad. In today's true story from the Bible, someone goes through a total change for the good . . . even though it started out pretty bad.

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

THE BIG IDEA | Jesus changes lives.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Each week, do a big reveal (and make it fun) when you announce the Big Idea, like:*
- *Ask the kids to give you a drumroll by stomping their feet or patting their laps.*
- *Shout the Big Idea, then point to the kids and have them shout it back. (Change it up by using funny voices, different volumes, or inflections).*
- *Have a character (either recurring or rotating) come out every week to reveal the Big Idea.*
- *Write it on a piece of paper and hide it somewhere in the room. Have the kids go on a "hunt" for it. When it's found, ask someone to come up and read it.*
- This week's Big Idea: **Jesus changes lives.**

BIBLE STORY | Acts 9:1-22

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Look up the story in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!*
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** *See your weekly instructions for ways to help your kids with special needs engage with this Bible story.*
- **How did Saul feel about Jesus and His followers?** He hated and threatened to kill them.
- But then, something happened that completely changed his life while he was on a journey hiking along the path to a city called Damascus.
- **What happened to Saul while he was on his way to Damascus?** A bright light blinded him, he fell down, and Jesus spoke to him. Saul was on his way to hunt down Christians when he met Jesus along the way, and his life was completely changed.
- Saul's name changed to Paul, but that wasn't all that changed. Saul's whole life was changed. He had a new heart and a new purpose in life. He became a follower of Jesus. **Would you change your name if you could? What would you change it to?**
- **Why do you think Jesus blinded Saul for three days?** We don't know why Jesus made Saul blind for three days – we may never know. But we do know that when Saul could see again, he opened his eyes as a changed person!
- **How do we know his life was changed?** What happened after his encounter with Jesus? This man who used to hate Christians became a completely different person! He went on three missionary journeys, started churches, and preached and taught many people. He performed miracles. He wrote thirteen letters that later became books of the Bible.
- No matter what you've done, you probably haven't done anything as bad as Saul! Saul had made some pretty bad choices.
- You might never have an encounter with Jesus like Saul did, but that doesn't mean Jesus won't change your life in big ways! Jesus can forgive you and change you just like he did with Saul. All you have to do is ask Him to forgive you and He will do it. He will change your life!

OBJECT LESSON | Running Pepper

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Take a shallow bowl or pie tin and fill it with water. Sprinkle some black pepper all over the surface of the water so it floats. Let the kids see the pepper (if you have a large group, you can do this experiment in every small group). After you talk to the kids, put a dab of dish soap on your finger, then stick your finger in the middle of the water. Let the kids watch as the pepper “runs” away from your finger.
- **What do you see when I put the pepper into the water?** The pepper covers everything! It’s kind of like when we make a choice that isn’t good for us to make. When God wants us to do something, but we don’t obey Him, our sin and bad choices cover everything. That’s what Saul was like in our true story from the Bible. He wasn’t following God. His life was full of bad choices. But then what happened to him? Let’s see what happens to the pepper when I stick my finger in the water. Wow!
- **What just happened?** The pepper scattered and now everything is clean, all because of a little bit of soap.
- When Saul met Jesus, Jesus forgave him and his whole life changed. Jesus can change your life, too.

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

SCRIPTURE | 2 Corinthians 5:17; Isaiah 1:18

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verses and read them!
- These verses tell us God doesn’t just fix us, but He makes us brand new.
- **Remember what happened to the pepper in the experiment?** When the soap appeared, the pepper ran away! When we decide to accept Jesus as our friend and live His way, our sins disappear. With Jesus, we are changed!

VIDEO | Metamorphosis

- Just like Jesus changes us from the inside out, let’s watch a video to help us see what it looks like when something becomes a new creation.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show [this](#) time-lapsed video of a caterpillar turning into a butterfly.
- **What happened to the caterpillar?** It completely changed into a new creature.
- **How is that similar to what happened to Saul?**
- God didn’t just kind of make Saul a better guy. He totally changed him. He made him into a whole new person. That is how God changes us. He doesn’t just make us better, He makes us new. He gives us a new purpose in life. He gives us His spirit to transform our lives.

ACTIVITY | Caterpillar Craft

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create caterpillars to remind kids of how Jesus changes us into a new creation. Give each child a clothespin, four craft pom-poms (black, red, white, yellow), and one set of wiggly eyes. Have the kids glue the pom-poms onto the clothespin in this order: black, red, white, yellow. They can then glue the eyes on the front pom-pom. Let it dry. Have kids write 2 Corinthians 5:17 on a small notecard to clip with the caterpillar. As they do, ask this question . . .
- **How has God changed your life?**

- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Have a completed craft available for them, or step-by-step pictures of the instructions.
- **FOR PRETEENS:** Play a caterpillar game instead of the craft (or after they finish). See your weekly instructions for details.

PRAYER | The Caterpillar Gospel

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use the colors of the pom-poms to share the gospel with the kids in the style of *The Wordless Book*, where each color represents a portion of the gospel.
- **FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Let them play with a sensory bin filled with colored pom-poms. Show them the colors and pray with them.
 - **BLACK POM-POM:** We sin. The black pom-pom reminds us we all make wrong choices that separate us from God (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23).
 - **RED POM-POM:** Jesus came. The red pom-pom reminds us God sent His only Son to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. He rose from the dead and made a way for us to go to heaven (John 3:16).
 - **WHITE POM-POM:** We are forgiven. The white pom-pom reminds us when we choose to believe in Jesus and repent our sins, He forgives us. Our hearts are as clean as snow (Romans 10:10, Isaiah 1:18).
 - **YELLOW POM-POM:** Eternal life. The yellow pom-pom reminds us that when we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we will live with Him forever in Heaven (John 14:2).
- Let's pray together and thank Jesus for changing our lives.

MEMORY VERSES | Psalm 119:105; Galatians 5:22

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid memory verse magnets or stickers. Then work on the memory verse together. For ideas on how to do this well, check out the Memory Verse Guide in your Programming folder and give them to your small group leaders, if you'd like.

SMALL GROUP TIME

DISCUSSION

- **What happened to Saul when he saw Jesus on the road?** (He was blinded.)
- **What was Saul like before he experienced Jesus?** (He hated Christians and hurt them.)
- **How was Saul changed after he experienced Jesus?** (He started following God and didn't hurt Christians anymore.)
- **Do you remember a time when you met or heard about Jesus for the first time? What happened?**
- **What changes has Jesus made in your life?**

SCRIPTURE | Philippians 1:6

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Look up the verse in your Bible and encourage kids to do the same. Read it!
- **What does this verse say about the work God is doing in you?** (He will finish what He starts.)
- **What kind of work do you think God is doing in you?**

ACTIVITY | Scratch Off Pictures

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give every kid a piece of black scratch off paper and a wooden scratcher. Let them use the wooden scratcher to draw a picture of something they think is beautiful.
- **When you first look at this paper, what does it look like?** It's all one color! There's nothing special about it. But let's use these wooden scratchers to turn this picture into something beautiful!
- When we have Jesus in our lives, He changes our hearts into something beautiful.

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