

**TEXT** Acts 9:1-22

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to describe the outstanding conversion of Paul. They will be able to explain that salvation for each person is just as real though possibly not as dramatic.

**MEMORY VERSE** Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. — Acts 3:19

# Paul's Conversion

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**REPENT YE THEREFORE** — Bend at waist as you fold hands to pray.

**AND BE CONVERTED** — Both hands in fist position, right fist palm faces forward with left fist palm facing it, twist hands around until they have reversed positions.

**THAT YOUR SINS** — Make fists with index fingers pointing to each other and then to self.

**MAY BE BLOTTED OUT** — With the right hand, pretend to paint over an imagined spot on the palm of the left hand.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

The visualization of this week's memory verse is a man kneeling at the cross. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Cut apart the pieces as indicated by the heavy black lines. Reassemble the arrangement piece by piece as your students learn the verse.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Take several different light sources to class to open your session. These could include a flashlight, lantern, candle, light bulb, camera flash, etc. Ask what these have in common. When the students have established that each is a source of light, move into your lesson. Explain that today your Bible story is about a very special light — a light from Heaven.

1. Saul received permission to go to Damascus and imprison any disciples of the Lord.
2. As he went, a light from Heaven shined upon him, and the Lord revealed Himself to Saul.
3. The light blinded Saul, and those with him led him to Damascus where he remained blind for three days.
4. The Lord instructed a disciple named Ananias to go and pray for Saul.

Climax: When he had done so, Saul received his sight and at once began to proclaim that Jesus was indeed the Christ.

Conclusion: Saul's conversion on the way to Damascus is dramatic proof of God's ability to reach the one intent on working against Him.

Response: The students should be able to relate the

unusual event which preceded Saul's conversion. They should realize that God may use unique ways to reach the one who has an honest heart.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Apostle Paul was born in the city of Tarsus on the southern coast of present-day Turkey. His original name was Saul and he was born a Roman citizen although he was Jewish. The Greek culture of his city no doubt was an advantage to him in his ministry after his conversion.

Saul was the son of a Pharisee and raised very strictly in the Jewish religion. He was taught by Gamaliel, an outstanding teacher of that day, and became very zealous for the religion of the Jews. His determination was to stamp out Christianity and he set out to do so with a vengeance. He is first mentioned as one who kept the clothing of those who stoned Stephen to death.

The Gospel spread rapidly immediately after Pentecost. On the Day of Pentecost about 3000 were added to the group of believers. Shortly afterward it notes that the number of believers was 5000 men. The Jewish high priest with the scribes and elders were very angry and demanded that the Apostles quit preaching about Jesus. They began to persecute the church, causing the believers to flee to other cities.

Saul obtained permission from the high priest to go to Damascus and bring back any believers that he found and imprison them. The city of Damascus was about 175 miles northeast of Jerusalem. As Saul was on his way the Lord shined a light from Heaven around him revealing that Jesus was truly the Messiah, and Saul became a devoted follower of the very Jesus he had persecuted.

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Use paper-bag puppets to help you tell the story (see Patterns). Show how God called Paul and how Ananias prayed for him.

Make 13 cards which are 2" high and as long as needed for each word of the memory verse (2" x 3", 2" x 5", etc.). Write one word on each card and scramble them, face up, on your desk. Ask the children to work together in putting the verse in order. Then talk about each section and key words of the verse (repent, converted, blotted out).

Draw a child's hands in a praying position on paper. (See patterns for 1e.) Write "Pray and Be Saved" on the hands. Use as visual aid in discussing lesson.

The children may discover, while reading the Bible text, that Paul's name was also Saul. The question may arise, "Why did he change his name?" Explain that he didn't really change his name. It was the same name but in a different language: The Hebrew people called him Saul, the Romans called him Paul. Do some research before this lesson is taught. Find out what each child in your class might be called in another language. (Kathrine/Katrina — Russian; Edward/Fuad — Lebanese; Mary/Maria — Spanish; John/Ian — Irish; etc.) The children should know that the real change was in Paul's heart.

## QUESTIONS

How did Jesus call Paul to be saved?

Why do you think God caused Paul to be blinded? How did Paul get his sight back?

Name some other people in the Bible who were told by God to go somewhere.

How do you think Paul was different after Jesus saved him?

What did Paul do after he got his sight back?

How does Jesus talk to people today about being saved?

Do you know someone who is saved?  
How are they different from the way they were?

Can God save you? What do you have to do to be saved?

## PRESCHOOL IDEAS

Show a heart on which you have put sin spots. Tell the children that Paul had been a very naughty man. Then show a clean heart as you tell of God's calling Paul and of Paul's praying.

Use construction paper to cut out a large cloud. Cut a

hole in the center large enough to fit around the head of a flashlight. Hold the flashlight up with the cloud surrounding it and turn the light on when telling about the light from Heaven and Jesus' speaking.

Make a small story box for each child (see Patterns). Help the children to identify each picture as you tell the story of Paul's conversion.

After telling how God changed Paul's heart, use behavior pictures from patterns for Lesson 19c to illustrate how Jesus changes the way we act after He makes our hearts clean.

## REVIEW IDEAS

Demonstrate things that are more useful after they've been changed. Examples:

Presweetened Koolaid must be dissolved in water before drinking.

A raw egg must be cooked before we would use it in salads, sandwiches, or for breakfast.

Cake or cookie ingredients by themselves aren't very good (salt, baking powder, butter, etc.), but when mixed together they make something delicious.

Tell the children that after God saves us He takes our feelings and thoughts and makes them Christlike.

Using a sad/happy face mask (see Patterns for 27b) act out a skit. First use the sad face and be unhappy and unhelpful. Then pray. During prayer, turn the mask over to the happy position. Salvation changes attitudes so you can be happy, kind, and helpful.

Act out the story of Paul's conversion. Have Paul and some soldiers walking to Damascus. Shine bright light on Paul (blindfold Paul at this point). Using a pretaped voice, reenact God's conversation with Paul. Then have Ananias visit Paul and pray that he will receive his sight.

## COORDINATING SONGS

"Do You Know That You've Been Born Again?"

"One Door and Only One"

"A New Name in Glory"

"Oh, What He's Done for Me" (chorus)

"Rolled Away"

"All of My Burdens Went Rolling Away"

"Wordless Book Song"

"Things Are Different Now"

"Bullfrogs and Butterflies"

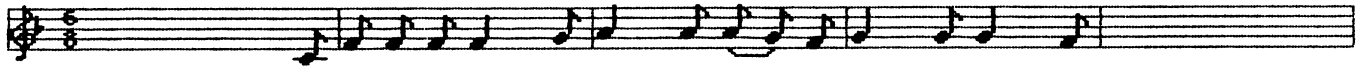
"I've Been Changed"

## SUPPORT MATERIAL

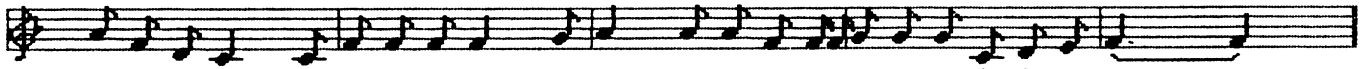
Paul Believes in Jesus — Arch Books, Concordia  
Paul, Speak for God — Thomas Nelson Publishers

## MEMORY VERSE SONG

♩ = 100



Repent ye therefore, and be con- ver - ted, that your sins may



be blotted out. Repent ye therefore, and be con- verted, that your sins may be blotted out.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

