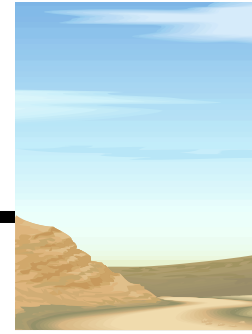


**Get Ready!****On the Road**

By: Myra Montgomery

**Text**

Acts 9:1-20

**Key Quest Verse**

“Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new.”  
2 Corinthians 5:17

**Bible Background**

If you were among the earliest of Christians, at the time just after The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the name "Saul" would very likely bring out strong emotions in you. Dislike and fear would have been quite normal—and justified.

Saul's view of Christianity was really quite simple—he wanted it, and everyone involved in it, destroyed. He traveled far and wide to have men and women arrested. Saul was present, and gave his approval to the gruesome stoning death of Stephen considered to be the first Christian martyr. Then one day, while Saul was on one of his journeys of persecution, as he was nearing Damascus he suddenly found himself surrounded by a very bright light. He fell to the ground and heard a voice from the heavens say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?"

The voice was of Jesus Christ himself. The account is found in Acts chapter 9. The incredible conversation that followed brought Paul to the realization of his error—Christianity was not a threat to the Jews, but rather the *fulfillment* of all that they hold true.

Saul, the man most Christians of the time may have considered to be somewhat of a monster, had reached his day of conversion—in no uncertain terms! He was literally knocked down on the road to Damascus and directly called by God. He thereafter became known as Paul.

Paul became one of the greatest Christians of the Bible, his ministry was long and productive, but never easy. He endured cold and hunger, beatings, imprisonment and persecution in his travels along the Roman Roads.

Paul's writings include a number of the books of the New Testament from which millions of Christians are taught. All from a man who was once "Public Enemy Number One" to every Christian man, woman or child. At the end of his ministry, he was executed by the Roman authorities for preaching the very Christianity that he himself once tried so hard to destroy.

*Get Ready!*

### Lesson Quest

**What I want my students to:**

**Know:** We meet God through Jesus

**Feel:** Jesus changes people who accept him.

**Do:** God can help us change enemies into friends.

### Leader's Devotion

One of the most notable lessons from Paul's example is that God, for some reason, often calls to His service some very unlikely people. Other examples: Peter, a man who was to teach Christian peace, was himself at times an impulsive "hothead". Moses, the spokesman for Israel, and of The Ten Commandments, apparently had to overcome a serious stuttering problem.

Paul's experience shows us that someone who persecutes you today for your Christian beliefs may one day be one of your best friends in the faith—perhaps the primary reason that we are to love our enemies. *Are you asking for God's help to love your enemies?*

**Get Set!****Option A****Materials:** None

**Procedure:** You will be hearing the story of a man who experienced an incredible change in his life, and because of this change, he has helped spread the news of God’s love all over the world.

Ask them if they have ever heard of Paul.

Have you ever known anyone who has experienced a big change in their life? This could be someone who has moved to a faraway place, started a new job in a new town or city, or started in a new school.

While sometimes changes can be hard and scary for many of us, often what comes out of a change, can be new and exciting experiences and results that can be wonderful.

In this story, we will be hearing how Paul experienced a complete turnaround in his life and the things that he believed. Our church and many churches around the world have grown and benefited greatly because of Paul, and the new life he led.

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY****Option B**

**Materials:** Some samples or pictures of things that transform in nature.

**Procedure:** Have you ever seen any changes or transformations happening outside? After they have had time to answer, pull out a few of your samples from outside. If they are still not coming up with some of their own examples, then prompt the discussion with these questions:

**What changes do you see on the trees?** (The trees have budded and are now full of leaves and flowers.)

**What is happening to the flowers?** (The flowers have bloomed.)

**What changes do you see on the ground?** (The grass is green and wildflowers are growing.)

All around us everyday things are changing. Do you know of anything else or have you seen anything else transform? Can people transform or change? Sometimes it is hard to tell when a person transforms. The Bible tells a story about a man named Saul who transformed. I want you to listen and see if you can tell when the transformation happens.

**GO TO THE BIBLE STORY**

**Get Set!****Bible Story**

**Teacher Tip:** Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

**This is the story of Saul who became Paul after God sent Jesus to change Saul’s mission.**

**Saul was a Pharisee, a Jewish religious leader who was also a Roman citizen. He didn’t understand that the message Jesus taught was God’s Word. It was his job to travel with soldiers to arrest Christians and destroy their communities. He thought he was doing the right thing.**

**One day he was traveling on the road to Damascus when suddenly a bright light shone down from heaven! Saul fell to the ground and heard a voice that said, “Saul! Saul! Why are you so cruel to me?” “Who are you?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus. I am the one you are so cruel to. Now get up and go into the city, where you will be told what to do.”**

**Saul could not see. The men with him helped him reach the city of Damascus. In the city there was a disciple of Jesus named Ananias. He had heard about Saul and was afraid of him. But God told Ananias “Go! I have chosen him to tell foreigners, kings and the people of Israel about me.” Ananias obeyed God and went to Saul and put his hands on him and said, “Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me. He is the same one who appeared to you along the road. He wants you to be able to see and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.”**

**Suddenly Saul could see with his eyes, mind and heart! He was baptized and stayed with the Lord’s followers. As a new man, called by God, he stopped hurting Christians and became the greatest missionary of the Christian church. Even his name changed. He was known as Paul.**

**Go!****On the Right Path****WORKSHEET****Materials:** Paper, pencils**Quest Connection****Procedure:**

1. Brainstorm things you do, places you go and people who help you make good choices and stay on the right path: Jesus, church, Sunday School, parents, being helpful, do something kind, make friends, sports, activities, school, etc. Create a list of ideas on chart paper.
2. Now make another list of dangers, people or activities that are wrong: bullies, drugs, cheating, fighting, television, bad language, etc.
3. Hand out sheets of paper, pencils, markers, and crayons.
4. Draw a picture of yourself at the top of the page.
5. At the bottom of the page, draw a picture of Jesus.
6. Draw a winding path from the top to the bottom. This is the path of good choices. Along this path, draw road signs or places you go and people who help you: Jesus, church, parents, friends, school, sports, activities, etc. See list of ideas on chart paper.
7. Draw other paths with dead ends or obstacles on the path. Label these or draw pictures of enemies or dangers along the paths.
8. Older Kids: Draw one path of obstacles and bad choices that leads directly to Jesus without a dead end. This path represents what happened to Paul. It can happen that people we know turn away from bad choices and decide to change. Jesus changes people as he changed Paul. (*Discuss this concept: that God can change enemies into a friend of Jesus.*)
9. Color and add details.

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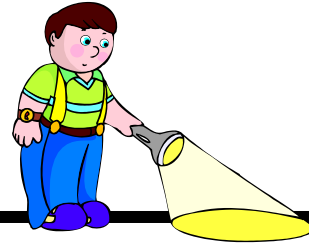
**Go!**

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**Close**

Ask for volunteers to share their maps with the group. Ask the group one or two of the following questions for reflection on how their life might be changed if they had to encounter “enemies” along the way? Enemies are all the things that keep you from Jesus. **How might we help people along the way?** *Helping someone carry heavy bags to their home, helping someone cross the street, not using bad language when they hear others say bad things, selecting people for their team, etc. could show how they are practicing what is right for Christians.*

**God changed Paul from an enemy of Jesus and his followers into a friend and believer. In the story Ananias had to accept Paul as a new friend and help Paul as God asked him to. Have you ever known someone who changed from an enemy into your friend? How did you feel about this? Was it hard to forgive that person and accept them as a friend? God can help us accept new friends if we pray and trust Him.**

**Go!****Laser Tag****GAME****Materials:** Flashlight**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** The students are to decide on a motion: pretend they are playing a musical instrument, playing a sport, eating food, whatever their daily activities consist of. While doing their motion, the kids are to try and avoid the light. The workshop leader tries to “catch” a child by shining a flashlight or laser pen, for a few seconds, on one child in the chest or back. That child must shout: “Blinded!” and freeze.

To unfreeze, the person closest to the frozen child touches him or her and says **“You can see—Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new.”** (memory verse) The unfrozen person must then do some different motion to show they are changed. Everyone else resumes their motion and the workshop leader tries once again to “catch” a child in the light.

If the student ignores or does not notice the light shining on him/her, someone else may touch that child and shout: “You are blinded by the Light!” The touched student must then freeze and stay frozen through the next round of play. At that point, both students may be unfrozen with a touch from persons nearby with the words: **“You can see—Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new.”**

**Close**

Keep playing until everyone has had a chance to be frozen and had to change their motion. You can spice up the game with older students by telling those who have been “caught” in the light and frozen, to sit down. The remaining children play until only one or 2 are left standing.

Remind the children as they play this game, that the light represents God’s light in our life, and God does change our lives daily.

Go!



## Changes

## SCIENCE

**Materials:** A map of the Jerusalem/Damascus area, a bottle of iodine and three clear glass jars:  
 #1 is filled with water  
 #2 looks empty but has spray starch coating the inside  
 #3 has a couple of tablespoons of bleach at the bottom

## Quest Connection

**Ahead of time:** prepare the three jars with water, starch and bleach. Have iodine on hand. Practice the demonstration at home to make sure it works.

Alternatives: Instead of spray starch, you can try using liquid starch and dry it in the jar. Also, instead of liquid bleach, you can use powdered bleach or Oxy Clean, which would be less messy, but you have to use warm water with it (keep the water warm in a Thermos). You can also try red food coloring instead of iodine. I HAVE NOT TESTED ANY OF THESE ALTERNATIVES, SO TRY THEM AT HOME FIRST.)

**Procedure:**

*Show jar #1 to the class:* **This jar of water represents a man named Saul. Saul was from the city of Tarsus, (point out on a map) in what is now the country of Turkey. He lived in the early days of the church, when followers of Jesus were spreading the good news and the church was growing. Saul was a very devout Jew who loved God and tried very hard to follow the Jewish law. But somewhere along the way, he became what we might call a fanatic. Drop some iodine into the first jar to turn the water yellow.**

**Saul decided his religion was the only way. He decided that Christians must go to prison or die. Saul went to Jerusalem (show on map), where he went around the city arresting Christians and putting them in jail. Then he went to the high priest and got permission to go to Damascus (show on map, 135 miles from Jerusalem), to arrest Christians there and bring them to Jerusalem.**

**But as Saul was going along the road to Damascus, an amazing thing happened. A bright light flashed around him, and he fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying, “Saul, Saul, why are you so cruel to me? .**



**Go!****Quest Connection**

Slowly pour yellow water into jar #2. It will turn black as you pour and talk.

“Who are you?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus,” the voice answered. “I am the one you are so cruel to. Now get up and go into the city, where you will be told what to do.”

There were some men traveling with Saul, and they just stood there speechless. They had heard the voice but could not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground, and when he opened his eyes, he could not see a thing. *Hold up the jar of black water.* He was blind.

Somebody took Saul by the hand and led him to Damascus. For three days he could not see anything and did not eat or drink.

A follower of Jesus named Ananias lived in Damascus. Ananias had a vision where Jesus spoke to him and said, “Get up and go to the house of Judas on Straight Street. When you get there, you will find a man named Saul from the the city of Tarsus. Saul is praying, and he has seen a vision. He saw a man named Ananias coming to him and putting his hands on him, so that he could see again.”

Well, Ananias had heard of Saul, so he said, “Lord, I’ve heard about terrible things this man has done to your followers in Jerusalem. Now he’s come here to Damascus to arrest anybody who worships you.”

But Jesus said, “Go! I have chosen him to tell foreigners, kings, and the people of Israel about me.”

So Ananias left and went into the house where Saul was staying. He put his hands on Saul and said, “Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me. He is the same one who appeared to you along the road. He wants you to be able to see and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Suddenly something like fish scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see. Quickly pour water into jar #3, where it will turn clear again. Saul got up and was baptized. Then he ate and felt better.

And Saul went on to spend his life spreading the good news of Jesus to others. He came to be known as Paul because he traveled throughout the Roman empire, and the Roman form of his name is Paul.

**Go!****Close**

**Who was the new person in this story?** (Saul)

**What made him a new person?** (Jesus changed him.)

**I wonder what was so special about Saul that Jesus chose him?** (Saul wasn't so different – Most people don't have such dramatic experiences as Saul, but Jesus changes anyone who accepts him, remember – “anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person.”)

**When Jesus made Saul a new person, did that mean Saul always did the right thing from then on, or never had any more problems?** (No – he just faced his problems knowing that Jesus was with him, and he tried to do the right things but knew Jesus loved him even when he did the wrong thing.)

**What did Jesus choose Paul to do?** (To tell a lot of people—foreigners, kings and Jews—about Jesus. When Jesus changed Saul, he called him to do God's work. And when Jesus changes US, he calls US to do God's work.)

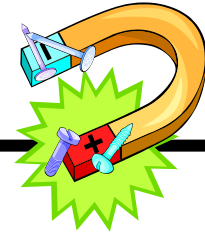
**I wonder how Paul knew what to do? Who did Jesus use to help Paul change?** (Ananias, other Christians in the church.)

**Who do you think Jesus uses to teach us?** (The church teaches us how to be disciples, just like the church helped Paul learn how to be a disciple. Other Christians help us, like our parents and friends.)

**Let's think of some ways the church teaches us to be disciples: through baptism and becoming part of God's family, through the things we learn in Sunday school, through worship, through the opportunities the church gives us for service to the church and for helping other people outside the church, etc.**

**I wonder how you can tell whether the change is something God wants?** (Pray to God and ask God if it is right. If the change makes you a better person, it is probably something God would want.)

**Go!**



## The Right Path

### SCIENCE

**Materials:** Overhead projector, two plastic transparency sheets, a permanent marker, magnet, iron filings

## Quest Connection

**Procedure:** It isn't always easy to know what to do, but God has promised always to show us the right way to go. This experiment is a fun way to help us see that God can guide us through everyday!

Have students gather around the overhead projector. Place one plastic transparency sheet on the overhead projector, and draw a straight pathway and a simple maze design on the transparency sheet with a permanent marker. Then sprinkle a few iron filings onto the sheet. Lay another plastic transparency sheet on top, and turn on the overhead projector light.

**Watch!** I can guide these iron filings through the maze. Demonstrate how to do this, drawing the magnet through the maze along the transparency sheet.

**What is happening? Why are the filings moving?**

I am using a magnet to move the iron filings. Magnets attracted to other metals such as iron, steel, nickel, and cobalt. Magnetism is such a strong force that it can even work through some materials such as plastic. Just like this maze that is all crooked, sometimes you might think that your life has no direction.

## Close

Now move the filings along the straight path, and use the magnet to move them along in a straight line. **Other times you might feel like you're traveling on a straight path. Just as the magnet moved the iron filings down the straight path God is working in our life no matter what! What kind of path was Saul walking down at first? What changed him?**

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**Go!**

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**Rocky Road****FOOD**

**Materials:** Chocolate ice cream softened, mini marshmallows, hard-shell syrup, bowls, spoons

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**Quest Connection**

Let's review our Bible story. Have students retell the story in their own words.

**Procedure:**

1. Put a scoop of ice cream in each bowl. **This represents the darkness that covered Saul's heart before he traveled the road to Damascus.**
2. Add the mini marshmallows. **This represents the blinding flash.**
3. Add the hard-shell syrup. **As this dries it will represent the darkness Saul was in after the flash.**
4. Mix it all up. **The broken shell reminds us of the scales that fell from Saul's eyes when he could see again.**
5. Add nuts. **The nuts remind us that God said Saul would have a rocky road to travel.**

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**Close**

Enjoy the ice cream or share it and the Bible story with another class.

**Go!****I Am Going to Pack****GAME****Materials:** Bible**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** Form a circle. Read aloud Acts 9:1-22. Explain that just as Saul was on a journey, they too are on a journey to get to know Jesus. But before they leave, they'll need to pack their suitcases and get to know their traveling companions.

Have kids each think of an object that represents a talent or interest they have. For example, if Pam is a dancer, she could "pack" a pair of ballet slippers.

Say: **We're on the road to Damascus. I'm (name), and I brought my (item of choice).**

Have the child on your left repeat the phrase, your name and item, and add his or her own. With each turn, the list will get longer and children will have to stretch to remember the names and interests of others.

Your list may sound something like this: **"We're on the road to Damascus. Alice brought her Bible. Andy brought his baseball glove. Jan brought her math book. And I brought a paintbrush."** If kids have trouble remembering, others may give hints.

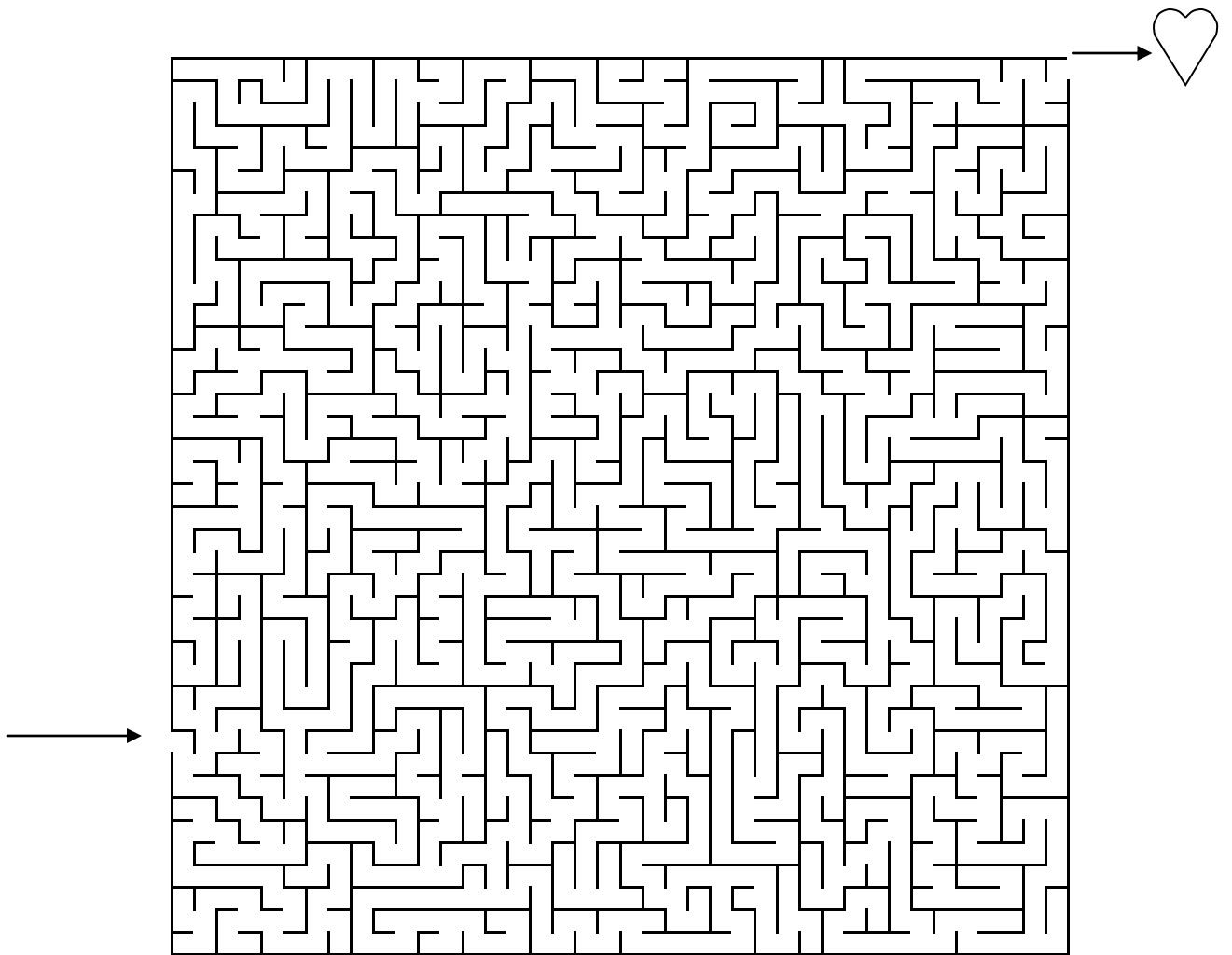
The game is over when the last person has repeated everyone's name and object.

**Close**

**The Christian journey is an exciting one. God will make us more like Jesus and will show us how to use our talents and interests to serve Him on our journeys.**

# Road to Damascus

Start at the arrow and find your way to the heart!



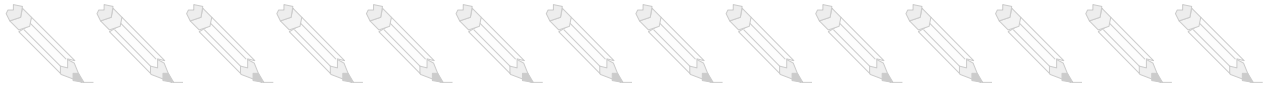
## Worksheet

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was an angry man who persecuted Christians.
2. What does "persecute" mean? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Saul was on his way to \_\_\_\_\_ to arrest any \_\_\_\_\_ that were in the synagogues.
4. What is a synagogue? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Saul saw a \_\_\_\_\_ as he came near the city.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ spoke to Saul and told him to go into the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
7. When Saul got up from the ground, he was \_\_\_\_\_ and unable to \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ days.
8. A man named \_\_\_\_\_ went to see Saul in the city.
9. How did Saul's life change after this? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Saul's name was changed to \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Saul spent the rest of his life as a missionary. What does a missionary do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Fill in the blanks with the words below.

worship	people	Jerusalem	Paul	walk
Christians	priest	Damascus	light	lame
country	bright	Jews	Jesus	teaching
Saul	see	cruel	God	three
Ananias	building	seven	preach	blind

**JOURNAL**



**What kind of person was Saul before he changed?**



**Who changed him?**



**When he became a disciple what did he do?**



**Can anyone think of a time when they were sure that what they were doing was right, but it was really wrong?**

