

12. Paul Is Changed (Acts 9:1-19)

“As for us, we can’t stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:20)



PLAN

Supplies

Deep Blue Resources: One Room Sunday School® Kit: CD-ROM | Leader Guide | Reproducible Kids’ Book | Resource Pak

Additional Deep Blue Resources:

CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible | Deep Blue Bible Storybook | Deep Blue Adventure DVD | Deep Blue Bible Dictionary

Basic Supplies: DVD player | CD player | Pencils | Crayons | Markers | Scissors | Tape | Paper lunch bags | Tissue paper | Glue | Mural paper

Gather: Cardboard | Craft blades | Sand or kitty litter | LED tea lights | Flashlight or lamp | Oranges, carrots, and water

Explore: No additional supplies

Respond: World map

Bless: No additional supplies

Before You Teach

Paul was known by Saul, his Jewish name, and also by Paul, his Greek name. To keep from creating confusion, we will refer to him as Paul.

Jesus reached out to the chief enemy of the church, Paul, and showed him God’s love. In Acts 8:3, Luke says Paul began to wreak havoc against the church and throw followers of Jesus into prison. Paul went to the high priest and received papers giving him permission to arrest followers in Damascus and return them to Jerusalem for trial.

On the road to Damascus, a light from heaven shone down on Paul and a voice called to him. So overwhelming was the light that Paul fell to the ground. The voice asked, “Paul, Paul, why are you harassing me?”

Paul calls out, “Who are you, Lord?”

Immediately he received the response, “I am Jesus, whom you are harassing.”

These simple words started Paul down a path of realization that his belief that he was serving God by persecuting the church was completely wrong. He was in fact an enemy of God. As Paul considered the divine perspective on his actions, his whole spiritual world was turned upside down.

The physical effects of Paul’s encounter were devastating. When he got up, he realized he was completely blind. The men with him had to help him into the city, and Paul didn’t eat or drink anything for three days. As Paul prayed to God during those three days of darkness, what had happened to him became clearer.

Meanwhile, God spoke to Ananias, a follower of Jesus in Damascus, in a vision and told him to go to Paul and restore his vision. At first Ananias protested. Paul had a terrible reputation for being cruel to followers of Jesus. But when God said, “Go!” Ananias obeyed. He found Paul and told him that Jesus had sent him to heal his sight. Instantly, Paul regained his sight. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized. Paul made a complete turnaround and began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues.

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GATHER

Greeting

Before class: Display the "Attendance Chart" (Resource Pak—pp. 2 and 23 or p. 3). Two different options for an attendance chart are given in the Resource Pak. Decide which is best for your class.

- Play the theme song, "All Are Welcome" (CD-ROM), as you welcome each child.
- Show the children where to place their offerings on the worship table.
- Have each child mark an attendance chart. For the "Community Attendance Chart," the children can write their first names or initials on the building marked #12.

PRAY: Dear God, help us learn how Paul was changed by your great love; in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

ASK: What is the biggest change you have gone through in your life? What problems and joys did you experience with the change?

Put the Story in Order (Puzzle – Preschool)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12b for each preschool child.

SAY: Paul bullied the followers of Jesus until one day when he was walking down a path. A light shone on him from heaven and Jesus spoke to him. Paul needed help after that because he couldn't see. After a few days God sent a man to heal Paul and make him see again. The four pictures on your paper tell the story of Paul changing, but they're not in the right order. Cut out the pictures and glue them on construction paper in the correct order.

- Allow the children time to put their pictures in order and color their pictures.
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Change Hate to Love (Puzzle – Younger Elementary)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12c for each younger elementary child.

SAY: Paul hated the followers of Jesus, and he was very cruel to them. But one day, Jesus spoke to him and everything changed. Change the word hate into the word love. You can only change one letter at a time. Three of the letters will stay the same in each row, and the empty box is the letter you need to change. Check out the tip at the bottom to help you with the word for number 3.

- Allow the children time to work their puzzles and go over the answers.
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What's Different (Puzzle – Older Elementary)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12d for each older elementary child.

SAY: After Jesus spoke to Paul on the road to Damascus, Paul changed completely. Look at the pictures of Paul on the road and find 12 things that are different between the two pictures. Circle the differences.

ASK: Why do you think Jesus chose to speak to Paul in such a dramatic way?

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Paper Bag Luminaries (Craft)

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12e for each child. Gather the supplies listed on the reproducible.

SAY: A luminary gives off light to the space surrounding it. Let’s make some paper bag luminaries to use in our worship center.

- Give each child a copy of “Luminaries.” Have them follow the directions:
 - Flatten your paper bag, and turn it so the smooth side without a seam is facing you.
 - Draw a simple design on the middle of the smooth side of the bag.
 - Slide a piece of cardboard bigger than your design into the bag.
 - Use a craft blade to cut out the design. (Older children or adults should do this step. Be very careful to cut away from your body.)
 - Remove the piece of cardboard and any piece of paper stuck inside the bag.
 - Cut a piece of tissue paper the size of your bag. Place it inside on the backside of the design. Tape it or glue it to the inside of the bag.
 - Set the open bag down on the bottom of the bag. Fill the bag with 2 inches of sand or kitty litter to help weigh the luminary down so it doesn’t fall over.
 - Turn on an LED tea light and place it into the luminary. The light should shine through the tissue paper design.

Follow the Light (Game)

Before class: Bring a lamp or flashlight that can be carried.

SAY: Paul was stopped on the path by a bright light shining down from heaven. For our game, you must follow the person holding the light and copy whatever that person does.

- Ask for a volunteer to be the leader.
- Some suggestions for what the leader can do are kneel, walk in different ways, cup your ear like you’re listening to someone speak, jump, and so forth.

Snack for Healthy Eyes (Snack)

Before class: Gather some oranges, carrots, and water for snack.

ASK: Do you know what foods can help you have healthy eyes? (*citrus fruits, fish, eggs, carrots, water, plus others*)

SAY: Today we’re going to eat a snack that will help your eyes. You may pick up an orange, some carrots, and a cup of water.

ASK: Which of these choices do you think offer the most help to keep us healthy? (*all of them*)

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Transition to Explore – Sacred Conversations

ASK: Why do you think Jesus wanted Paul to follow him? (*He was in a position to bully the followers of Jesus.*) What was different about Paul? (*He made a complete turnaround.*)

EXPLORE

Read the Bible Story

- Ask the children to find Acts 9:1-19 in their Bibles. Encourage them to bring their own Bibles and learn how to use them. Read the story from the *Deep Blue Bible Storybook* (pp. 462–5).

ASK: Who spoke to Paul? (*Jesus*) Why did Paul need help after Jesus spoke to him? (*He couldn't see.*)

Dictionary Search

- Allow the children to look up *Paul the Apostle* and *Ananias* in the *Deep Blue Kids Bible Dictionary*.
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See the Bible Story

SAY: Edgar's glasses are broken, and he can't see anything clearly. On the way to the eye doctor, Victor tells Edgar the story about when Paul couldn't see.

- Watch today's episode from the Adventure DVD.

ASK: How do you think it feels to not be able to see clearly or at all?

Interact with the Bible Story

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12a for each child.

- Give each child a copy of the Bible story.
- Assign parts for the drama: Narrator, Paul, Jesus, Another man with Paul, God, and Ananias.

SAY: Jesus speaks to Paul in our Bible story. Saul was his Jewish name, and Paul was the Greek form of his name.

- Allow the children to present the drama.

SAY: Paul was a completely different person after Jesus spoke to him. He became a very important preacher who told the good news to the Gentiles, people who were not Jewish. He started many churches and taught the people to follow God.

ASK: Do you think people accepted that Paul had changed at first? What do you think Paul had to do to convince people that he had changed?

SAY: We will talk about how people felt about Paul's change in next week's Bible story.

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Bible Verse (Activity)

Before class: Display "Eye Chart" (Resource Pak—p. 9)

- Our verse for Unit 3 is Acts 4:20.
- Say the verse without looking at the Bible verse poster. Go over the sign language for the Bible verse. Encourage all the children to sign and say the Bible verse with you.

TIP: Look on the Deep Blue Kids website, the Free Stuff tab, to see a video demonstrating the signs.

ASK: Have you had your eyes checked by a doctor? Did the doctor ask you to read an eye chart?

- Mark off a distance from the eye chart by putting tape on the floor. Have the children stand behind the tape. Allow the children to take turns reading different lines on the eye chart, letter by letter.
- After everyone has had a turn, ask for a volunteer who has very good eyesight to read all of the lines starting at the top and going to the bottom line.

ASK: What is written on the lines of the eye chart? (*the Bible verse*)

SAY: Let's use our healthy eyes and read the verse together from the chart.

Transition to Respond

SAY: Luke used the words *The Way* to refer to people who followed Jesus in the early church. Jesus was considered to be the way to God, the way of love and justice, and the one who showed his people how to live.

ASK: What do we call people today who follow Jesus? (*Christians*) What group of people did Paul teach how to follow Jesus? (*Gentiles*)

- Say together, "God said, 'Paul is the person I have chosen to carry the good news to the Gentiles.'"

RESPOND

Loving God, Loving Neighbor

Before class: If it has not been done yet, display the Mission Poster (Resource Pak—p. 7). Make copies of "Mission Letter" (Leader Guide—p. 91).

SAY: This month we are collecting a special mission offering for the John Wesley Community Centre in South Africa.

- Encourage children to find South Africa on a world map.

SAY: The Centre reaches out to vulnerable children through programs that stimulate creativity and provide opportunities to experience intercultural events. They have an award-winning marimba band that has toured London. They reach out to the children in their community through after-school programs offering art, chess, reading-spell it, computer, marimba band, homework assistance, and Saturday school English and mathematics tutoring. We will be collecting an offering the rest of this month for the Centre.

- Give a mission letter to any child who hasn't received one yet.

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Transition to Bless

ASK: How did Paul have to change to serve God?

- Gather the children around the mural paper you placed on the wall in session 10.
- Talk about the responses that have been added to the paper.

BLESS

Inviting

Before class: If it hasn't been done yet, place a large piece of mural paper on the wall and write, A Disciple Is . . .

ASK: How would you finish the sentence, A Disciple Is . . ., in a way that would describe Paul in today's story?

- Write the responses on the paper. Talk about the different responses.
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Praising

SAY: Our song this month is "Changed."

- Hand out the songbooks and have the children find the song.
 - Play this month's song and encourage the children to sing and dance to the song.
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Blessing

SAY: Each week before you leave, you will receive a blessing or a challenge. God shows you how special you are by being a part of your life.

- Gather the children in a circle. Go around the circle and offer a challenge to each child.

SAY: (Child's name), God loves you very much.

PRAY: Dear God, thank you for loving us. Show us how to serve others; in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Loving God/Loving Neighbor at Home

Before class: Make a copy of Reproducible 12f for each child.

SAY: "Loving God/Loving Neighbor – Faith Family Devotional" is for you and your family to use at home.

ASK: Can you share the story of how Paul changed with your family?

- Send home a copy of Reproducible 12f with each child.

Paul Is Changed – Bible Story

Narrator: A man named Saul was on a mission to find all the followers of Jesus and put them in prison. He was cruel to any believer he found.

He was traveling to Damascus with a legal document giving him the power to arrest believers, when suddenly a light from heaven came over him.

Saul: I was so shocked by the light, I fell to the ground. Then I heard a voice speaking to me.

Jesus: Saul, Saul, why are you bullying me?

Saul: Who are you, Lord?

Jesus: I am Jesus, the one you are bullying. Get up and enter the city. You will be told what you must do.

Another man: We heard a voice speaking, but we didn't see anyone. We didn't know what was happening. We picked Saul up from the ground, and that's when he told us he couldn't see. So we led him into Damascus.

Saul: After Jesus spoke to me, I was blind for three days. I couldn't eat or drink anything. I just kept thinking about everything I had done to Jesus' followers and wondering why Jesus had chosen to speak to me. What did the future hold for me now?

Narrator: In Damascus, God spoke to a disciple named Ananias in a vision.

God: Ananias! Go to Judas's house and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul.

Ananias: But Lord, I have heard many reports about this man. People say he has done horrible things to your holy people in Jerusalem. He's here to arrest everyone who calls on your name.

God: Go! This man is the person I have chosen to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites.

Narrator: So Ananias obeyed God. He went to the house and placed his hands on Saul.

Ananias: Brother Saul, the Lord sent me— Jesus, who appeared to you on the way as you were coming here. He sent me so that you could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

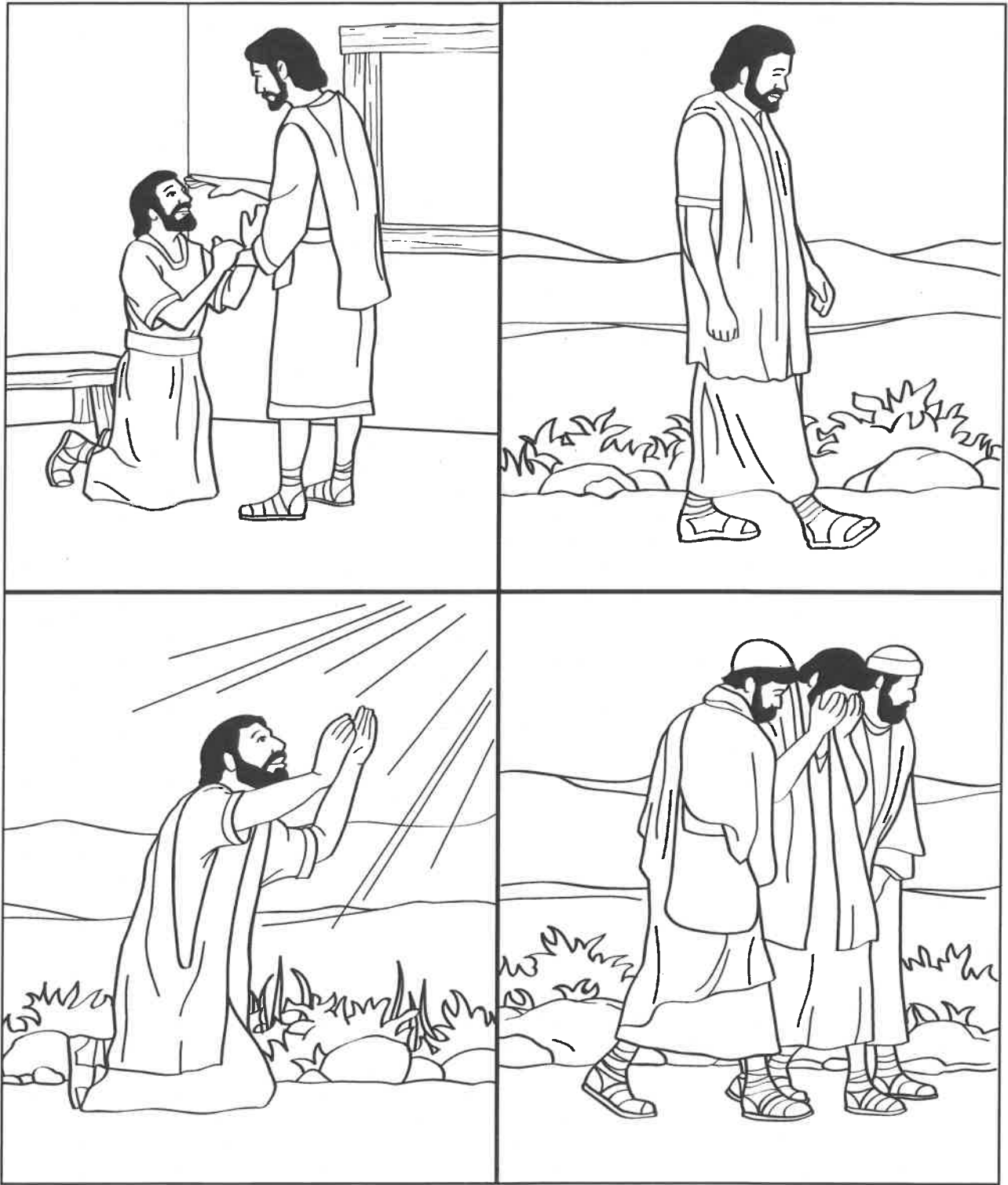
Saul: When Ananias touched me, flakes fell from my eyes, and I could see again. I was baptized as a follower of Jesus. He had turned my life completely around. Jesus had turned the hate in my heart for the believers into love. The disciples in Damascus allowed me to stay and fellowship with them for several days. I continued praying, asking what new mission God had for me.

(Based on Acts 9:1-19)



12b Put the Story in Order - Puzzle (Preschool)

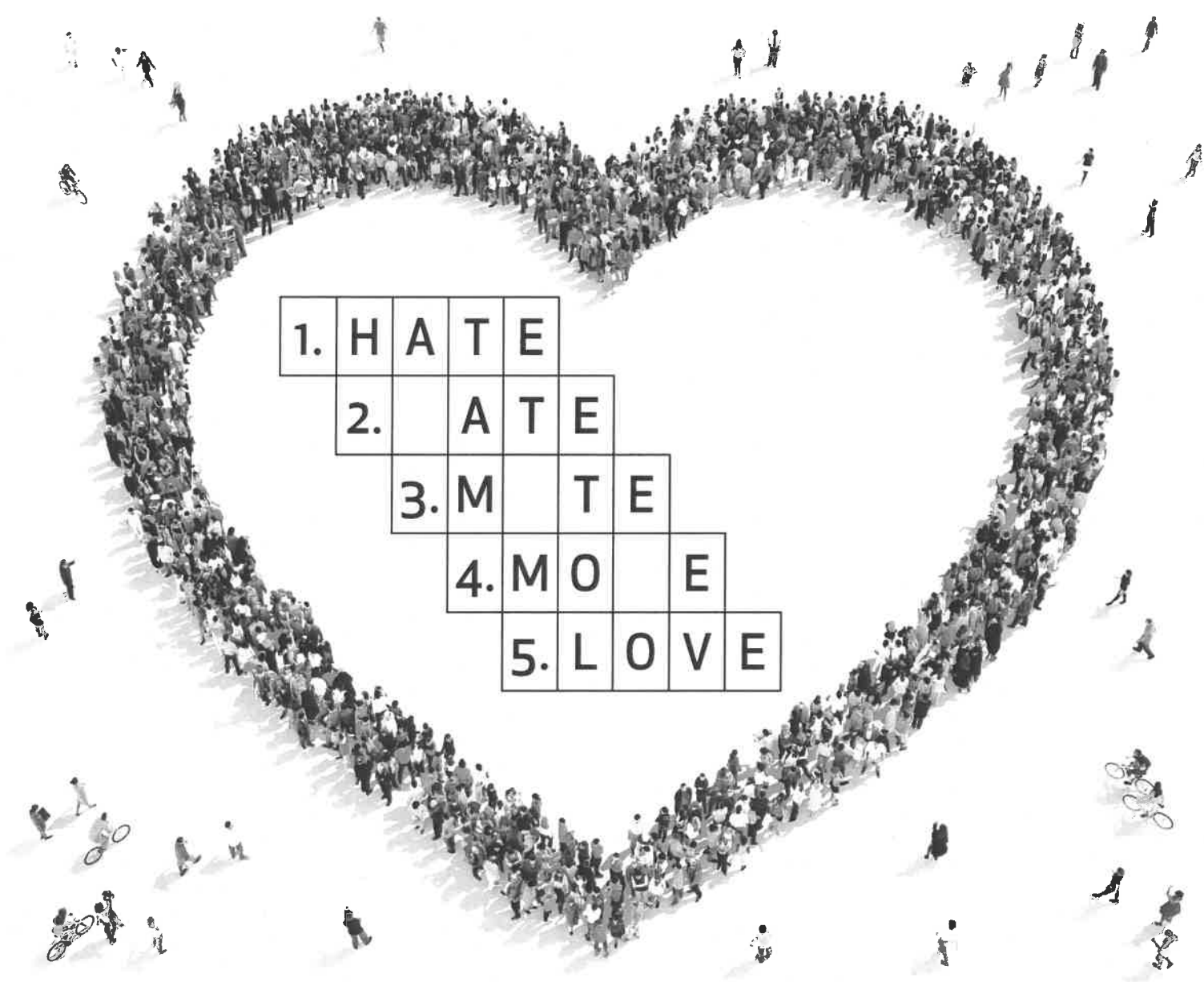
The four pictures tell the story of Paul changing, but they're not in the right order. Cut out the pictures and glue them on construction paper in the correct order.



Change Hate to Love – Puzzle (Younger Elementary)

12c

Paul hated the followers of Jesus, and he was very cruel to them. But one day, Jesus spoke to him and everything changed. Change the word hate into the word love. You can only change one letter at a time. Three of the letters will stay the same, and the empty box is the letter you need to change.

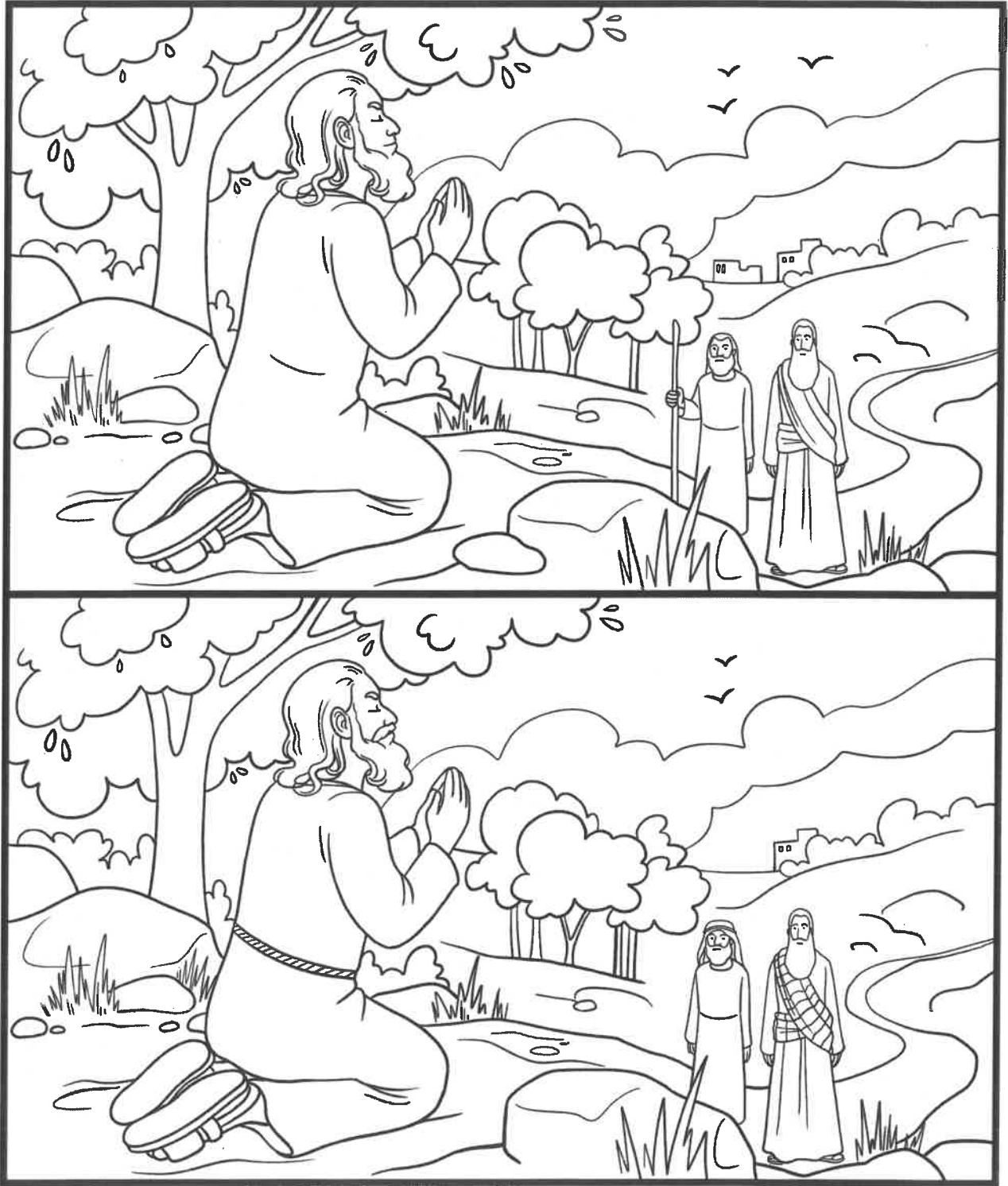


TIP: For #3, read Matthew 7:3-5 in your Bible. The word for #3 is another way of saying the word “splinter” in Matthew.



12d What's Different? – Puzzle (Older Elementary)

After Jesus spoke to Paul on the road to Damascus, Paul changed completely. Look at the pictures of Paul on the road and find 12 things that are different between the two pictures. Circle the differences.



Luminaries – Activity

12e

Materials:

brown paper lunch bags
pencils
pieces of cardboard
craft blades
tissue paper (light colors)
scissors
tape or glue
sand or kitty litter
LED tea lights



Directions:

1. Flatten your paper bag, and turn it so the smooth side is facing you. The side with the bottom of the bag folded against it is the back.
2. Draw a simple design on the middle of the front of the bag.
3. Slide a piece of cardboard bigger than your design into the bag.
4. Use a craft blade to cut out the design. (Older children or adults should do this step. Be very careful to cut away from your body.)
5. Remove the piece of cardboard and any piece of paper stuck inside the bag.
6. Cut a piece of tissue paper the size of your bag. Place it inside on the backside of the design. Tape it or glue it to the inside.
7. Set the open bag down on the bottom of the bag. Fill the bag with 2 inches of sand or kitty litter to help weigh the luminary down so it doesn't fall over.
8. Place an LED tea light into the luminary and turn it on.
9. The light should shine through the tissue paper design.

12f Loving God/Loving Neighbor – Faith Family Devotional

Paul Is Changed

Acts 9:1-19

A man named Saul had made it his mission to throw in jail all the people who believed in Jesus. He was very cruel to the church. One day on his way to Damascus, a bright light shone down on him. Saul fell to his knees. Then a voice from heaven said, "Saul, why are you bullying me?" Saul realized that Jesus was talking to him. The men with him helped him to Damascus, because Saul was blind. God told a man named Ananias, who loved God, to go help Saul. Ananias obeyed God. Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit, and his sight was restored.

Verse of the Month

"As for us, we can't stop speaking about what we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20

What Do You Think?

How do you think Saul felt when Jesus, the person he had been bullying, spoke to him?

How do you think Ananias felt when God told him to go help Saul?

Family Activity

Talk about how Saul's life totally changed when Jesus spoke to him. Saul was given a new mission—take the good news to the Gentiles. How has knowing Jesus changed your life?

What plans do you think God has for your family? Is there a special group of people you could share the good news with?

Prayer

Dear God, thank you for loving us just the way we are. Show us what we can change in our lives to bring us closer to God; in Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.