TEACHER’S GUIDE

Grades 1-2
Year 3 | Spring

Sunday School
I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.

John 8:12
(NIV 1984)
Looking Back at Lesson 12

Philip and the Man From Ethiopia
Acts 8:4-8,26-40

Aim: How did God show his love for a man from Ethiopia?

Truth: God the Holy Spirit led Philip to share God's Word with the man from Ethiopia and then brought him to faith.

Application: God uses believers to share his Word in many different ways and situations.

Response: We ask God to give us many opportunities to share his Word.

Lesson Summary: Philip had been chosen as one of the seven helpers for the disciples, and the Holy Spirit brought many people to faith through Philip's teaching in Samaria. But Philip was also chosen by God to demonstrate what making disciples of all nations means. An angel of the Lord told Philip to travel to Gaza along the desert road. There Philip preached the gospel of Jesus to an Ethiopian official, and God brought that man to faith.

Memory Treasures: *Matthew 28:19; *The Third Commandment (with explanation); *Hymn 573:2

Saul Becomes a Believer
Acts 9:1-31

Aim

How did God change Saul?

God brought Saul to faith and chose him to tell many people about Jesus.

Application: Only God can change unbelieving hearts into believing hearts that love and serve him.

Response: We thank God for bringing us to faith by sharing our faith with others.

Lesson Summary: Since Saul believed it would please God if all Christians were eliminated, he persecuted Christians. Jesus changed this plan by appearing to Saul as he traveled to Damascus and bringing him to faith. Sometime later, rather than returning with Christians he had arrested, Saul returned to Jerusalem preaching the message of Christ. God chose Saul, now known as Paul, to tell many Jews and Gentiles about the Savior.

* 1 Timothy 2:3,4
* The Third Commandment (with explanation)
* Hymn 573:2

lord/Lord—a ruler or master; a name often used to refer to Jesus

Gentiles—a name given to all people who are not Jews

missionary—anyone who shares the Word of God with another person


Dear Lord, remind me frequently of the grace you showed to undeserving Saul and show to undeserving me. Help me remember that your Word is for everyone. Increase my love for others, and help me share your saving love with them. Amen.
**WORSHIP**  
*Sing:* Tell the children to join you in pretending to ride bikes on a trail in the park. Then stop suddenly. Say that the trail has been washed away and now ends at a cliff. Whew! That was close! You rest for a moment and thank God for stopping you just in time. Oh, no! Two children are racing by on their bikes in the direction of the cliff. Ask the students what they would call out. [Stop! There’s a cliff ahead!]

Explain that there is a far worse danger that many people have ahead of them that we need to warn them about. Ask what that danger is. [Hell.]

Sing “Hark! The Voice of Jesus Crying” (hymn 573:1, 2) to remind you that Jesus is calling to you to help others avoid punishment in hell.

*Pray:* Dear God, you love us so much that you sent your Son, Jesus, to take away our sins. But this good news isn’t just for us. It’s for the whole world. Help us gladly share your love so that many others will be with us in heaven. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Ask the children to give a word that means the opposite of each of the following words: happy, dark, fast, hate. [Sad, light, slow, love.]

Today’s lesson shows how God changed a man’s heart that was full of hate into the opposite—a heart filled with love. The man was Saul. God had great plans for him. Listen to find out how God changed Saul.

**Alternate Lesson Plan**

*Sing:* Ask the children if they can get to the moon right now. [No. They don’t have the means to get there.] Then explain that trying to get to heaven on one’s own is far more difficult. It’s impossible! Sing “I Am Trusting You, Lord Jesus” (hymn 446:1) to remind the children that only Jesus can provide full salvation—the forgiveness of sins and life in heaven.

*Pray:* Dearest Jesus, we trust that you are the only way to heaven. Keep us faithful to you, and help us tell others about the gift of heaven you earned for them. Amen.

Put ¼ cup baking soda into a bottle, and set the bottle in a large bowl. Save for Discuss (Alternate).

Tell the children that later in the lesson, the white powder inside the bottle will change into something totally different.

Today’s lesson tells about change. God changed a mean man named Saul. Let’s find out how God changed Saul.
As you tell the story, draw simple pictures on the board. Draw a building with bars across a window to represent Saul putting believers in jail. Draw rays coming from a cloud to represent the light from heaven. Draw the number 3 to represent the three days that Saul was blind. Draw a stick man and a thought balloon with a cross in it to represent the Holy Spirit changing Saul’s heart to believe in Jesus as his Savior. Optional: Use a Bible map (See Copy Master S) to show the children the location of Damascus in respect to Jerusalem.

A young man named Saul did not believe in Jesus. Saul had watched as Jesus’ enemies had thrown stones at a believer named Stephen until he died. Saul thought that the Jewish leaders had done the right thing by killing Stephen.

Saul became one of the believers’ worst enemies. He went from house to house in Jerusalem looking for believers. When he found them, he had them thrown into prison.

But putting the believers in Jerusalem into prison wasn’t enough for Saul. He wanted to arrest them wherever they lived. So one day he took some men and went to the city of Damascus. He knew that many believers were also living there. Saul planned to find them and bring them back to Jerusalem as prisoners.

As Saul came near Damascus, a bright light from heaven suddenly flashed around him! He fell to the ground and heard a voice say, “Saul, Saul, why are you working against me?”

“Lord, who are you?” Saul asked.

The voice said, “I am Jesus. I am the one you are working against. Now get up and go into the city. There you will be told what you must do.”

Saul got up, but when he opened his eyes, he could not see a thing. He had become blind! The men who were with Saul took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. For three days he couldn’t see, and during that time he didn’t eat or drink anything.

Now, a believer named Ananias lived in Damascus. The Lord said to him, “Get up, and go to the house where Saul is staying. He is praying. I’ve let him know that you’re coming to place your hands on him so that he’ll see again.”

“Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard bad things about this man from many people! They told me what terrible things he did to...
your believers in Jerusalem. And now he has **come to Damascus to arrest** those who believe in you!”

But the **Lord told Ananias**, “Go! I have **chosen this man to teach people** in many different countries about me."

Then **Ananias went** to the house where Saul was and put his **hands on Saul’s head**. Ananias said, “Brother Saul, I know that the **Lord Jesus appeared to you** on the road to Damascus. He has sent me so that you may **see again** and be **filled with the Holy Spirit.”**

Right away **something like scales fell** from Saul’s eyes. He could **see again**! Saul got up and was **baptized**. After that he **ate some food** to get his **strength back**.

Saul **began to preach about Jesus**, the Son of God. All **those who heard** him were **surprised**. They kept asking one another, “Isn’t this the **man** who **made so much trouble** for the believers in Jerusalem? And didn’t he **come** here to Damascus to **arrest** more of them?”

**God had changed Saul from a man who had hated believers** into a **man who loved Jesus**.

Saul **later** became known as **Paul**. Paul **preached boldly** about Jesus to Jews and Gentiles in **many different cities**. God **blessed Paul**, and Paul became one of the Lord’s **greatest missionaries**.

**Discuss**

**Cut out two 1-foot tall paper man figures** (cookie cutter shapes). **You need a marker**.

**Ask** When Saul watched people stoning Stephen to death, why did it not bother him? **[Saul thought Stephen deserved to die because he believed in Jesus.]**

**Do** Show one paper man. Draw a heart on his chest.

**Ask** What do Saul’s actions show was **not** in his heart? **[Love for Jesus and faith in him.]**

**Do** Draw a cross inside the heart, but then draw a slash across the heart to represent no faith in the Savior.

**Ask** What were some of Saul’s wicked actions? **[Hunting for believers, putting believers in jail or killing them, expressing hate for Jesus.]**

**Do** Write the children’s responses on the man figure.

**Say** **Only God knows what is in someone’s heart**, and God knew that hate was in Saul’s heart. But God still loved Saul and planned to help him.

**name tag** that says “Paul.” **You need the materials you set up in Introduce (Alternate), a self-stick note, and some vinegar.**

**Say** Describe unbelieving Saul. **[Saul did not love Jesus or his followers. He okayed the stoning of Stephen. He put Christians in jail.]**

**Ask** If you met a person like Saul, would you tell that person about the Savior? **[Responses. Hopefully the children would want to share Jesus with someone like Saul, but with the help of a grown-up.]**

**Say** The Bible tells us that God wants everyone to be saved.

**Do** Read the 1 Timothy 2:3,4 memory treasure.

**Say** Although it might be scary to tell someone like Saul about the Savior, these words remind us that Jesus is for all people, including Jesus-hating people like Saul.

**Ask** What happened as Saul was on his way to Damascus? **[A bright light shone around him, and he heard Jesus speaking to him.]**

**Say** God the Holy Spirit is the only one that can change
a person’s heart, and that’s what happened to Saul’s heart. Look at an amazing change that can happen to the ordinary baking soda in this bottle.

Do Add the vinegar to the baking soda in the bottle. It will foam out of the bottle into the bowl.

Say That’s an amazing change that God causes to happen when baking soda and vinegar come together. But the change God caused in Saul is far more amazing!

Ask What did Ananias do for Saul after Saul could see again? [Ananias baptized him.] What did Saul, later known as Paul, then begin to do? [Tell others about Jesus.]

Say What a change! God uses his Word and Baptism to change unbelieving hearts into believing hearts. When the baking soda changed, it bubbled out of the bottle. Saul’s heart bubbled with happiness because he believed in Jesus as his Savior. God has worked that same faith in you and me.

Do Write your name and the name of your class (first graders, for example) on a self-stick note, and attach it to the bottle.

Ask How can you bubble with happiness as Saul did? [By sharing the good news of Jesus with others.]

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Ask What surprised Saul as he traveled to the city of Damascus? [A bright light blinded him, and he heard the voice of Jesus.]

Say God the Holy Spirit was working in the heart of Saul, changing him from an unbeliever into a believer.

Ask For how long was Saul blind? [Three days.]

Why did Ananias not want to go help Saul as God asked him to do? [He knew Saul hated believers and had come to capture believers in Damascus.]

Say God had important work for Saul to do. God convinced Saul to believe in Jesus as his Savior and change his wicked ways.

Ask In what ways did God help Saul? [He sent Ananias to heal his eyes through God’s power. He had Saul baptized and gave him saving faith.]

Do Show the second paper man. Draw a heart on his chest. Draw a cross inside.

Say God gave Saul the gift of faith in Jesus. He changed Saul from an unbeliever who worked to hurt God’s followers to a believer who served God and others.

Ask What did Saul, later known as Paul, begin to do after he came to faith in Jesus? [He traveled to countries and told people about the Savior.]

Do Write the children’s responses on the second paper man.

Say Only God could change you and me from unbelievers to believers. He did that through Baptism and through the preaching of his saving Word.

Ask Why, then, is it important for us to tell others about the Savior? [God changes hearts and leads people to faith through the Word.]

Say Saul thanked God for saving him by going out and telling others about the Lord.

Ask How can you show thanks to God in the following situations?

- You sometimes spend weekends with your grandparents who do not believe in Jesus. [Tell them about the Savior; share your Bible lesson; pray for them; invite them to church.]

- You’re in an art class at the recreation center in town. The teacher often says “Jesus” or “God” when she’s upset. [You can tell her that those names are special because they refer to the one who saved you so that you can go to heaven. She may be surprised at what you say and ask questions.]

Say Let’s thank Jesus for our saving faith by telling others about him.
CLOSE

You will write on the board.

Say

God changed Saul from a person who did not have Jesus in his heart to a person who loved Jesus.

Ask

In what way did God want Saul to serve him?
[By telling others about Jesus.]

Say

Only God can change unbelieving hearts into believing hearts that love and serve him. We are glad God changed our hearts and brought us to faith in the Savior. We thank him by [telling others about him].

Do

Write “Use us to tell others about you” on the board, and read the words. Have the children read them during the following litany:

Teacher: Lord, you said your name would be great among the nations.
Children: Use us to tell others about you.
T: Lord, you said that the gospel would be preached in the whole world.
C: Use us to tell others about you.
T: Lord, you told believers to go into the world and preach the good news.
C: Use us to tell others about you.
T: Amen.

To Do

Student Idea: Trace a hand on one sheet of paper. Then stack three more sheets under that sheet and cut out four hands at once. On each hand write or draw a way to be a “helping hand,” including sharing Jesus with others. Bring the paper hands to the next class.

Note: Send home four sheets of paper with the previous instructions.

Say

God changed Saul by bringing him to faith. God also chose Saul (later known as Paul) to tell other people about Jesus. Only God can change unbelieving hearts into [believing hearts]. Only God can lead us to love and serve him. Listen as I read a poem that tells about thanking the Lord by telling others about him.

Do

As you say the poem, lead the children in doing the actions.

Father, help me every day,
(fold hands to pray)
So I know just what to say.
(touch hand to mouth)
Help me share your Word like Paul, (open hands to make a book)
Saying, “Jesus died for all!”
(make cross with fingers)

Student Idea: Targets usually have round circles. Look on your student lesson for a target that is rectangular. Take aim, fill in the missing information, and then do what it says!
* The Third Commandment
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

What does this mean?
We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and his Word, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.

After Saul came to know Jesus as his Savior, he no longer hated God’s Word but loved it and shared it with others. This commandment reminds us that it is God’s will that we also love his Word.

* Hymn 573:2
If you cannot speak like angels,
If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus;
You can say he died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked
With the Judgment’s dread alarms,
You can lead the little children
To the Savior’s waiting arms.

• Begin by singing “Hark! The Voice of Jesus Crying” (hymn 573:1,2). If the song is new, sing one phrase at a time and have the children echo you.

• Use Activity 1 under Lesson Activities to review the story.

• Remind the children that only God can change unbelieving hearts into believing hearts that love and serve him. We thank God for bringing us to faith by sharing our faith with others. Give each child a sheet of paper on which you have written, “I can share God’s Word by . . .” Have the children do either of the following: (1) complete the sentence on their own; (2) tell you what to write down for them. [Possible endings: giving my offerings, telling a friend about Jesus, inviting a neighbor to church, reading a Bible lesson to my little brother.] Under the sentence, each child should draw himself or herself doing what is described in the sentence. Hang the completed works on a bulletin board titled “Here Am I; Send Me!”

• Lead the children in performing the suggested actions as you say the following words:
Father, help me every day, (fold hands to pray)
So I know just what to say.
(touch hand to mouth)
Help me share your Word like Paul,
(open hands to make a book)
Saying, “Jesus died for all!”
(make cross with fingers)

• Choose and use the Lesson Activities that best meet the needs of your students.
Lesson Activities

1. Review

Move and Review

*Purpose:* To use a game board to review the lesson.

*Procedure:* Show the children a copy of *Copy Master 1.* Tell them you will give each of them a paper heart to move along the path as you tell the Bible lesson. They will also get to draw things on the game board.

First, give each child a 1-inch paper heart and a duplicate of the copy master. Tell the children to place their paper hearts on “Start.” Have the children move their hearts along the path, stopping near pictures to finish them as directed here or on the page.

• Add the missing letters to the first road sign. [J,u,m.]

• Stones were used to kill Stephen. Add more stones.

• Saul went from house to house looking for believers. Draw two more houses.

• Saul put believers in jail. Draw a window with bars.

• Saul headed to Damascus. Finish the sign. [m, u.]

• God sent a bright light (finish it), and Jesus spoke to Saul.

• Draw a cross on the paper heart to represent the faith God the Holy Spirit was giving to Saul. Then move the heart along the path again.

• Blind Saul went to Damascus. God sent Ananias to help him. Add windows and trees to Damascus.

• Ananias baptized Saul. Add more water drops.

• God changed Saul’s heart and his name. Add the missing letter. [P]

2. Application

Helping Hands

*Purpose:* To discuss ways children can be “helping hands” to spread God’s Word.

*Procedure:* Give each child four sheets of paper. Have each child do the following:

• Trace a hand on one sheet of paper.

• Stack the four sheets together, the one with the hand shape on top. Tape the edges of the paper together.

• Cut out the handprint, cutting through all the sheets at once.

• Discuss ways that children can be helping hands to spread God’s Word.

• Write (or have someone write) one idea on each hand shape. Draw a picture for each idea, if you wish.

• Staple the hand shapes together to make a booklet.

Optional: Send the sheets of paper home with a copy of the note in *To Do at Home.* Have the students bring the paper hands to the next class to show, discuss, and staple together.

3. Music

Songs to Sing

*Purpose:* To sing songs that reinforce the lesson application.

*Procedure:* Teach and sing one or more of the following songs:

• “I Have the Joy” (Little Ones Sing Praise, Concordia Publishing House) is an upbeat, easy song with which the children can express their joy in knowing Jesus as their Savior.

• “Go and Tell” from *Copy Master 2,* Lesson 5, is a fun song in which the children encourage one another to witness about Jesus.
• “Paul” (The Little Christian’s Songbook, Concordia Publishing House) tells about Saul’s conversion and ministry.

4. Art

Bunches of Jesus’ Love

Purpose: To make a vase and flowers with a mission message.

Procedure: Cut various size hearts out of red and pink paper (for flowers) and green paper (for leaves). You may do this step yourself to save time or provide stencils or templates for the children to use.

To make each flower, have each student sandwich a pipe cleaner (stem) between two red or pink hearts of the same size and glue the hearts together. Bend a green heart in half around the stem, and secure with glue to make a leaf. Each child should make at least three flowers.

Then have each child cover an empty can with construction paper to make a vase. Have each child write “Jesus loves you, and I do too!” on the vase. Put a piece of modeling clay inside each can, and poke the stems into the clay to hold the flowers in the vase. Students may take these gifts to people they know or give them to guests at a Friendship Sunday or another outreach event.

5. Review and Apply

Nonreader

Purpose: To draw pictures to complete sentences, and to draw places where we can tell others about Jesus.

Procedure: Duplicate Copy Master 2 for the children to complete. Read the directions, and have the children do the drawings.

God’s Word in the Lesson: Students draw the following: 1. Jesus, 2. prison, 3. light, 4. people

God’s Word in My Life: Other than adding water to the font and a cross to the Bible, pictures for the last activity will vary.

Reader

Purpose: To complete story sentences with words from a word box, and to unscramble letters to complete an application sentence.

Procedure: Duplicate Copy Master 3 for the children to complete.


God’s Word in My Life: Jesus

Challenge

Purpose: To complete story sentences with words from a word box, and to draw places where we can tell others about Jesus.

Procedure: Duplicate Copy Master 4 for the children to complete.


God’s Word in My Life: The pictures can be of any place where people could be present.

6. Other Ideas

Memory Treasure Activity

Purpose: To help the children learn the hymn 573:2 memory treasure.

Procedure: Write the entire stanza on the board. Then read it with the children. Ask a child to erase one or two words of the stanza. Then you read the words that are written and have the children say only the words that are missing. Repeat until all words are erased.
Writing Challenge

*Purpose:* To review the story by writing it from Ananias’ point of view.

*Procedure:* Distribute ruled paper. Have the children pretend to be Ananias and write the story from his point of view, including his fear about going to visit Saul and his joy when he knew that Saul had become a believer. Encourage the students to add illustrations.