

Saul gets the shock of his life

Start

You can do this session on your own or with other people, whichever you'd prefer. Try to find a place where you won't be disturbed. You could write down any thoughts you have during these sessions as a way of helping you keep track. If you want to read the passage online, just go to the 'Bible Gateway' website and type the passage in there.

<https://www.biblegateway.com>

Quiz

1. You see a chance to trip up in the playground the person who's been bullying you. Do you:
A: Trip them up
B: Walk by and do nothing
2. You see the person who's been bullying you being upset in the playground. Do you.
A: Join in to get your own back
B: Ask a teacher to help
3. The person who's been bullying you asks you for help with their homework. Do you:
A. Refuse to help them
B. Say you'll help, but only after you've both talked through what's been happening between the 2 of you.
4. The person who's been bullying you comes up and says sorry and they mean it. Do you:
A: Accept their apology
B: Tell them to go away and never speak to you again

The point behind that was to get us thinking about how we react when people are unkind to us. It's not easy forgiving people that have hurt us. We can feel tempted to try and get our own back, but Jesus says we need to forgive people when they hurt us because he forgives us when we hurt him. This does not mean we say what that person did doesn't matter. It can take time to forgive someone, it doesn't necessarily happen straight away, but Jesus promises to help us do it however long it takes. Our story today looks at how Jesus asks someone to help someone else who had done some terrible things.

Bible input and discussion

Read Acts 9:1-10. You will come across a tricky word here called: 'gentile'. That word means anyone who is not a Jew.

The distance from Jerusalem to Damascus is around 150 miles. What does this tell us about Saul's determination to wipe out the Christians?

How does Jesus change Saul?

How do you think Saul felt after meeting Jesus?

What do you think life would have been like for Ananias?

Read Acts 9:10-19.

Why do you think Jesus tells Ananias to go to Saul?

How is Ananias being brave here?

What does this story teach us about being a follower of Jesus?

Jesus can breakthrough anything and get through to anyone. Saul was a bully, but Jesus changed him and Ananias had to be brave enough to believe that and trust Jesus when he asked him to go to see Saul. Saul went on to become a missionary for Jesus and helped spread his message.

Finishing up

Spend some time thinking about what this story means for you. Below are some ideas for prayer:

- Thank Jesus that he is always willing to forgive us no matter what.
- Is there someone you have been hurt by? Ask Jesus to help you in that situation.
- Pray for any people you know who have hurt each other. Ask Jesus to heal the pain between them.

Other stuff you could do in the week

Have a look at the following Bible verses. There are short passages for each day of the week. You could jot down some thoughts in response to them.

'as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he (God) removed our wrongdoing from us.' Psalm 103:12

'The name of the Lord is a strong tower;
the righteous run to it and are safe.' Proverbs 18:10

Jesus' words: 'For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.' Matthew 23:12

Jesus' words: "I have come that they (everyone) may have life, and have it to the full."
John 10:10

Jesus' words: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who hurt you." Matthew 5:43-44

Jesus' words: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."
Matthew 7:12

Jesus' words: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33