

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



SAUL MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Acts 9:1-20 Saul is converted

This week we explore how, like Saul and Ananias, the Holy Spirit might want to work through us.

Each child will need:

→ Pens/pencils and A3 paper

You will need:

→ A bag filled with random objects (optional) – see Start It section

Start It

Play a game of guess the object. Encourage lots of guessing, and when the object is guessed highlight how the children changed their minds when they got more clues.

Option one – guess the object

Fill a bag with random everyday objects like dice, a toy, a book, a ruler, a plate, a sock, a hairbrush, a mug (nothing sharp). Children take turns feeling an object in the bag and describing it to the rest of the group.

Option two – guess the picture

Use an interactive game which reveals an image. <https://wordwall.net/resource/2637008/guess-the-picture>

🗨 **Say:** We made some pretty wild guesses sometimes, but when we saw the bigger picture, or got more clues, we changed our minds.

Share the following questions with the group. Most of them could have a yes/no answer, but encourage the group to explain their choices.

- Can you think of anything that you used to have a really strong opinion about but then you changed your mind?
- Is there a food that you used to hate but now would eat all day if you could?
- Is there a TV programme that you would never watch, but now you can't miss?
- Is there a pop group that you were never a fan of but now you love them? What changed your mind?

Sing It

🗨 **Say:** Throughout these sessions we have discovered how the Holy Spirit helps us to make a difference in the world. Today's song reminds us to get up every morning and commit our day to God, making a difference for him.

'I want to make a difference' by Jana and Ron Alayra (2 mins 43 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2eQlabUY68>

Tell It

🗨️ **Say:** Today we will find out more about Saul who played a big part in the book of Acts and made a huge difference for God.

Read Acts 9:1-2 (ICB)

'In Jerusalem Saul was still trying to frighten the followers of the Lord by saying he would kill them. So he went to the high priest and asked him to write letters to the synagogues in the city of Damascus. Saul wanted the high priest to give him the authority to find people in Damascus who were followers of Christ's Way. If he found any there, men or women, he would arrest them and bring them back to Jerusalem.'

Ask:

- ➔ What do we discover about Saul in Acts 9:1-2?
- ➔ How much did he like or dislike Christians?

🗨️ **Say:** Saul absolutely hated the Christians as he thought that they were a threat to the one true God. He would go to any lengths to shut down anyone who said they believed in Jesus.

Video

Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-19) by Saddleback Kids (1 min 37 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLZ67inPx-4>

Ask:

- ➔ What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus?
- ➔ Imagine that you are Ananias. How would you have felt if God asked you to look after Saul?
- ➔ Would you have been afraid? Why?

🗨️ **Say:** In the Bible we find out exactly what God said to Ananias.

Read Acts 9:15 (ICB)

'But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! I have chosen Saul for an important work. He must make me known to non-Jews, to kings, and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.'"

🗨️ **Say:** That was all Ananias needed to hear. Saul was chosen by God and that was good enough for Ananias.

Read Acts 9:17-19 (ICB).

'So Ananias went to the house of Judas. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus sent me. He is the one you saw on the road on your way here. He sent me so that you can see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something that looked like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes. He was able to see again! Then Saul got up and was baptised. After eating some food, his strength returned.'

Ask: What happened when Ananias went to visit Saul?

🗨️ **Say:** Before this moment, Saul had put all his energy into attacking Christians and making life as difficult as possible for them. Now he used that same energy to tell as many people as he could about Jesus.

🗨️ **Say:** Saul's name changed on that day; he now went by the name of Paul. It wasn't Jesus who gave Saul a new name; Saul was his Hebrew name and Paul was his Greek name.

Video

Paul in Damascus (Acts 9:20-31) by Saddleback Kids

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_IsmzsfU5Y

Ask: How did Paul's life change once he met Jesus and was filled with the Holy Spirit?

🗨️ **Say:** The Holy Spirit transformed the mind of Saul/Paul, and he was able to do amazing things for God. Jesus can do the same for us as Christians so that we can make a difference for him in the world.

Action It

Ask: Who can remember this month's Bible verse?

'The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them.'

— (Romans 8:14 ICB)

Spend a moment sharing together how they have been letting the Holy Spirit lead them.

Make a difference for God

Explain that we are going to think about ways we can make a difference for God. Give each child a piece of A3 paper and ask them to either write their name or draw a picture of themselves in the centre. Ask them to create a spider diagram showing all the places they go during the week, eg school, home, dance club, church ...

Discuss together some practical things they could do to make a difference for God.

Then ask the group to write one or two practical things that they could do in each setting, to make a difference for God.

Using a different colour, now ask them to write what they need from the Holy Spirit to be able to carry out the task. It would be great if the group leaders could complete their own sheet too, to share ideas with the children.

🗨️ **Say:** Today we have taken the time to think about the different places we visit during the week and how God can use us to make a difference in each one. We have also recognised that we cannot do this in our own strength. As you try and carry out some of these tasks over the coming weeks, it is important that you pray regularly, asking for the Holy Spirit's power to help you make a difference for God.

Pray It

Have a look at the 'Make a difference' sheets that you have completed together. What are the common things that the children, and group leaders, need help with? It may be the courage to speak up, or guidance about the right words to say, but there will be common threads within the children's thoughts. Jot down the common themes on a sheet of paper that the whole group can see. Ask each child to choose one to pray about and go round the room sharing in a time of prayer.

To bring the time of prayer to a close, use the lyrics from today's song. You can either read them out or display them for the children to read.

Jesus changes lives forever, if he calls I won't say 'never',
I'll say, 'Now! Use me, Lord, somehow!'
He's at work every minute, his great plan, I am in it,
I'll say, 'Now! Use me, Lord, somehow!'

*With all my heart this is what I say,
I want to get up and make a difference,
Get up and make a change!
With all my heart this is what I say,
I want to get up, get up with all my might,
Get up and give you all my life,
I want to make a difference today!*

('I want to make a difference' by Jana and Ron Alayra)

Ask the children to take their 'Make a difference' sheets with them, to share with someone at home.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It Ideas for children and families.

Explore It

IDEAS

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.

FOR ME

TOGETHER



Watch

Just because you are young, it doesn't mean that God doesn't have a purpose for you. He wants you to make a difference in the world. Watch the clip to give you some ideas.

Kids can make a difference by Scholastic News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3QbI5LOSic>



Share

Spend some time talking through your 'Make a difference' sheet with someone at home. There are lots of places where you can make a difference for God, but you will need the power and strength of the Holy Spirit to do it and the support of other Christians, just like Ananias.

How can someone at home support you as you try to make a difference for God?



Song for the week

'I want to make a difference' by Jana and Ron Alayra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2eQlabUY68>



Memory verse

'The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them.'

— Romans 8:14 (ICB)

KIDS ALIVE! ONLINE

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive>

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!

