

10 SAUL'S CONVERSION

KEY TEXT: ACTS 9:3-19

CENTRAL truth

Saul was a cruel and violently zealous man who was willing to do anything to stop the church from growing. Yet because of his encounter with Jesus, his life was transformed. Through the gospel, **enemies are reconciled to God and one another.**

key question

What do verses 4 and 5 indicate about Jesus's relationship to His people?

The risen Jesus made it clear to Saul that his violent pursuit of the early church affected Him. To persecute Jesus's people was to persecute Jesus. This reveals how closely He identifies Himself with His people. He is the head and we, the church, are His body.

keep in mind

- When the Lord called Ananias to visit with Saul, he responded by reminding God of Saul's reputation as a persecutor of the church. Notice that the Lord doesn't harshly rebuke Ananias for his concern. Students need to be reminded that God invites us to bring our questions and hang-ups to Him honestly. Though Ananias was obedient, it wasn't without a bit of wrestling! Allow the group you lead to be a safe place for students to ask questions.
- Saul went from a persecutor of the church to a "brother" (v. 17) in the family of God. Students may have friends or family that they think are unlikely to respond to God's grace. Allow Saul's story to be an encouragement to them. God can redeem anyone.

application

How can we be a blessing to those we struggle to like or who we think won't be receptive to the gospel?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Challenge students to select 1–2 people who they think are unlikely to respond to the gospel and to begin praying for them this week. Remind them that reconciliation to God and His family are available to all through the gospel.

FOR THE LEADER: Help students to see that God's grace is not simply for those we get along with. Those who've been shown much grace have the privilege and responsibility to extend it to others. Share examples from your life about times when you've struggled to show grace to others and how allowed let the Spirit lead you.

SUMMER
2024